

# BIPOC Health Matters: Trauma-informed, community-based, and culturally responsive approaches to improving health outcomes for marginalized populations

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*RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds*

## *YWCA of Asheville and Western North Carolina*

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# Application Form

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## Question Group

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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.

BIPOC Health Matters: Trauma-informed, community-based, and culturally responsive approaches to improving health outcomes for marginalized populations

## Amount of Funds Requested\*

\$3,357,748.92

## Recovery Fund Eligible Category\*

Please select one:

Address disparities in public health outcomes

## Brief Project Description\*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

Disparities in COVID-19 morbidity, mortality, and complications in communities of color, elders, low-income families, and women has elucidated the need for a culturally responsive approach to mitigating negative public health outcomes. The YWCA of Asheville and WNC, Light a Path (LAP), and Sistas Caring for

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery

Sistas (SC4S) propose to provide trauma-informed, maternal, mental, physical, and community health interventions to ameliorate negative outcomes in disproportionately impacted communities. The YWCA will provide trauma-informed community-based education, advocacy, and a culturally inclusive approach to fitness. SC4S will expand their birthing doula services, provide housing assistance, as they form themselves as a 501(c)(3). Through our collaboration we will enact a continuum of care and resources for historically disadvantaged groups and pregnant people that spans pregnancy and birth and includes access to high quality affordable childcare and economic empowerment programming.

## Project Plan\*

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

YWCA, LAP, and SC4S's partnership fosters a trauma-informed, community-driven continuum of support of maternal, preventative, and physical health resources for high-need populations. YWCA will bolster SC4S's preparedness to become a 501(c)(3) with financial planning and grant management advising. This partnership is a natural extension of continuing work that SC4S and YWCA have begun as members of Mothering Asheville and directly aligns with YWCA's mission to eliminate racism and empower women. This project includes LAP becoming a program of the YWCA. LAP offers trauma-informed wellness instruction in order to teach resilience to vulnerable populations. The synergy between each organization will deepen the impact and expand the reach of trauma-informed, resilience, and community-based approaches to wellness provided by pre-existing YWCA, LAP, and SC4S programming and curriculum models. YWCA acts as the fiscal sponsor of this project.

YWCA will reduce barriers to access by providing a platform for virtual content and offering childcare to individuals engaged in health programming. YWCA will hire a mental health counselor and community health worker to design virtual and in-person support groups, nutrition, diabetes, and heart health programming to communities most impacted by COVID-19. LAP Method training will be offered to YWCA health and wellness team, SC4S, and community partners, host workshops for nonprofits, and design virtual wellness content. LAP will leverage volunteers to offer LAP Method classes at the YWCA, in low-income communities, and to incarcerated individuals. SC4S will expand their suite of maternal and infant health services providing Doula Services, Childbirth Education, Lactation Education, Extended Postpartum Support, Peer Support, wrap around social determinants of health (SDOH) support, resources, and pathway to sustainable/affordable housing. SC4S will hire an executive team and lease office space that will co-locate housing support, behavioral health, peer support, employment, and credit repair specialists, higher education advisor, and social worker.

We request two-year funding. In year one, YWCA will merge with Light a Path, build a Digital Platform for wellness classes and resources, hire a Director of Health and Wellness, hold internal trauma- Informed and resilience training, and host community health sessions, workshops, and fitness classes. SC4S will increase doula trainings and certifications. In year two, YWCA will replace building ventilation, launch a BIPOC farmer's market at the YCWA, launch virtual mental health and fitness classes in Swannanoa and county corrections facilities, and offer LAP Method Trainings and workshops for fitness instructors. SC4S will leverage community partnerships to expand access to housing for pregnant mothers, establish their team, and offer increased behavioral health resources in conjunction with doula services.

## Statement of Need\*

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

SDOH can be grouped under the categories of economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context. COVID-19 has

had negative impacts on every facet of the SDOH– according to the Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey, more than half of adults reported difficulty paying for household expenses, 19% reported delaying medical care due to the pandemic, and 31% of adults reported symptoms of depression or anxiety. According to a KFF analysis of the survey, “Non-Hispanic Black adults (48%) and Hispanic or Latino adults (46%) are more likely to report symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder than Non-Hispanic White adults (41%).”

Research has identified that mental health is a key factor influencing wellbeing, and Mountain Area Health Education Clinic (MAHEC) and CHIP (Buncombe County Community Health Assessment Report) have identified mental health as a priority public health issue. At the YWCA, we have experienced an increased demand for mental health resources and support from program participants, the majority of whom are low-income women of color. It is our goal to be able to provide group, individual, and families with access to equity-informed mental health counselors to promote overall well being.

The 2018 Buncombe County Community Health Assessment has identified birth outcomes & infant mortality as a priority issue, along with mental health. In Buncombe County, 15% of Black babies are born at low birth weight, 81.8% of Black pregnant women access prenatal care in their first trimester, and 74% of Black mothers are breastfeeding at discharge after birth as compared to their white counterparts who have 8% babies born at low birth weight, 85.7% access prenatal care, and 89.2% of mothers are breastfeeding. In 2017, the infant mortality disparity ratio between Black and white populations was 3.8, representing a significant increase from 1.6 in 2013.

### [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.

COVID-19 disproportionately affected Black and brown communities, and continues to do so. According to the CDC, this can be attributed to “biomedical factors as well as social determinants of health,” including living and working conditions and lower access to healthcare, all of which can be attributed to institutional and structural racism. At-risk individuals are faced with barriers to preventing or managing chronic disease, including poverty, lack of access to transportation, affordable healthcare, healthy nutrition, education, and safe spaces to be physically active. Additionally, COVID-19, which led to increased houselessness and precarious housing for many of the families SC4S serves, had a serious impact on their ability to reach clients and meet their needs. YWCA, LAP, and SC4S will provide community-centered health programming to address chronic and pre-existing conditions that led to increased COVID-19 mortality rates in Black, brown, and low-income populations.

The YWCA saw the importance of non-traditional, community-centered approaches via our moderation of “Let’s Talk Covid” series hosted in conjunction with Buncombe County. Our proposed project is a step towards creating change in the communities we serve through action and intentional programming. This project addresses harms caused by ongoing medical trauma inflicted upon communities of color, the maternal morbidity rates of Black women (identified as a priority in the Buncombe County Health Assessment) coupled with past inequities and inaccessibility of culturally relevant and safe health information by creating diverse entry points for individuals outside of traditional medical structures.

COVID-19 called into question the safety of the YWCA as it relates to building air quality and ventilation. Due to the vulnerable populations we service– elders, BIPOC populations, and children– it is imperative to ensure that our air circulation is connected to our automatic building controls.

## Population Served\*

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

The YWCA serves communities of color, low-income families with small children, and elders, many of whom are at greater risk for preventable diseases and have limited access to wellness programs. The YWCA Health and Wellness program will serve 500 unduplicated individuals per project year through workshops, community dinners, and fitness programming. Our program participants have intersecting identities across common socioeconomic, racial, gender, sexuality, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. SC4S supports primarily women of color, low-income women, and those with substance use disorder, through pregnancy, birth, and postpartum. Since 2018, SC4S has served 205 families and assisted with 141 births. During the project period, SC4S will serve 100 families per project year.

## 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.

This project aims to bolster preventative care in Buncombe County among low-income and Black and brown populations and address the racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality rates. Overall, this project will address health disparities on a holistic level.

Performance measure 1 (PM1): Maternal and infant health

Activities: Doula services, childbirth education, lactation education, extended postpartum support, peer support services

Output: Train 3 new doulas each year, provide 100 families per year with culturally sensitive doula services, 100 families will access prenatal/postpartum

Outcome:

-90% of babies delivered will be born at a healthy birth weight

-85% of babies will be born full term

-95% of babies delivered will be breastfed

-90% of babies will be delivered vaginally

PM2: Self-Reported Health and Wellness

Input: YWCA/LAP staff (CPO, Community Health Worker, Director of Health & Wellness, LAP Program Coordinator) will design and implement mental health and fitness programs

Activities: LAP trauma-informed wellness offerings, YWCA community dinners, YWCA mental health and fitness offerings

Output: 600 people/year will access YWCA/LAP health and wellness services

Outcome: 90% of people who access YWCA/LAP health and wellness services will report an increased sense of mental and physical well being

PM3: YWCA Preventative Health Program

Input: WCA/LAP staff will design and implement preventative/mental health programs

Activities: 12 chronic disease prevention/management workshops per year, 12 mental health workshops per year

Output: 100 individuals attend preventative health workshops per year, 100 individuals will attend mental health workshops per year

Outcome: 90% individuals will report increased knowledge on managing chronic disease using holistic health and wellness practices, 90% of low-income women who participate in trauma-informed fitness classes will increase their rate of exercise or report improved nutrition

## Evaluation\*

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

Data will be collected throughout the project in order to ensure proper delivery of services and outcomes. As this is a community-driven project, measures will also include participatory research from community members and participants, to ensure we are meeting the needs of the individuals we are purporting to serve.

- Data collection
- Demographics
- Race, SES, marital status, children
- Pre-and-post data: health/physical activity education
- Quarterly probe data collection regarding satisfaction
- Program surveys
- Event surveys
- Education attainment
- Educational outcomes
- professional development activities
- Qualitative Interviews and focus groups with community members

As this is a pilot program, data collection and analysis is of the utmost importance. We plan to contract with a public health researcher to help develop data collection instruments to prove the efficacy of our holistic health and wellness approach and track SC4S outcomes. Contract requirements will be monitored and executed by the YWCA Chief Program Officer, Dr. Amieris Lavender, with support from her team. Several YWCA staff members are trained in Results Based Accountability and will be working to implement that framework in all programs, including this project.

As fiscal sponsor and project partner, the YWCA will work closely with SC4S staff to ensure they are carrying out contract requirements and tracking outcomes. SC4S has several public health experts on their board with experience in research and outcomes tracking.

## 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?

Understanding the collective trauma of a global pandemic, coupled with ongoing historical inequity and generational trauma is essential to recovering and rebuilding in an equitable, sustainable fashion. Addressing wellness on a holistic, trauma-informed level and targeting social determinants of health will improve the lives of the communities we engage with throughout the COVID-19 recovery and beyond. Both the YWCA of Asheville and SC4S share a commitment to equity and addressing the root causes of racial inequity. For the last 5 years, SC4S has explicitly named dismantling structural racism as key to the success of its work, and this project aligns with YWCA's mission of eliminating racism and empowering women.

The pandemic disproportionately impacted low-wage workers. Both YWCA and SC4S will be contributing to workforce development by creating public health full-time, salaried, and insured positions within each of our organizations. The YWCA is committed to growing into paying a living wage for our team members, as such, full-time employees in the Health and Wellness Department will make at least \$15.80 + competitive benefits. SC4S will hire a team that will create job opportunities within the local community. Due to their focus on racial equity, SC4S assures that community-based doulas are paid above living wage and provided sustainable, long-term support.

In 2020, Buncombe County declared racism a public health crisis. YWCA health promotion programs work at the intersection of racialized trauma, health and wellness, addressing not only physical and nutritional wellness but also emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, financial, and environmental wellness: centering equity in everything we do. The YWCA approach to wellness centers holistic wellbeing, caring for the whole person in order to address the underlying issues of racism and sexism– issues that are proven to contribute to negative health outcomes.

## 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.

YWCA and SC4S both work in partnership with organizations doing aligned work in the community. All project partners listed below are unfunded except Light a Path, who will join the YWCA as one of its programs.

A Therapist Like Me  
 Alcohol Drug Abuse Treatment Center (ADATC)  
 American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)  
 Buncombe County Community Land Trust  
 Buncombe County Family Justice Center and all on-site partners  
 Buncombe County Pregnancy Care Managers  
 Buncombe Partnership for Children  
 Children First/Communities in Schools of Buncombe County  
 Habitat for Humanity  
 Healthy Aging WNC  
 Homegrown Families  
 Housing Authority of Asheville  
 Light a Path  
 Mission Hospital Women's Services  
 MOTHER TO MOTHER  
 Mothering Asheville  
 Mountain Area Health Education Coalition (MAHEC)  
 Nurse Family partnership  
 Nutritious Thoughts  
 Pisgah Legal Services  
 Racial Justice Coalition  
 Read to Succeed

## 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 2018, SC4S has served 205 families over 141 births, and has developed specialization in lactation education, postpartum support, peer support, childbirth education, doula training provider, and death and

bereavement support. SC4S is nationally recognized, serving as conference facilitators and delivering presentations on community-based doula programs, medical racism, advocacy, lived experience as women of color in the healthcare system, and how to facilitate clinical shifts integrating medical teams with community-based doulas. SC4S is also a pilot for two Prepaid Health Plans that provide reimbursement of doula services through Medicaid for the state, and is the only community-based pilot program. SC4S is working towards becoming an independent registered 501(c)(3) organization, and will be receiving mentorship and capacity building support from their fiscal sponsor, the YWCA of Asheville.

A trusted community organization, the YWCA has served marginalized communities in Asheville for the past 114 years. We are well-equipped to support this project due to our track record of implementing health and wellness programs and our partnerships with other wellness organizations. YWCA is led by an all-female Board of Directors and a strong, diverse staff, including an educational policy PhD and program implementation specialist and two LCSWs. YWCA has years of experience managing and implementing grant-funded programs, including the federally-funded SNAP-Ed program, several concurrent grants from Buncombe County, and Community Development Block Grants administered by the City of Asheville.

During the project period, YWCA and SC4S will work collaboratively to secure funding in order to sustain this project past the two-year grant period.

## 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.

YWCA and SC4S recognize that this is an innovative, ambitious, and collaborative expansion project with many moving pieces. If there are any aspects of the project plan or budget that the County would like to explore further, we are open to strategizing together.

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Recovery-Funds-budget-template.xlsx

## Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Proposed Project Budget

<b>Organization Name:</b>	
<b>Project Name:</b>	
<b>Amount Requested:</b>	

Proposed Project Revenue Funder	Amount	Confirmed or Pending?	Notes
Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds			
List other sources here			
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<b>Total</b>	\$ -		

Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Recovery Funds	Other Funds	Total	Capital or Operating Expense?	Notes
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