

Workforce Development Initiative

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Asheville Home Builders Association Education Foundation

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Application Form

Question Group

Buncombe County requests proposals for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

Buncombe County has been awarded \$50,733,290 in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (Recovery Funding), as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. To date, Buncombe County has awarded projects totaling \$23,093,499, leaving a balance of \$27,639,791 available to award.

Visit <http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding> for details.

This infusion of federal resources is intended to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Buncombe County is committed to investing these funds in projects that:

- Align to county strategic plan and community priorities
- Support equitable outcomes for most impacted populations
- Leverage and align with other governmental funding sources
- Make best use of this one-time infusion of resources
- Have a lasting impact

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

[Click here for the full terms and conditions of the RFP](#)

Organization Type*

Nonprofit

Nonprofit documentation

If nonprofit, attach IRS Determination Letter or other proof of nonprofit status.

IRS Determination Letter AHBAEF.pdf

Name of Project.*

Workforce Development Initiative

New/Updated Proposal*

Is this a new project proposal or an updated version of a proposal submitted during the earlier (July 2021) Recovery Funding RFP?

New project proposal

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$327,000.00

Category*

Please select one:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging/Older Adults
- Business Support/Economic Development
- Environmental/Climate
- Homelessness
- K-12 Education
- Infrastructure and/or Broadband
- Mental Health/Substance Use
- NC Pre-K Expansion
- Workforce

Workforce

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

Our mission is “supporting the next generation of construction professionals through classroom and hands-on education.” Our Workforce Development Initiative pulls talent into an industry that is lucrative, ubiquitous and in dire need of skilled labor.

The classroom component awards scholarships to students in programs like building science, solar, plumbing or HVAC. Beyond funds, recipients are invited to events of our sister organization, Builders Association of the Blue Ridge Mountains (BABRM; formerly Asheville Home Builders Association). Students then network, meeting mentors and potential business contacts.

We also support community partners with funding, materials and volunteers. The City of Asheville’s BuildOut program is our current partner running a shed-build project and bringing youths to City property for hands-on build days. We are requesting one-time and annual money for our community partners fund, which would donate to BuildOut and 1-2 new projects selected by our board.

Project Plan*

Explain how the project will be structured and implemented, including timeframe.

Our annual scholarship program begins with an application release in spring, with a May deadline. We promote this among area high schools, colleges and other organizations. Our board then reviews applications and votes on winners and scholarship amounts. Winners are notified in June and invited to be recognized at BABRM's summer "After Hours" networking event. Scholars are subsequently invited to attend more BABRM events and volunteer opportunities, in hopes that they meet potential mentors, business contacts or employers.

We are seeking four years of scholarship funds to be allocated among 3-5 students per year. We currently have \$6,800, which can be put toward 2022 scholarships, but thereafter, we would like to increase our scholarship amounts.

Our main community partner BuildOut is currently implementing a shed-building project, where two youth teams will build mini sheds over many work sessions this summer. Starting with a set of simple plans, participants will measure, cut and assemble various materials, practicing hands-on carpentry basics under adult supervision. Once the shell is finished, the youths can bring their creativity to interior design, decorating and painting. This allows participants to try multiple types of hands-on work and see what they like. They also get a tangible result to be proud of at the end. The finished sheds will be showcased and raffled off at a community event this fall, with funds going back to the Foundation. We will also have tabling games like fastener sorting to draw more attention.

In 2021, BuildOut also traveled to 13 sites around Asheville, serving lower income neighborhoods with free hands-on building activities like free-form scrap wood projects. Some materials were diverted from the landfill from construction sites of BABRM members.

We have given BuildOut a one-time donation, but we want to scale up this pilot partnership. By late 2022, we would grant BuildOut a one-time capital investment fund to purchase tools, create an inventory of building materials and fasteners, purchase supplies like shelving and plastic bins, and acquire any incidental items to upfit this traveling community attraction. On an annual basis, we would like to fund BuildOut's ongoing materials, gas, tool maintenance/replacement, and other operational expenses. Labor is already paid and managed by the City, but the program could do much more if outfitted properly.

Currently our scholarship program is implemented by staff of our sister organization BABRM, and our board oversees community partners like BuildOut. Moving forward, the Foundation seeks to add a full time staff person to coordinate scholarships and the logistics of community partnerships, in addition to other duties. This person would work from BABRM offices and become a key liaison, linking the foundation with BABRM's large network and many resources.

Statement of Need*

Describe the need that this project will address. Include data to demonstrate the need, and cite the source of the data.

Despite higher pay than many industries, construction is facing long-term and worsening labor shortages. The 2008 housing crash caused a mass exodus of talent at all levels, and the workforce never recovered. The pandemic added strain, bringing labor shortages to a record level, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

A 2021 NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index Survey showed a staggering percentage of single-family home builders experiencing shortages of direct labor. The greatest need was in framing crews (86%), rough carpenters (86%), finish carpenters (85%), plumbers (77%), masons (77%), concrete workers (76%), electricians (76%) and HVAC workers (74%).

The same survey showed a more dire need for subcontractors, with the vast majority of builders reporting a lack of subs in almost every trade. The greatest needs were framing crews (94%), rough carpenters (93%), finish carpenters (90%), masons (84%), plumbers (83%), concrete workers (83%), electricians (82%) and drywallers (81%).

A 2021 Housing Needs Assessment of WNC conducted by Bowen National Research found troubling statistics on Buncombe County: Among 15,074 multi-family rentals surveyed, the overall vacancy rate was 1.2%, while a healthy rate is 4-6%. Among 2,344 subsidized multi-family rentals, zero were vacant, and a waitlist of 1,003 households had formed. Even market rate rentals had waitlists, illustrating pent up demand at all income levels. From 2020 to 2025, Buncombe County will add 3,380 renter households, further tipping the imbalance.

The same report explained a concerning ripple effect. Of 27 employers surveyed, 20 said housing adversely impacts their business. Affordability, availability and location topped respondents' list of problematic factors. Employers cannot attract and retain workers that will have nowhere to live.

Our industry is called upon to solve one of the biggest issues Buncombe County residents are facing. But we need new talent to make real progress.

[Link to COVID-19*](#)

Identify a health or economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency, describe the nature and extent of that harm, and explain how the use of this funding would address such harm.

The pandemic exacerbated construction industry's woes in many ways:

Material supplier labor fell sick, slowing production. This created long lead times for most products, with some multiple months out.

It also led to unprecedented volatility in lumber and other costs. This complicated financing, contracts, timelines and ultimately home prices.

As the population stayed home en masse, DIY projects surged in popularity. This exacerbated supply chain issues and costs.

Working from home and other personal changes caused migration into North Carolina, leading to greater housing demand. Buncombe County is expected to keep growing, and we will need a roof over each head.

As other industries switched to remote work, construction professionals continued in-person. Many were exposed to COVID-19 and experienced sickness or death.

Long-term unemployment benefits allowed many people to stay home to avoid COVID-19, which further reduced the labor pool.

Housing prices skyrocketed as a result of these changes and supply/demand imbalances. At a time when housing mattered most, it became inaccessible for many, especially those at lower incomes.

Our scholarships directly support motivated locals who are already on a path of professional development. These individuals should be able to continue their studies without cost burden, especially at a time of inflation.

BuildOut intercepts people before they even know they are interested in construction. It creates positive impressions as youths figure out their direction in life. It is also simply a free, outdoor reprieve for parents and antsy kids, near public housing.

Together, these efforts bring more people into construction careers.

It's difficult to enumerate all of the ways that COVID-19 disrupted the building industry. However, it's evident that we need an infusion of new talent to untangle the mess. Grant funding would help us cultivate skilled professionals, who could spend their careers bettering Buncombe County housing.

Population Served*

Define the population to be served by this project, including volume and demographic characteristics of those served.

Our scholarships do not have demographic eligibility criteria, so funds may be awarded to any student of merit in our advertising region (across WNC at schools like Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Warren Wilson College and area high schools). However, we believe the construction industry needs a more diverse and inclusive workforce, so, we are striving to attract more females and minorities through advertising placement and designs (graphics featuring females, for example).

We are seeing an uptick in interest among females. One previous scholarship winner (the author writing this proposal) was an aspiring builder. Award funds covered her cost of classes, which helped her purchase a work van and scale up her business. Our program provided her with an instant network of successful builders offering advice and employment. She earned her general contractors license and has since built four, green built certified, two-bedroom apartments in Buncombe County with plans to build net-zero, "missing middle" housing next. She is also now a board member. We want to channel resources to people like this who need a boost to create lasting results.

BuildOut's shed program will repeatedly reach the two groups of student builders, who will largely be pre-teens and teens. Showcasing the sheds at a community event, we stand to reach thousands more attendees. In 2021, BuildOut's pilot season of traveling events reached an estimated 724 K-5 children and 80 teens (30-60 attendees per event), at 13 City properties around Asheville. These events largely served lower income neighborhoods, often near or attracting residents of Asheville's subsidized housing projects.

In the long-term, our efforts most affect local people seeking housing. The pandemic disproportionately affected housing of lower income individuals, who already had fewer options. These populations will benefit as we restore our workforce and create more housing options.

Results*

Describe the proposed impact of the project. List at least 3 performance measures that will be tracked and reported. If possible, include baselines and goals for each performance measure.

The impact of funding for this project will be the strengthening of our scholarship program (i.e. donating to more students and giving greater award amounts) and growth of our community outreach (bigger, better projects supported).

Moving forward, our metrics of success will be as follows:

1. We want to increase the number of scholarship applications to 10 in 2022, and attract four more applicants annually thereafter. We want to create awareness about funds and competition to further motivate academic excellence at area schools.

2. We aim to increase the percentage of women or minority applicants to 25% in 2022, and increase that figure by 5% annually thereafter.

3. We want to see a healthy percentage of recipients graduating from their program within 3 years of receiving our funding. Our goal is 60% for 2022 winners (data collected in 2025), and an additional 5% increase annually thereafter, up to 80% maximum.

4. We want to see more recipients involved with our sister organization BABRM or the Education Foundation, both of which advocate for positive advances in construction. Our goal is 20% of recipients as members of one or both organizations within 3 years of funding, with a 5% annual increase thereafter.

5. We want to see BuildOut increase its hands-on building events' reach to 1,500 people within the first year of funding, with an increase of 250 more people reached each subsequent year

Evaluation*

Describe the data collection, analysis, and quality assurance measures you will use to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes.

To track scholarship data, we have established a database that includes recipient name, year of award, date of birth, gender, minority status, major, graduation status, BABRM membership, foundation board membership, volunteerism, email and phone number. Additional data points may be added to comply with federal requirements or Buncombe County goals.

Moving forward, BuildOut will be asked to track the reach of initiatives through attendance counts, locations and qualitative feedback.

In the past, our scholarship and community outreach was conducted on a limited basis by BABRM staff. However, we recently formed a separate 501(c)3 in order to be eligible for grant funding and establish our own team and systems. BABRM has an expanding network of hundreds of construction professionals and a calendar of popular annual events. As a sister organization, we will be integrated into these resources, which will multiply our impact. To capitalize, we need a dedicated staff person fully focused on our mission.

A portion of our requested funding would establish this full time role. In addition to overseeing data tracking and federal funding compliance, the new hire would establish a library of promotional materials, establish a social media presence, create an annual grant application calendar, liaise with BABRM to gain full advantage of available resources, fulfill logistics of the scholarship and community partnership programs, seek tabling and outreach opportunities, cultivate a pool of volunteers for the foundation and complete additional duties as directed by the board. Our board would oversee the role, which we envision as a permanent one. We need funding for the initial years of operation, but this role would eventually be paid through a portion of new grants received.

If we are unable to receive full funding from Buncombe County, we are able to scale down our operations and programs. However, this will proportionally affect the speed and level of results we will achieve.

Equity Impact*

How will this effort help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery? How are the root causes and/or disproportionate impacts of inequities addressed?

An equitable COVID-19 recovery involves funneling resources to individuals who are struggling. Our scholarships are typically going to youths who are preparing to enter an economy and employment landscape that has been shaken by COVID-19. The construction sector offers solid opportunities for these students to stay in Buncombe County, earn incomes above the area median and most importantly, contribute to the advancement of their own communities through the built environment.

Plumbers and HVAC technicians are booked out months in advance. Carpenters can name their hourly rate and get it. Our organization can connect individuals without the means to pay for a four-year degree with prosperous futures. In doing so, we will benefit the neighbors of these individuals, who will reliably need home repairs, renovations and new housing. Seed funding for schooling can unleash decades of professional productivity, attacking the root cause of the housing crisis to create lasting improvements.

It is important to note that the housing supply crunch has disproportionately affected lower income households, who are facing increased competition for lower priced rentals and homes for sale. Builders of subsidized housing projects and luxury homes alike are competing to utilize the same limited pool of skilled workers. We believe that by infusing new talent into the workforce, we will alleviate the pressures on both types of housing, thus mitigating the price hikes and benefiting everyone. Construction offers a rare opportunity to assist impacted communities while also employing them.

As a final note, the shortage of skilled labor is placing extreme pressure on those who are left in the industry. A building boom means that they must achieve more productivity with less help, all while dealing with increased turnover and chaos around them. It affects mental health, and we are at risk of burning out the remaining few if relief does not come.

Project Partners*

Identify any subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, indicate:

- 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor and;
- 2.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.

Also, list non-funded key partners critical to project.

We do not have any subcontractors, other than a bookkeeper.

One key non-funded partner is the Builders Association of the Blue Ridge Mountains, formerly Asheville Home Builders Association. Our nonprofit foundation was born as a spinoff of this organization, with a specialized focus on education and workforce development. We enjoy healthy cross-pollination, with all Foundation board members being business members of BABRM. BABRM is in the process of completing a merger, which will greatly expand the organization's reach in WNC. However, with BABRM staff focused on successfully merging and serving its new membership base, we have reached a natural time for the Foundation to establish its own independent staff to carry out operations. BABRM will not carry out a percentage of the scope of work directly. It will simply support the Foundation with access to existing resources and events.

BuildOut is also a key partner. This is a City-run program that already has an employee. However, since this is a relatively new program that needed to prove its concept, it has not been properly upfitted to best serve the community. With proper resources in place, BuildOut could stop seeking materials and supplies and focus on increasing the frequency and quality of hands-on build events.

Capacity*

Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your organization or department as it relates to capacity for delivering the proposed project and managing federal funds.

Our board is comprised of Kat McReynolds (owner and GC at Green Room Builders; previous scholarship recipient), Debbie Odom (project manager at Deltec Homes), Megan Carroll (executive director of BABRM), Gus Adams (owner and GC at Adams & Adams Construction; VP of BABRM executive committee; regional VP for Region X at the NC Home Builders Association), Smith McAuley (owner and GC at WSM Craft). Our board president Brandon Bryant (owner and GC at Red Tree Builders) is also president elect at the NC Home Builders Association, giving Buncombe County a voice at the state level.

As a group, we are extremely well connected, influential and natural leaders in our building community. Each of us is driven to welcome newcomers into an industry that has helped us make a living and support our families in Buncombe County. We have all experienced the upheaval of our industry in recent years and desire more stability through a solid workforce. We see a need, and we are well positioned to affect change that benefits multiple stakeholders for decades to come.

Most board members are small business owners, so we are accustomed to setting goals, tracking progress and achieving results by managing complex processes. However, as a relatively new organization, we have not handled federal funds. We would like to take advantage of capacity building by training our new staff member to comply with federal funds rules. Not only will this aid us in this round of funding, but it will prepare our nonprofit for future funding from various sources.

Budget*

Provide a detailed project budget including all proposed project revenues and expenditures, including explanations and methodology. For all revenue sources, list the funder and denote whether funds are confirmed or pending. For project expenses, denote all capital vs. operating costs, and reflect which specific expenses are proposed to be funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Recovery-Funds-EF.xlsx

Special Considerations*

Provide any other information that might assist the County in its selection.

We are happy to answer any outstanding questions.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- IRS Determination Letter AHBAEF.pdf
- Recovery-Funds-EF.xlsx

IRS DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
CINCINNATI OH 45999-0023

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ASHEVILLE HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION
% BRANDON BRYANT
14 MIMIDIS LN STE A
SWANNANOA NC 28778

001518

Date of this notice: 03-26-2019

Employer Identification Number:
83-4068438

Form: SS-4

Number of this notice: CP 575 F

For assistance you may call us at:
1-800-829-4933

IF YOU WRITE, ATTACH THE
STUB OF THIS NOTICE.

WE ASSIGNED YOU AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Thank you for applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). We assigned you EIN 83-4068438. This EIN will identify you, your business accounts, tax returns, and documents, even if you have no employees. Please keep this notice in your permanent records.

When filing tax documents, payments, and related correspondence, it is very important that you use your EIN and complete name and address exactly as shown above. Any variation may cause a delay in processing, result in incorrect information in your account, or even cause you to be assigned more than one EIN. If the information is not correct as shown above, please make the correction using the attached tear-off stub and return it to us.

When you submitted your application for an EIN, you checked the box indicating you are a non-profit organization. Assigning an EIN does not grant tax-exempt status to non-profit organizations. Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, has details on the application process, as well as information on returns you may need to file. To apply for recognition of tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), organizations must complete a Form 1023-series application for recognition. All other entities should file Form 1024 if they want to request recognition under Section 501(a).

Nearly all organizations claiming tax-exempt status must file a Form 990-series annual information return (Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-PF) or notice (Form 990-N) beginning with the year they legally form, even if they have not yet applied for or received recognition of tax-exempt status.

Unless a filing exception applies to you (search www.irs.gov for Annual Exempt Organization Return: Who Must File), you will lose your tax-exempt status if you fail to file a required return or notice for three consecutive years. We start calculating this three-year period from the tax year we assigned the EIN to you. If that first tax year isn't a full twelve months, you're still responsible for submitting a return for that year. If you didn't legally form in the same tax year in which you obtained your EIN, contact us at the phone number or address listed at the top of this letter.

For the most current information on your filing requirements and other important information, visit www.irs.gov/charities.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- * Keep a copy of this notice in your permanent records. This notice is issued only one time and IRS will not be able to generate a duplicate copy for you. You may give a copy of this document to anyone asking for proof of your EIN.
- * Use this EIN and your name exactly as they appear at the top of this notice on all your federal tax forms.
- * Refer to this EIN on your tax-related correspondence and documents.
- * Provide future officers of your organization with a copy of this notice.

Your name control associated with this EIN is ASHE. You will need to provide this information, along with your EIN, if you file your returns electronically.

If you have questions about your EIN, you can contact us at the phone number or address listed at the top of this notice. If you write, please tear off the stub at the bottom of this notice and include it with your letter. Thank you for your cooperation.



001518

Keep this part for your records.

CP 575 (Rev. 1-2016)

Return this part with any correspondence so we may identify your account. Please correct any errors in your name or address.

CP 575 F

0509907387

Your Telephone Number () Best Time to Call

DATE OF THIS NOTICE: 03-26-2019
EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 83-4068438
FORM: SS-4 NOBOD

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
CINCINNATI OH 45999-0023

ASHEVILLE HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION
EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC
% BRANDON BRYANT
14 MIMIDIS LN STE A
SWANNANOA NC 28778



Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Proposed Project Budget

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Organization Name: | Asheville Home Builders Association Education Foundation |
| Project Name: | Workforce Development Initiative |
| Amount Requested: | 327,000 |

| Proposed Project Revenue Funder | Amount | Confirmed or Pending? | Notes |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds | \$ 327,000.00 | Pending | |
| Private Donations Balance | \$ 6,800.00 | Confirmed | Business and personal donations balance to date |
| List other sources here | | | |
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| Total | \$ 333,800.00 | | |

| Proposed Project Expenses | Proposed Recovery Funds | Other Funds | Total | Capital or Operating Expense? | Notes |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Scholarship Dispersements | \$ 60,000.00 | \$ 6,800.00 | \$ 66,800.00 | Operating Expense | \$15,000/year among 3-5 students; 4 years of funding |
| BuildOut Initial Investment, 2022 | \$ 20,000.00 | | \$ 20,000.00 | Capital | One time: Upfit program with new tools, materials, fasteners, tables, chairs, shelving, plastic bins |
| Annual Partner/BuildOut Fund, 2023 - 2026 | \$ 40,000.00 | | \$ 40,000.00 | Operating Expense | \$10,000 annually; 4 years of funding; cover ongoing materials, gas, tool maintenance/replacement; increased frequency of events + new community partners |
| Education Foundation Administrative Personnel | \$ 192,000.00 | | \$ 192,000.00 | Operating Expense | Annual salary of \$48,000; 4 years of funding |
| Office supplies | \$ 7,000.00 | | \$ 7,000.00 | Operating Expense | Purchase table, linens, graphics, iPad for outreach, printer and other office items. |
| Mileage Reimbursement | \$ 8,000.00 | | \$ 8,000.00 | Operating Expense | \$2,000/year for outreach travel; 4 years of funding |
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