Community Member Compensation Policy

Establishing fair compensation practices for community members is necessary in demonstrating our commitment to engaging community voice and recognizing the value those with lived experience add to the work. Community members rarely receive adequate compensation and recognition for their time, expertise, and contributions. Often, community members sharing their expertise and experience are the only ones in the room not compensated for their time, even though they are the only ones with lived experience on the subject.

XYZ Community Foundation (XYZ) team members should clearly define engagement criteria before engaging community members in any activity. These criteria may include, but are not limited to, a person's lived experiences, expertise, and/or skills that are relevant and aligned with the objectives of the activity. These criteria for engagement and compensation should be clearly communicated when recruiting community members to participate in the activity.

Eligible community members are defined as: community members who are not compensated for the time they spend in collaboration with XYZ as an employee of XYZ or a partner organization. Employees of XYZ are ineligible to receive compensation as a community member and should be compensated as part of their regular pay (salary or hourly wage).

Each fiscal year as part of the organizational budgeting process, an overall community compensation budget is established based on revenue projections and anticipated projects for the year.

At XYZ compensation is standard in exchange for a community member's time and expertise. These are the components of our community compensation approach:

1. **We compensate community members by the hour.** Determine how much time the community member will spend on the activity (outlined in the following section).
2. **We pay a living wage.** The base rate of compensation is $20.00 per hour for a community member's time and expertise. Multiply the amount of time in hours that the community member will spend on the activity by $20.00 to determine the base rate of compensation for the activity.
3. **We pay for transportation, childcare, and set up.** For in-person meetings, add a flat $20.00 to the base rate of compensation to account for these things. For virtual meetings, add a flat $5.00.
4. **We pay in the form of gift cards.** Community members are paid in electronic gift cards via Rewards Genius.
5. **We follow IRS guidelines for taxable income.*** Individuals who receive more than $500 in a year will be required to complete a W-9. The project lead should inform community members that payment can be considered taxable income and when necessary, clearly communicate before participation that they will need to complete a W-9 before receiving compensation.

The following activities qualify for community compensation:

1. **Focus Groups:** Focus groups are designed to gather qualitative data in the form of participant experience, input, and feedback, to better inform work in our partnerships.
2. **Surveys:** Surveys are designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data to inform work in our partnerships.
3. **Interviews:** Interviews are designed to collect qualitative data in the form of participant experience, input, and ideas to inform our partnerships.
4. **Meetings:** Individuals may be invited to participate in partnership, school, and community

meetings to contribute their expertise.

5. **Presentations:** Community members may be invited to present or speak at events, board meetings, conferences, site visits, or in other capacities to represent their experience.
6. **Miscellaneous:** We may provide compensation for other activities not outlined above with permission from the CEO of the appropriate organization. Examples of other activities we may compensate for include reviewing and providing feedback in writing, video, or audio format, acting as co-designers and contributors of XYZ projects, translation, providing expert advice on XYZ programs, proposals, etc.

Fair compensation for community member participation is not the only thing team members should consider when engaging community members. The following are expectations for XYZ team members to build and maintain community member trust:

1. Compensation amounts should be determined and clearly communicated *before* participation or projects begin to prevent confusion or unpaid effort. Team members should be upfront and transparent about the processes for collecting W9 forms after $500 of compensation so both parties can plan accordingly. Additionally, participants should be informed before participation that all compensation can be considered as taxable income from the IRS and that XYZ/Promise Partnership cannot provide tax advice.
2. Compensation should be paid to the community member within 2 weeks of their participation.
3. It is essential to clarify the role and impact the community members will have in the activity they are engaging in. Items that should be clearly communicated to community members include responsibilities, expected deliverables, and timeline of the project which could be communicated in a verbal or written agreement such as (but not limited to) standard operating procedures (SOPs), scope of work agreements, and/or a memorandum of understanding. Importantly, reference the XYZ and let community partners know what level of collaboration they can expect from this project: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Shift Ownership
4. Consider the space you're inviting community members into. Does it value their lived experience and expertise? Will the community members feel ignored, devalued, or tokenized by participating?

*If a situation requires extended or more intensive engagement in approved activities listed above, community members will be compensated directly as an Independent Contractor in accordance with the standards detailed in the policy. They will also be required to complete a W9 in accordance with the guidelines listed above.

For information on the Community Compensation process, including how to request approval for a community compensation project, click here.