

Statement on the Somali Youth Development Fund Sources

We know that communities in Minnesota are concerned about the implications of new policies and executive orders targeting immigrant, Muslim, refugee, and American Indian communities and we are especially concerned about how these policies impact young people. We have heard firsthand from our partners in the Somali community about the impact they are already feeling from these policies and their worries about the future.

Historically Youthprise has made deep investments in the Somali community and we developed the Somali Youth Development Fund (SYDF) as a way to invest in Somali-led organizations. The SYDF totals \$1.5 million, and \$216,000 came from the Department of Justice as a part of a public/private commitment to support the SYDF. These funds were a part of the Building Community Resilience pilot project and were distributed to community organizations in 2016.

Youthprise was strict in ensuring these funds were deployed to support positive youth development initiatives such as tutoring and arts-based programs. However, we know there have been concerns regarding the sources of these funds. We understand that the current context has heightened community concerns around funding from such sources. To be clear there are no longer any federal funds in the SYDF.

As an organization that is committed to being responsive to community voice and needs we have decided that we will not seek or accept funding from sources focused on the anti-radicalization of Somali youth, including Countering Violent Extremism.

In this landscape we know it is more important than ever to invest in immigrant and refugee communities. In 2017, Youthprise is granting out \$700,000 through our Somali Youth Development Fund. 100% of funding for the current round of grants comes from a partnership with the State of Minnesota through the Department of Economic and Employment Development. **The RFP is open for this funding opportunity until April 1st, 2017.**

Youthprise is committed to continued investment in the Somali community. We are committed to celebrating Somali, Muslim, immigrant and refugee youth and sharing their stories and successes. We are committed to helping dismantle Islamophobia. We are committed to seeking funds aligned with our values rooted in positive youth development.

As always, we are committed to championing learning beyond the classroom so *all* Minnesota youth can thrive.