



## **ViiV Healthcare Announces New Positive Action Project in U.S. for MSM Youth, Calls for Proposals**

*Grants will fund innovative social and digital tools to engage and empower younger populations*

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**Research Triangle Park, NC – June 22, 2015** – ViiV Healthcare today announced the Positive Action MSM Youth Engagement Initiative, a new project to address critical gaps in culturally appropriate and innovative communication methods that engage and empower hard-to-reach young Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) in the United States. Through the initiative, ViiV Healthcare will fund creative social and digital strategies developed by young MSM (ages 18-29) in collaboration with nonprofit sexual health or AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) to increase sexual health knowledge within their own communities.

“Earlier this year, ViiV Healthcare committed to expanding its Positive Action programme to focus additional resources on the MSM community,” said Michael N. Joyner, Director of Positive Action and Patient Advocacy at ViiV Healthcare. “We are excited to announce the Positive Action MSM Youth Engagement Initiative. Through this effort, we aim to help sexual health organizations and ASOs communicate critical information to young MSM using language and tools that are a natural fit with their daily lives.”

The initiative will support strategies that make use of social and digital tools such as mobile technology, photo sharing platforms and online video sharing to link those in need to culturally appropriate health information designed by and for young MSM. Grants of up to \$50,000 per year, for two years, will be provided to selected partnerships between young MSM and existing nonprofit sexual health organizations and ASOs.

“Young MSM have unique perspectives and are in the best position to inform, design and lead projects within their own communities,” explained Quoc Lam, outgoing HealthyU Program Manager at Nashville CARES, a community organization focused on education, advocacy and support for those at-risk for, or living with, HIV. “They know the language, tools and practices that will effectively engage MSM youth when it comes to this very important topic.”

Gay, bisexual and other MSM represent approximately two percent of the U.S. population, yet are the most severely affected by HIV, according to the CDC.<sup>i</sup> In 2010, young gay and bisexual men accounted for 72 percent of new HIV infections among all persons aged 13 to 24, and 30 percent of new infections among all gay and bisexual men.<sup>i</sup> Engaging and empowering this overwhelmingly affected age group is the primary purpose of the new program.

The Positive Action MSM Youth Engagement Initiative is a U.S.-focused project of ViiV Healthcare’s broader Positive Action MSM and Transgender Programme, a global programme dedicated to supporting vulnerable communities and minimizing the stigma and discrimination they face on a daily basis due to sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and/or HIV status.



**To be eligible to apply for grant funding through the Positive Action MSM Youth Engagement Initiative, projects must:**

- Increase the sexual health knowledge of young MSM
- Extend the reach and capacity of community-based organizations to engage young MSM in program design and delivery
- Encourage young MSM to proactively engage with service providers that can help improve their health and well-being

The initiative will prioritize projects that are designed and led primarily by MSM youth in partnership with nonprofit sexual health organizations or ASOs in the U.S.

Positive Action MSM Youth Engagement Initiative funding proposals are now being accepted. Completed request for proposals must be received by 5 p.m. ET on July 24, 2015. For more information and to complete a request, please visit: <https://www.viivhealthcare.com/community-partnerships/focus-on-msm-and-transgender-populations/msm-youth.aspx>.

**About ViiV Healthcare's Positive Action Programme**

Positive Action was created in 1992 as the first pharmaceutical company programme to support communities affected by HIV and AIDS. ViiV Healthcare is proud to continue the Positive Action programme and its valuable work with these communities. Positive Action works with those communities most vulnerable to HIV disease, including youth, girls and women, sex workers, gay men, men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender people, injecting drug users (IDU), the homeless and the incarcerated. Our projects range across education, prevention, care and treatment-related activity such as treatment literacy and community/clinical engagement.

For more information about Positive Action, please visit: <http://www.viivhealthcare.com/community-partnerships/the-viiv-healthcare-effect.aspx>.

**About ViiV Healthcare**

ViiV Healthcare is a global specialist HIV company established in November 2009 by GlaxoSmithKline (LSE: GSK) and Pfizer (NYSE: PFE) dedicated to delivering advances in treatment and care for people living with HIV. Shionogi joined as a 10 percent shareholder in October 2012. The company's aim is to take a deeper and broader interest in HIV/AIDS than any company has done before and take a new approach to deliver effective and new HIV medicines, as well as support communities affected by HIV. For more information on the company, its management, portfolio, pipeline and commitment, please visit [www.viivhealthcare.com](http://www.viivhealthcare.com).

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<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV Among Gay and Bisexual Men Fact Sheet: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/HIV-MSM-english-508.pdf>. Accessed February 10, 2015.