

Empowerment Resource Center's - WRES-LP Operations & Studio Refurbishment Project

*RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal
Recovery Funds*

Empowerment Resource Center - WRES-LP Operations & Studio Refurbishment Project

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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.

Empowerment Resource Center's - WRES-LP Operations & Studio Refurbishment Project

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$284,217.00

Recovery Fund Eligible Category*

Please select one:

Services for disproportionately impacted communities

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

The requested funding will be utilized for operating support needed to supplement underwriting funding losses due to COVID-19, which has had a significant negative impact on our annual budget. Our annual fundraising and annual sponsorships allow us to keep our rates affordable for local non-profits and community organizations to spread word about their programs and initiatives to our listeners, so this funding

will give us the ability not to raise our rates during a time of economic and health crisis in our country and community when public education and health information is so needed. Additionally we seek to purchase equipment needed to upgrade our ability to reach and expand our listening base, including mobile broadcast equipment and studio updates necessary for enhanced internet broadcast. This will allow us to reach even more people by our traditional medium of radio and allowing our programming to better reach younger generations and anyone in the world via the internet.

Project Plan*

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

The WRES Empowerment Resource requests \$284,217 to purchase equipment needed to upgrade our ability to reach and expand our listening base, including mobile broadcast equipment and studio updates necessary for enhanced internet broadcast, support the hiring of an Executive Director and their salary for three years. The WRES-LP Studio Refurbishment Project is an initiative that our organization is pursuing due to the current age of our current equipment. WRES Empowerment Resource has operated since 2001 with the same equipment that was originally purchased in 2001. During the past 20 years, WRES has focused on meeting the programming needs of the community, while investing limited resources into the equipment needs of the radio station.

WRES will be able purchase equipment that will assist the station with encountering fewer issues when transitioning programs, increasing the accuracy in recording, improving the clarity of the sound when the programs are aired. More importantly the equipment will be easier to use, which will allow more volunteers to be trained on how to assist the station, which will allow more educational and other service providers to be able to successfully host programs.

Additionally, this funding will give us the ability not to raise our rates during a time of severe economic and health crisis within our country and community. WRES' Board of Directors and staff recognizes that this is a vital time that the public readily needs access to education and health information. WRES collaborates with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Buncombe County Government and other entities to provide vital information to the community.

Furthermore, this will allow us to reach even more people through the medium of radio and allow our programming to better reach younger residents of the community. WRES' Board and staff are actively looking to develop innovative programs that will further reach and meet the needs of students who access the radio station via the WRES' website. According to Chassiakos and Stager teenagers and young adults continue to use digital platforms to access academic support, entertainment and information.

Statement of Need*

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

WRES serves as a catalyst for creative innovation by offering programming that reflects the needs of the community, while also promoting empowerment in communities of color and low wealth. During the past twenty years, WRES has actively worked to bridge the information gap that exists between programs, organizations, governmental agencies and the community. In the past few months, WRES has hosted live radio shows where important governmental officials were offering vitally information about COVID-19 to the community, produced and aired shows about resources that are available to small business owners, and broadcasted information about educational changes and resources available to families. Additionally, WRES has provide free program time to nonprofit organizations who submit public service announcements, including programs that encourage parents to talk to their children about the harms of alcohol, information that remind parents to register their children for Pre-school and information on fair housing.

This vital information was offered and accessible to residents who do not have cable or limited access to the internet; however, they have a radio and can listen to WRES at home, in their car or at work. WRES' efforts played an important role in helping to inform and empower the community with information, while removing access barriers for families. Without funds from the Glass Foundation, WRES' delivery of programming will not be improved nor enhanced. WRES is an important component in the African American community; Unfortunately, the donors of the organization have limited resources, and the donations have not been able to effectively sustain the radio station's equipment replacement needs. The Glass Foundation's funds will assist in furthering the programming of the radio station for generations.

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.

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Population Served*

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

WRES Empowerment Resource efforts strive to reach People of Color & low-wealth communities in Asheville and Buncombe County through the programming and activities that offered via the radio station and internet program. Due to the WRES radio station being aired throughout Asheville and Buncombe County, the approximate number people who are impacted is up to several thousand individuals.

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.

1. Replace equipment in the WRES' main studio and production room.
2. Hire an Executive Director who can assist in development and implementation a strategic plan for the organization.
3. Implementation of a strategic plan that focuses on increasing listenership and raising for funds for the sustainability of the organization.

Evaluation*

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

The Executive Director will be reviewed by the Board of Directors on an annual basis. The radio's business partners will complete a quarterly survey to provide information on the services being provided.

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?

WRES 100.7 LPFM is the only African American managed radio station in the region that is owned by an African American led nonprofit. Currently, WRES is celebrating its 21st year of operation. It has always been the intention of WRES' Board of Directors and staff to be a resource for all people in our listening area; however, WRES choose to host programs that would be of particular interest to People of Color and people of low wealth. WRES' Radio programming focuses on providing information that empowers listeners with resources that they will need to improve their quality of life. Moreover, the programming includes information on how individuals can develop their employability, educational attainment, access entrepreneurial opportunities, and improve their housing options. While WRES provides programming that evolves to meet the growing needs of the community, especially during this unprecedented pandemic. WRES has provided vital information about changes with the various school systems, after school service providers, and community based resources.

According to Mahwah, entertainment-education is an effective tool in educating due to low-cost, high accessibility, versatility, & ability to reach people (1999). WRES provides local community based organization opportunities to host programs that help deliver information & resources to individuals & families who need this essential information.

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.

Non-funded partners:
Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement
African American Churches
Small Business owners

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 currently comprised of 5 African Americans and 2 White board members. Our one staff member is African American and our 4 volunteer DJs are all African Americans as well.

The Board of Directors have over 50 years of collective experience of operating nonprofit organizations. The volunteer DJs have been working with the organization for well over a decade. The one current staff member has been with the organization since its inception.

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-budget-template.xlsx

Special Considerations*

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

We are looking to hire an Executive Director who can continue to the legacy of Mr. John Hayes. while also helping to lead the organization to more sustainable future.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Recovery-Funds-budget-template.xlsx

