



NATIONAL FOSTER YOUTH INSTITUTE

Arkansas Child Welfare Systems & Youth Leadership Consultant

Contract Amount: \$15,000

Duration: 6 months

Location: Work from home in Arkansas (required)

Status: Independent Contractor

Reports to: CEO

Overview

The National Foster Youth Institute (NFYI) seeks an Arkansas-based consultant to lead a six-month environmental scan examining how lived experience experts and foster youth shape child welfare systems and policy in Arkansas. This scan will map the state's child welfare landscape, identify key stakeholders, and assess youth-driven systems change work in the state.

The consultant will work closely with NFYI national staff and potentially a part-time youth intern with lived experience in foster care to analyze the current child welfare advocacy landscape, synthesize data, elevate youth perspectives, and produce actionable recommendations that will inform NFYI and other stakeholders on the current child welfare and youth-driven system change landscape.

About Us

Founded in 2012, NFYI empowers current and former foster youth, their families, and communities to use their lived experiences to bring about systemic policy changes in the child welfare system nationwide.

We believe that meaningful reform begins with those who have experienced the system firsthand. By connecting current and former foster youth with elected representatives and policymakers, we amplify their voices to drive impactful change.

Our work engages current and former foster youth between 18 and 30 who organize around the issues that matter most — from housing and education to employment and healthcare. With support from NFYI staff, they identify their community's most urgent issues and bring together other foster youth, families, community leaders, organizations, and local partners to mobilize a powerful coalition for change.



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Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for:

- Conducting a statewide environmental scan of Arkansas's child welfare system, with attention to placement trends, permanency outcomes, transition-age youth experiences, and existing reform efforts
- Reviewing and synthesizing relevant quantitative data, policy reports, evaluations, and publicly available research
- Mapping key stakeholders, including state agencies, policymakers, service providers, philanthropy, advocacy organizations, and youth-serving entities
- Conducting interviews and/or small group conversations with decision-makers, providers, and community partners
- Supervising and collaborating with a part-time youth intern, integrating lived-experience insights into all phases of the work
- Identifying gaps, opportunities, and points of leverage for youth-led engagement and systems improvement
- Producing a concise written report and briefing that includes findings, themes, and recommendations for strengthening the youth-led systems change work.

Deliverables

- Stakeholder, issues, and systems landscape map
- Summary of key findings, gaps, and opportunities
- Recommendations for activities that could engage youth, community partners, and policymakers
- Final written environmental scan report, recommendations, and presentation/briefing
- Supervision and mentorship of an intern

Qualifications

- Demonstrated experience in child welfare, youth development, public policy, community organizing, or systems change work
- Strong knowledge of Arkansas's child welfare or youth-serving landscape
- Experience conducting research, environmental scans, or strategic assessments
- Ability to translate complex information into clear, actionable insights
- Commitment to centering lived experience and partnering authentically with youth
- Strong writing, synthesis, and facilitation skills
- Experience working in a remote environment
- Mentoring and/or supervisory experience
- Must be based in Arkansas



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To Apply

To apply, upload a cover letter and resume at <https://bit.ly/26nfyijobs>. In your cover letter, please include any experience you have with Arkansas' child welfare system and share one opportunity where you believe that lived experience experts or foster youth could meaningfully influence systems or policy. Applicants must currently be located in Arkansas; applications from individuals outside the state will not be considered.