

Buncombe County Teamship: An equitable, team-based approach to internships

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

District C

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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. 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](#)

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds*

Name of Project.

Buncombe County Teamship: An equitable, team-based approach to internships

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$70,000.00

Recovery Fund Eligible Category*

Please select one:

Services for disproportionately impacted communities

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

In March of 2020, many hard-earned high school internships were canceled because of COVID. Valuable opportunities for students to get real work experience, develop needed skills, and build professional networks disappeared. It is important that Buncombe County schools and students, particularly in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID, receive assistance to rapidly ramp up internship

opportunities through a new model that is more equitable and more focused on the skills most sought after by employers. This model is called Buncombe County Teamship, a team-based internship through which teams of students are coached through the process of solving real problems for local businesses.

For this project, District C will train 6 educators from 6 Buncombe County Title I high schools to implement Teamship experiences for their students during the grant period and for years afterward.

Project Plan*

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

Through Buncombe County Teamship, students will have the opportunity to solve real problems for local businesses during the school day. This innovative internship experience will be more equitable, will prepare students with the competencies most sought after by area employers, and will provide students with the coaching they need to excel. To ensure high quality and sustainable implementation, this project will build capacity in Buncombe County high schools in three phases.

Phase 1. January-March: 6 educators train to become District C Certified Coaches.

Phase 2. March - June: These 6 coaches prepare for and co-coach a summer Teamship experience for 24 Buncombe County students, with intensive support from the District C team.

Phase 3. July - December: These 6 coaches plan and coach a Teamship experience at their respective high schools with the goal of enrolling 16 students at each school in the fall semester of 2022 (96 students total).

In the years following the grant period, these 6 coaches will continue to run Teamship programming, reaching a minimum of 96 Buncombe County students each year.

Phase 1, District C Certified Coaches: With the help of our Project Partners, we will recruit 6 educators from Title I high schools in Buncombe County for the District C Coaching Institute. The Coaching Institute has three steps to certification:

Do it -- (January 2022). Learn the Teamship model by doing Teamship as a student. Work with a team of educators to solve a real business problem for a local business.

See it -- (January-February 2022). Observe student teams and coaches in action. Watch pre-recorded "game tape" and analyze team dynamics, student interactions, and coaching moves.

Get certified -- (February-March 2022). Complete a 75-minute coaching assessment. Coach parts of the Teamship experience, analyze student teams at work, and demonstrate your mastery of the coaching philosophy.

Phase 2, Co-Coach Summer Teamship: With the support of the District C team, these 6 coaches will implement their first Buncombe County Teamship. They will coach 24 Buncombe County students through the process of solving a real problem for a Buncombe County business. Here's how it works:

Diversify: District C groups students into diverse teams of 3 or 4 students each.

Launch: Students meet their teammates and coach, start to build their team dynamic, and interview their business to understand the root problem.

Solve: With support from their coach, teams interview additional stakeholders and create a solution for the business partner.

Pitch: Teams propose solutions to their business partner and answer questions in a live session attended by community members.

Phase 3, Coach In-School Teamship Experience: With the support of District C, coaches will offer Teamship for at least 16 students at their respective schools. Coaches will decide if their Teamship experience is offered as part of an existing course that they already teach or through a brand new course.

Statement of Need*

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

Teamship provides students with the skills most needed by today's employers: teamwork and problem solving (Asheville Area Chamber et al., 2018). "Our latest research reveals that ...soft skills dominated the top four core competencies global executives seek.... [A] constantly evolving landscape... requires individuals who can communicate effectively [and] apply problem-solving, critical-thinking, ... teamwork, and organizational [skills]" (IBM, 2019). The gap between the importance of these skills and relative preparation is alarming. An AACU (2018) survey finds a 40 percentage point gap in importance versus preparedness for critical thinking in recent college graduates and a 37 point gap for working effectively in teams. Educational programming has done better to prepare students with the technical skills necessary for an evolving economy, but lacks effective and equitable models for the messy work of solving problems in teams. The District C Coaching Institute equips educators with a model to prepare their students for team-based problem solving.

Teamship also meets the need to provide equitable access to internships. Hispanic and Black students have the lowest rate of participation (53.3% and 59.5% respectively). This inequity is critical, as professional connections made through internships lead to increases in job offers (Hecht, 2016). Many obstacles stand in the way including the need to work a paid job after-school, difficulty finding opportunities, and lack of access to transportation (Hora, 2020). District C designed Teamship to be implemented during the school day which means:

Students who need to prioritize work or family responsibilities after school aren't excluded from Teamship opportunities.

Transportation and technology are not a barrier as most schools provide both.

Students do not need to rely on family networks or social capital to secure internships because Teamship engages businesses from District C's network and brings them to students.

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.

Glassdoor's findings in the spring of 2020 clearly indicate the early impact of COVID on internships: "Over 1 in 2 U.S. internship openings on Glassdoor have been closed since the coronavirus crisis began in the U.S." While those numbers are rebounding, we need to ensure support for communities disproportionately impacted by COVID, including Black, Hispanic, and low-income communities (Hilsenrath, 2021, NCDHHS, 2022). Support for this project will build capacity in Buncombe County Title I high schools to offer Teamship, thereby accelerating the recovery from internships lost due to COVID and bringing this opportunity to high school students most affected.

This project will also address an increased need to support social-emotional learning (SEL). Experts on child development have described COVID as an "unprecedented year of disruptions, stress, and trauma" for students (EdWeek, 2021). Experts have provided a clear set of recommendations to support students through SEL including the following from XQ Super School's recent report (2021):

Use class time to build social connections.

Coach strategies to manage stress.

Create opportunities for students to add value to their community.

Coach strategies for peer-to-peer support.

Teamship, a model designed to add real value to local businesses through problem solving, incorporates each of these recommendations. For example, Buncombe County Teamship students will build meaningful social connections and a culture of peer support by learning how to foster psychological safety. "Google researchers found that individuals on teams with higher psychological safety are ... more likely to harness the power of diverse ideas from their teammates ... and they're rated as effective twice as often by executives."

(Rosovsky, 2015). Teamship students will also learn how to manage the stresses of solving complex problems in teams with tools to help them take time to reflect and maintain productive levels of urgency (not unproductive stress).

Population Served*

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

This funding would be used to reach Buncombe County high school educators and students disproportionately impacted by COVID. We will recruit a diverse group of educators from Title I high schools and businesses in Buncombe County with the help of our Project Partners. Business recruitment will focus on historically underutilized businesses (for-profit, nonprofit) across all sectors and sizes of business. Teamship is intentionally designed to bring diverse, dynamic, and innovative people together.

In the first year, this grant would support training 6 coaches, offering Teamship to 120 students, and solving problems for 15 local businesses. Funds from this grant will be used to ensure high quality and sustainable implementation of Teamship beyond the first year. Therefore, in each subsequent year, based on the assumption that each coach will continue to offer Buncombe County Teamship to 16 students, 96 new students will solve problems for 12 new businesses each year. Given the excitement we have seen from coaches, students, and businesses, we anticipate these numbers will be even higher. As we reach more students, District C's support of schools, coaches, and businesses will remain with ongoing access to the District C Playbook, professional development workshops and events, access to District C's business partner network, and an annual review to discuss impact and opportunities for improvement.

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.

Teamship will impact Buncombe County by accelerating the recovery from internships lost due to COVID and bringing this opportunity to high school students most affected. Buncombe County Teamship will have a lasting impact well beyond the grant period, as the grant funding will be used to build capacity to implement and sustain Teamship programming in Buncombe County Title I high schools.

This project will track 3 impact measures:

Students Reached: When coaches implement Teamship, they complete an Activity Report. Included in their Activity Report is the number of students who participated in each Teamship cycle. Our goal is for all 6 coaches recruited to become certified, successfully implement a school-based Teamship experience within their first year of certification, and offer ongoing Teamship experiences for a minimum of 16 students per year.

Student-Reported Satisfaction: When students complete a Teamship cycle, they complete a survey that asks: 1) Based on your experience during this last problem cycle, how likely are you to recommend Teamship to a friend or peer? 2) What is the reason for your rating above? The first question is based on a 0-10 score, 10 being the highest. Our goal is for coaches to maintain an average score of 8.0 from their students.

Business-Reported Satisfaction: Businesses also complete a survey including the following questions: 1) How likely are you to recommend a Teamship partnership to another business leader or organization? 2) What is the reason for your rating above? 3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: My experience with Teamship provided value to me and my business/organization. 4) Do you plan to implement any part of the solutions that were presented to you? Questions 1 and 3 are based on a 0-10

score, 10 being the highest. Our goal is for businesses to report an average score of 8.0. Our goal for question 4 is an average of 80% respond “yes.”

Evaluation*

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

Best practices in program evaluation include not just collection of data but also use of (or discussion of) data to improve practice on an ongoing basis (University of Kansas, 2021). In addition to collecting the data described in the Results section above, District C conducts an annual review of an Impact Report with each school and each coach to discuss progress toward our goals and provide any support coaches need to make program improvements. This report includes the data described above as well as examples of qualitative data collected from students and businesses. These annual reviews also create opportunities for schools and coaches to use the data to determine steps for improvement and for the District C team to provide additional insights or recommendations or to connect the school and/or coach with other District C members who have relevant experience, expertise, or perspective.

An ongoing discussion of data will also take place with Project Partners through (optional) monthly meetings. Our partners also have a stake in the success of Buncombe County Teamship and can better provide support if they are made aware of the project’s growth and impact. These data-based conversations again create the opportunity to celebrate progress and focus on steps needed for improvement, including how to increase access to Buncombe County Teamship, how to ensure equitable access for all students, and how to build a diverse community of Teamship businesses and advocates.

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?

Buncombe County Teamship is designed to bring more equitable internship experiences to high school students who have been disproportionately affected by COVID in Buncombe County. This is achieved by training coaches from Title I high schools in Buncombe County to implement Teamship and utilizing time during the school day for students to be coached through the process of solving real problems for local businesses.

Buncombe County Teamship will also create more equitable opportunities for students to build social capital, a critical driver of economic success and mobility. This is achieved by bringing the internship to the students and not leaving it to students to rely on their own social networks, an approach that typically favors those with existing networks and leaves others behind. An extensive study conducted in Charlotte, North Carolina by Brookings (2020) shows that most social connections are formed in educational institutions. This finding highlights the importance of offering Teamship as part of the school day.

Buncombe County Teamship students will also build their social capital by connecting with the Buncombe County businesses they work with directly and by becoming part of the larger District C community, a community of over 140 businesses across the country and growing. The Asheville Area Chamber et al. (2018) surveyed hiring managers in North Carolina and found that “over 70% of employers rely on professional networks and family and friends to recruit talent.” This finding highlights the importance of helping students build their own social networks. A quote from a District C alumna also illustrates this point: “This was my dream job because I wanted a job that was impactful. I’m very grateful to District C being able to connect me, because before I was job searching, I was coming up short on job offers because of a lack of networking and connections. This is much better than anything else I could’ve found.”

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.

Project Partners have agreed to provide their support to this project by working with District C to recruit schools and coaches, engage new businesses as problem providers, and tell the story of Buncombe County Teamship. The Project Partners (non-funded) for Buncombe County Teamship are Economic Development Coalition, Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, Buncombe County Schools Foundation, and Asheville City Schools Foundation.

The Economic Development Coalition (EDC) partnership with District C started in 2020 and continues through today. A highlight of this partnership was in the winter of 2021 when the EDC, District C, and NCSSM implemented a Teamship experience for 14 students from Buncombe and Henderson Counties. Students from Buncombe County Early College, AC Reynolds, SILSA at Asheville High, North Buncombe High and Tuscola High solved a problem for two Asheville-based businesses, Chill Cereal and Grind. April Brown, Director of Industry Recruitment and Expansion at the Asheville Area Chamber, is a District C certified coach and was one of the coaches for this Teamship experience. Connie Matisse of East Fork and Brandy Mills of Smallcakes Cupcakes and Creamery opened the final pitch event with remarks about the importance of this kind of internship experience. This experience provided a powerful example of the potential of Teamship in Buncombe County.

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, Buncombe County Schools Foundation and Asheville City Schools Foundation are new partners with District C and all have expressed their enthusiasm to support Buncombe County Teamship's shared vision to bring valuable, real work learning experiences to students through a model that is equitable, scalable, and sustainable.

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.

Since its founding in early 2017, District C has achieved the following milestones:

1,328 diverse students have been coached through a Teamship experience and have interacted directly with business leaders.

91 educators have been trained to be District C-certified coaches to reach as many students as possible.

47 schools & districts have adopted the Teamship model -- including schools in Wake, Rowan, Edgecombe, and New Hanover counties -- to provide their students with opportunities for meaningful work-based learning.

Over 140 businesses have had problems solved by Teamship students and have given back to their community by investing in the next generation.

Student survey: "How likely are you to recommend Teamship to a friend?" Average 7.8 on 10-point scale

Coach survey: "How likely are you to recommend the District C Coaching Institute to a colleague?"

Average 9.5 on 10-point scale

Business problem provider survey: "How likely are you to recommend a District C partnership to another business leader or organization that you know? Average 9.5 on 10-point scale

Previous Grants Awarded:

One8 Foundation \$125,000 (total from two awards)

Kenan Charitable Trust \$50,000
Raleigh Impact Partner \$50,000 (total from two awards)

District C Team: Dan Gonzalez, Co-Founder, studied engineering at Dartmouth College before becoming a high school physics teacher. As president of Manhattan Prep, Dan led the company as its 185-member team achieved over 50% revenue growth. Anne Jones, Co-Founder, grew up on a farm in Nebraska before attending Dartmouth College. She taught middle school science, earned an Ed.D., and was Chief Program Officer at PLTW, a national STEM-focused nonprofit. Sophia Woo, Managing Director, graduated from UNC Chapel Hill with a BS in Business Administration and a Masters of Accounting from the Kenan Flagler Business School. After 3 years with PricewaterhouseCoopers, Sophia became a small business owner and currently sits on the Boards of two nonprofits.

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.

District C Budget.pdf

Special Considerations*

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

No special considerations considerations.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- District C Budget.pdf

District C Project Budget Summary & Detail

Budget Summary

REVENUE	
Buncombe County Recovery Funds	70,000
TOTAL Revenue	70,000
EXPENSE	
Training	
District C Coaching Institute participation fees	15,000
Training stipends	10,800
Total Training	25,800
Summer Teamship	
Coaching pay	8,640
Program administration	22,000
Total Summer Teamship	30,640
Fall Teamship	
Coaching prep and planning	4,320
First-year District C membership fees	6,000
Total Fall Teamship	10,320
Contingency	3,240
TOTAL Expense	70,000

Budget Detail

All expenses are operating expenses, and all expenses will be funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Training

District C Coaching Institute participation fees

- 6 participants x \$2,500 per participant = \$15,000
- Funds support District C's administration and facilitation of the Coaching Institute.
- Participants experience 50 hours of intensive training and professional development, leading to District C coaching certification.

Training stipends

- 6 participants x 50 hours x \$36 per hour = \$10,800
- Funds paid to 6 educator participants to support extra hours spent above and beyond their standard teaching time.
- Stipend will also provide an incentive that will help us recruit participants.

Summer Teamship

Coaching pay

- 6 coaches x 40 hours x \$36 per hour = \$8,640
- Funds paid to the 6 certified coaches to compensate them for time spent preparing for and coaching the Summer Teamship experience for students.

Program administration

- This \$22,000 amount funds District C's administration of the Summer Teamship experience, including:
 - Scheduling
 - Student recruitment and onboarding
 - Coach support
 - Business partner sourcing, recruitment, and problem scoping
 - Technology (Zoom, Google, Slack)
 - Event planning and management
- District C administration allows the newly certified coaches to focus exclusively on coaching students their first time through.

Fall Teamship

Coach prep and planning

- 6 coaches x 20 hours x \$36 per hour = \$4,320
- Funds paid to the 6 certified coaches to support time spent planning for each coach's in-school implementation of the Teamship model.

First-year District C membership fees

- 6 schools x \$1,000 per school = \$6,000
- Funds paid to District C to support school membership for the 2022-2023 school year.

- District C membership provides the schools and coaches access to membership benefits to support the implementation of Fall Teamship across the 6 schools, including:
 - Licensing of District C's Teamship program and materials
 - Business partner matching from District C's network of partners
 - Implementation support
 - Access to the District C Playbook of resources and best practices
 - Access to the District C community of member schools and organizations
 - Ongoing professional development
 - As-needed support from District C
- Schools will pay their own membership fees starting in year 2 as the certified coaches continue offering Teamship for more students with the support of District C.