



## UNITED FOR GIRLS: INNOVATE TO ELEVATE PRIZE

### OVERVIEW OF OPPORTUNITY

The U.S. Soccer Foundation is committed to transforming the soccer landscape to achieve gender equity. Although COVID-19 punted us out of bounds, we have an opportunity to rebuild the field to reflect inclusivity - of all genders, of all races and ethnicities, and of all socio-economic backgrounds. Building on the successes of our [United for Girls initiative](#), we are releasing an 'Innovate to Elevate' prize. The *United for Girls* initiative has identified six key strategies (below) to engage girls and women from underserved communities in sport - and we want to hear from you, the pioneers, the trail blazers, and the change agents - to expand on this work.

We know that girls and women in underserved communities were among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are looking for change agents committed to increasing access to sport during the 2022 calendar year – focused on the spring, summer, and fall seasons. Pitch your innovation to increase opportunities for girls to play and to redesign gender norms in sports settings. [Click here to submit a proposal](#) for a chance to win a \$5,000 prize to test or scale your innovation so that more girls and women have access to sport.

The six strategies built by our *United for Girls* cohort that your innovation must be tied to include:

1. **Partnerships** - Collaborating with other entities (schools, community orgs, etc.) to increase recruitment reach or service offerings
2. **Structural Changes** - Changes to organization or program structure (i.e. creating girls-only teams or intentional co-ed spaces)
3. **Programming Redesign** - Changes to program implementation or how coaches coach (i.e. implementing new curriculum, training, etc.)
4. **Family Engagement** - Specific efforts to engage parents, caregivers, siblings (i.e. community events)
5. **Marketing & Outreach** - Promoting programs in ways specifically designed to reach and appeal to girls, especially girls of color
6. **Female Staff Recruitment** - Increasing the proportion of coaches and staff who identify as women or non-binary



## PARAMETERS & NEXT STEPS

### *Innovate to Elevate Informational Webinar:*

The U.S. Soccer Foundation will be hosting an informational webinar about this exciting opportunity on Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 12:00pm ET. Please come prepared with any questions, comments, or concerns you have as this is the opportunity to ask questions during this process. [Click here to register](#) for the webinar.

### *Key Dates:*

RFP - Webinar: October 20, 2021, Global Dignity Day

RFP - Closes: November 20, 2021, Universal Children's Day

Awards - Announcement: December 20, 2021, International Human Solidarity Day

Awards - Celebration: March 24-26, 2022, Urban Soccer Symposium

### *Prize Details:*

#### The Prize

- Prize value: \$5,000
- All sports-based youth development organizations, not currently in *United for Girls* cohort, are eligible to apply

#### A Competitive Application

- Has a demonstrated commitment to and deep knowledge about gender equity best practices
- An innovative idea related to at least one of the six *United for Girls* strategies that will increase access to sport for girls in underserved communities and reach at least 500 girls in 2022
- Ability and commitment to providing aggregate participant and coach data from the innovation and stories about positive influence and/or change
- Preference will be given to organizations that include soccer in their portfolio of programming and that can start implementation their innovation during the first half of 2022

#### The Requirements

- Awardees must attend the U.S. Soccer Foundation's [Urban Soccer Symposium](#) and participate in 'Innovate to Elevate' workshops
- Awardees must provide data and contribute learnings and promising practices to amplify efforts during the 2022 calendar year
- Awardees must have coaches complete one virtual training opportunity provided by the U.S. Soccer Foundation during the 2022 calendar year
- Awardees must comply with the Safe Sport Act of 2017
- Awardees must require criminal history screenings for any staff that has regular contact with minors
- Awardees must have insurance that protects staff and participants



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