**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT BEST PRACTICE COLLOQUIUM**

**from Innovation to Change**

**CALL FOR PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS**

**A colloquium hosted by Department of Social Development and the Office of Minister Albert Fritz**

1. **Introduction**

This is an invitation to academics and people working in youth development practice and policy to share both your theoretical and practical experiences with us. We are looking for thought leaders and risk takers who have thought of and implemented new ideas, approaches and perspectives in addressing the challenges youth (15 – 24 years) in our province face.

The intended Colloquium will be the inauguration of what will become an annual fixture in the youth development field in the Province and is open to funded and non-funded youth development programmes and initiatives. The colloquium is envisaged as a platform for debate, discussion and exchanges over all aspects of youth development in the Province one year after the adoption of the Provincial Youth Development Strategy and the DSD Youth Development Strategy (Hereafter referred to as the YDS). The Colloquium is an opportunity for critical engagement on elements of the strategic challenges and issues facing evidence-based youth development.

1. **Objectives of the Colloquium**

* To provide a platform for engagement around new, innovative and proven ideas and approaches in the field of youth development;
* To critically examine youth development theory and practice inside and outside of government with specific focus on best practices in evidence-based youth development;
* To identify the strategic high level challenges facing evidence-based youth development practice inside and outside of government;
* To create opportunities for engagement and networking for all youth development stakeholders;

**3. Colloquium Methodology**

The Colloquium will be methodologically organised around specific thematic areas- the proposed themes are detailed further in this concept note. Organisations/individuals wanting to present their ideas around specific themes are requested to submit a Presentation Abstract of no longer than 1 page that outlines the key elements of their proposed presentations. A committee will evaluate all submissions and approve those submissions that address the requirements as set out in this call for abstracts.

Presenting organisations/individuals are requested to focus on the key areas outlined in this Call for Abstracts and to avoid using the occasion primarily to market and punt their organisational and programmatic profiles.

**4. Colloquium Themes**

Presentations are sought that correspond with the following thematic areas:

**4.1 Youth Transitions and Change**

Young people have to contend with a range of complex, difficult, disruptive and often simultaneous transitions. They often lack the services, opportunities and support needed and are also deemed ‘at risk’ when they fail to cope with these processes adequately. This thematic area calls for presentations that engage with the key challenges and best practice innovations in relation to young people undergoing various processes of transition and change. Of particular interest are presentations that deal with the challenges of the role of the family as a key institution in the lives of youth. Presentations that provide new insights into processes of youth transitions and change of youth in gangs and ‘hard to reach youth’ are also welcomed.

**4.2 Youth Life Chances and opportunity Pathways**

Youth Development is a process that involves a multiplicity of opportunities, diverse avenues and interlinked pathways that enable young people to acquire the necessary academic, vocational, social, life, and resiliency competencies that form the core of the long –term outcomes of the YDS. Presentations in this thematic area must provide a multiplicity of linked, supported and outcomes based Pathways for young people. Two important sub-themes around which presentations are welcomed are: the school to work transition and linking young people to the world of work and education (with specific focus on NEETS - young people not in Employment, Education or Training).

**4.3 Youth Leadership Development**

Youth leadership development is central to meeting the long term challenges posed by the YDS. Of particular interest are presentations that deal with identity and belonging; ensuring that youth are able to identify with positive influences in their lives which promote a sense of belonging and agency for leadership and active citizenship.

**4.4 Rural and Farm Youth**

The situation of youth living in rural and farm areas demands special attention. The contextual specificities of young people in rural areas and on farms therefore demand a specialised focus that addresses their unique needs and challenges.

**5. KEY AREAS TO CONSIDER**

* Innovation and new perspectives in conception and design of initiative
* Theory of Change and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Assignable/Achievable, Realistic, Time-related) objectives
* Organizational and governance structures for effective management and leadership
* Implementation, replication and scale
* Monitoring and evaluation of programmes
* Finance/sustainability models

**Deadline for submission of Abstracts**

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is 24 October 2014 at 14:00. All submissions can be addressed to Ms Farhana Parker at Farhana.Parker@westerncape.gov.za or please contact at 021 483 8997.