

Post-COVID Academic Response and Recovery Plan

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

OpenDoors of Asheville

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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-1.pdf

Name of Project.*

Post-COVID Academic Response and Recovery Plan

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?

Updated version of previously submitted proposal

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$879,350.00

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

K-12 Education

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

The mission of OpenDoors Asheville (ODA) is to eliminate the race-based opportunity and achievement gaps for students through educational and enrichment opportunities. ODA would use funding to expand our To & Through academic programming in three ways: 1) we would hire a full-time Academic Coordinator for Tutoring and Assessment for four years, allowing us to expand our student services and student roster; 2) we would hire a full-time College Bound and STEAM Coordinator for four years, allowing us to better support our high school students preparing for college and to provide more enrichments for all of our students; and 3) we would purchase an additional van to transport more students to academic and enrichment opportunities.

Project Plan*

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

Our plan calls for three measures, each of which relies on strategies that ODA has successfully used to help our students thrive since 2009.

First, ODA will use funds to hire a full-time Academic Coordinator for Tutoring and Assessment to deliver more services to our current students and expand the number of students whom we serve. Currently on staff, our Education Director and Program Coordinator intensely collaborate with 71 students and their families to support academic and socio-emotional learning. The plan for each student is individualized, drawing on our deep reservoir of resources such as tutoring, psychoeducational assessments, and after school and summer enrichments. As it stands, these positions are stretched beyond capacity to serve our roster, while also addressing the cumulative learning loss and greater demands brought on by the pandemic.

Secondly, ODA will use funds to hire a full-time College Bound and STEAM Coordinator. The primary responsibility of this position is to support college preparation. Currently, staff and volunteers help students navigate the hurdles of the research and application process (including standardized test preparation and registration, financial aid research and applications, and college visits and applications). We have nine students in college, with 22 more set to graduate high school in the next four years. Adding a staff person will meet the rising demand for college prep services post-COVID, along with an increase in enrollment. This position also facilitates STEAM opportunities for all our students. An additional staff person is required to meet the heightened demand for services following the interruption in community programs during COVID and the increased number of students seeking our services post-COVID.

Finally, ODA will use funds to purchase an additional van to transport students to schools as needed, after school tutoring, and after school and summer enrichment programming. We currently own one van and employ two part-time Transportation Associates. An additional van doubles our capacity for students to access interventions that help them discover their spark, thrive as learners, and recover from the academic and emotional damage wrought by COVID.

The timeframe for the two new positions is four years, with hiring beginning in May 2022 so that assessments and interventions can be put in place before the new school year. Funding for these two positions for four years creates long-term relationships with students and families, improves results for students, and allows us to track greater progress. Four years of funding combats the worst of the COVID educational crisis, while at the same time bolstering our track record of success and giving us time to secure future funding for these positions. The immediate purchase of an additional van would benefit ODA for many years to come.

Statement of Need*

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

ODA supports Black and brown students living at or below poverty level, as these students are most impacted by the race-based opportunity and achievement gaps. Asheville lays claim to the fifth largest achievement gap in the nation, which has been further widened by the pandemic. ODA programming narrows this gap, offering comprehensive support that include tutoring, psychoeducational evaluation, targeted academic support, Best Fit school placement, college prep and enrollment guidance, after school and summer enrichment opportunities, access to transportation, housing advocacy, and other resources.

Generations of systematic racism have forged race-based gaps across every economic measure, including wages, home ownership, and wealth accumulation. (See Inequality.org, citing Survey of Consumer Finances 2021, Institute for Policy Studies 2022, and Census Bureau 2021.) COVID only served to deepen these race-based economic disparities. (Commonwealth Fund, 2020.) Fortunately, research also shows that closing the gap in opportunities between Black and white youth at a given parental income level could eliminate much of the Black-white income gap in two generations. (Chetty, 2019.) Finally, research also uniformly shows that “the more you learn, the more you earn.” (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018.) Thus, ODA’s work to shrink the race-based opportunity and achievement gaps faced by Buncombe County students of color will have long-lasting economic impacts. Tragically, the disparate academic impact of COVID makes the uphill climb to

economic equality even steeper. Hiring an Academic Coordinator for Tutoring and Assessment and a College Bound and STEAM Coordinator to eliminate the learning loss of COVID will help narrow the race-based opportunity and achievement gaps plaguing Buncombe County.

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.

Academic success and high school and college graduation are tied to long-term health and economic outcomes. (Zajacova, 2018.) COVID disproportionately impacted Black families in education, health, and economic welfare. (Gould, 2021.) Two full-time positions and a van address achievement gaps that became chasms in the wake of COVID. While performances fell for both Black and white students due to the pandemic, they fell more drastically for Black students. NC School Report Cards describes performances for students in Asheville City Schools in 2019 and 2021:

3rd through 8th, end of grade tests:

-Math:

--Black students: 19% were proficient in 2019 and 5% in 2021=drop of 74%

--White students: 78% were proficient in 2019 and 52% in 2021=drop of 33%

-Reading:

--Black students: 22% were performing above Level 2 in 2019 and 12% were proficient in 2021=drop of 45%

--White students: 83% were performing above Level 2 in 2019 and 71% were proficient in 2021=drop of 14%

High school, end of year tests:

-English II:

--Black students: 21% were grade level proficient in 2019 and 12% in 2021=drop of 42%

--White students: 88% were grade level proficient in 2019 and 79% in 2021=drop of 10%

-NC Math I:

--Black students: 10% were grade level proficient in 2019 and less than 5% in 2021=drop of >50%

--White students: 39% were grade level proficient in 2019 and 27% in 2019=drop of 30%

Graduation:

In 2019, 83% of Black students graduated high school within four years. By 2021, only 73% of Black students were on track to graduate within four years, a 12% drop for Black students. In comparison, 100% of ODA students are on track to graduate high school, showing that our strategies are exceedingly effective. From 2019 to 2021, the four-year graduation rate for white students did not change.

Each area saw a larger percentage drop post-COVID for Black students than for white students and each area saw bigger percentages of Black students struggling than white students.

Population Served*

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

In 2021, we intensively served 67 students; we also provided less intensive services to 107 additional students and 47 guardians, but our impacts are far greater than our direct service numbers. With the launch of AVL Rise, our peer-to-peer literacy program (partly funded by Buncombe County in 2021), ODA's reach is

drastically growing. AVL Rise will continue to train more high school students as tutors each year, and will feed additional students in need of resources to ODA each year.

Our current demographics include 98% Black and 2% Latinx students. From its inception, ODA has always prioritized students of color, as they are most impacted by the race-based opportunity and achievement gaps. We work solely with students and families who live well below the poverty line, who reside in Housing Authority neighborhoods, or who are described as homeless under the McKinney Vento definition of homelessness for students in public schools. (This definition provides additional protection and services for students who have fragile housing.) We have long and deep relationships with families who live in Hillcrest, Pisgah View, Klondyke, and similar communities throughout Buncombe County. We prioritize applicants who qualify for Medicaid, free and reduced meals, or other public assistance. Additionally, we prioritize students who are struggling in school academically; 36% of our students are diagnosed with learning differences and many more are suspected. By working within these demographics, ODA helps to dismantle the entrenched and systemic racial, economic, and academic inequities in Buncombe County.

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 project will have the following impacts:

Outcome 1: We will increase our Kindergarten through 12th grade roster by 26% percent with the intake of 17 waitlisted students into our program. We will maintain a 90% retention rate, using our current roster of 61 Kindergarten through 12th grade students as our baseline.

Outcome 2: We will increase academic support services to existing and new students by providing 15 additional psychoeducational assessments and increasing tutoring hours by 600%. The tutoring increase seems dramatic, but it is based on practical numbers: Our 17 new students will receive three hour-long tutoring sessions per week for twelve months; a total increase of 2586 tutoring hours. (Baseline is the 367 tutoring hours and seven assessments provided in 2021).

Outcome 3: 90% of ODA's students will be eligible to progress to the next grade level. Our baseline will be the percentage of students eligible to progress to the next grade at the end of the 2020-2021 school year, as this data is available due to COVID.

Outcome 4: 90% of high school students will meet necessary benchmarks to graduate high school on time and enroll in colleges of their choice. Our baseline will be the percentage of 2020-2021 high school graduates who have met these benchmarks and are enrolling in college.

Outcome 5: 90% of ODA students will attend one or more enrichment programs during the academic year and one or more enrichment programs during the summer. Our baseline will be the percentage of students who attended enrichments during the 2020-21 school year, including summer of 2021.

Evaluation*

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

Data collection. ODA uses several tools (including: direct communication with schools and families, semi-annual student reviews, and United Way Learning Circle, and Emergency Warning Response Systems) to

collect data on programming. These tools can also collect data on the impact of adding an Academic Coordinator for Tutoring and Assessment, a College and STEAM Coordinator, and an additional van.

Data analysis. We currently use Google Suite software to analyze the success of our programs based on both qualitative and quantitative findings, such as:

- The ABC's (Attendance, Behavior, and Course Completion) and/or quarterly grades at all grade levels
- Attendance and attitudes at tutoring sessions
- Attendance and attitudes at enrichment activities
- High school and college graduation rates of ODA students compared to non-ODA students from similar schools and demographics
- Acceptance rates for post-high school education
- Intentions to attend and/or acceptance into postgraduate level programs

Quality assurance. The Academic Coordinator for Tutoring and Assessment and the College and STEAM Coordinator will report to our Director of Education, who will monitor their performance. Our Impact Coordinator will analyze the data described above to measure the effect that these two new positions and the new van have on the student outcomes previously outlined. These new staff members will set and review goals at 90 days, six months, and one year of employment at ODA, complete an annual self-evaluation, participate in quarterly all-staff professional development, and identify and complete individual goals and training. All staff complete successive levels of Racial Equity Institute training annually and participate in a biweekly sharing of resources.

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?

ODA values equity and inclusion and recognizes that there is deep and wide systemic work to be done to dismantle social and economic injustices, including racial inequities in education that contribute to other discrimination-based injustices. Our staff is committed to listening, asking questions, and collaborating with students, families, individual supporters, and community partners.

ODA employs a whole-child approach to help students reach their full potential. Working alongside students, parents, and educators, we ensure access to academics and associated resources so students can meet their potential and thrive. Each student and family builds a relationship with ODA staff and community partners to ensure long-term success. We add academic resources such as an individualized support team, general and specialized tutoring hours (including Orton Gillingham trained tutors for dyslexia and other learning differences), scholarships, and financial aid. In addition to academic support, ODA provides out of school STEAM enrichments, employment networking, emergency resources, financial literacy coaching, increased housing stability, access to transportation (including facilitating driving permits and driver's licenses and improved access to affordable vehicles), advocacy for health needs, and legal advocacy.

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.

Psychoeducational Testing Subcontractors

ODA currently works with four assessment providers, each of whom offers pro-bono or greatly reduced fees for assessment services: Center for Research, Assessment, and Treatment Efficacy (CReATE); Roots Psychology - Dr. Rob Durr; Ladder to Learning - Nicole Baker; and Dr. Deidre Christy.

Tutoring Subcontractors

ODA currently works with 22 trained academic tutors. We ask partners to provide a minimum of 50% of their services pro-bono to ODA students and we match them, so that we always promote community investment in the success of our students. While working with ODA students, Orton-Gillingham tutors earn up to \$40/hour with a market rate of more than \$80 per hour.

AVL Rise Tutoring Pilot Program

ODA also works with consultant Mark Hecker to expand the innovative AVL Rise peer tutoring and leadership program.

Non-funded Community Partners

Non-funded partners who are critical to the project include, but are not limited to, Asheville City and Buncombe County Schools, United Way's Early Warning and Response Systems (EWRS), other Best Fit boarding, private, and charter schools, and Working Wheels.

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 2009, ODA has had tremendous success in helping students graduate from high school. During that time, of the intensively served 39 high school students eligible for graduation, more than half were diagnosed dyslexic and 100% lived well below the poverty line, and 84% graduated. In 2016, Buncombe County's graduation rate for students of color, regardless of economic status or learning difference, was 71%. With the exception of those who were incarcerated, 100% of our students with learning differences graduated high school, fiercely outpacing the national rate of 65% for students with learning differences, a statistic which includes students of all races and socioeconomic backgrounds. Today, 100% of our current high school students are on track to graduate high school.

55% of our staff members are Black, five of whom grew up in Asheville and have deep connections to the community we serve. A significant endorsement of our program is that two former ODA students, a current ODA parent, and a former ODA parent are currently on staff. We also have a current ODA parent on our Board. More than half of our Board members are people of color. Key staff members who deliver our academic programming possess teaching experience; Racial Equity Training; degrees and training in Child Development, Sociology, Human Rights, and Africana Studies; and have long relationships with Asheville's Black and brown communities. In 2020 and 2021, 100% of referrals and applications for new ODA students came through our existing parent and student connections, a testimony to our relationships, integrity, and commitment to student success.

Our full-time Head of Finance has the expertise to manage any disbursed funds. She has successfully managed and tracked all donations for ODA for the past 10 years and supervises our operating budget of \$1.4 million.

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 (2).pdf

Special Considerations*

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

Here is a link to our Annual Report:

<https://opendoorsasheville.org/annual-report/>

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- IRS Determination Letter-1.pdf
- Recovery-Funds-budget-template (2).pdf

CINCINNATI, OH 45201

Date: MAR 23 2011

OPEN DOORS OF ASHEVILLE INC
C/O BRIAN G MORRISON
PO BOX 3180
ASHEVILLE, NC 28802

Employer Identification Number:
27-1543937
DLN:
17053059330041
Contact Person:
JOHN J KOESTER ID# 31364
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
December 21, 2009
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Letter 947 (DO/CG)

OPEN DOORS OF ASHEVILLE INC

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lois G. Lerner". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Lois G. Lerner
Director, Exempt Organizations

Enclosure: Publication 4221-PC

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Proposed Project Budget

Organization Name:	OpenDoors of Asheville
Project Name:	Post-Covid Academic Recovery and Response Plan
Amount Requested:	\$879,530

Proposed Project Revenue Funder	Amount	Confirmed or Pending?	Notes
Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds	\$ 879,530.00	Pending	
National Financial Services	\$ 224,000.00	Confirmed	Donor committed to 4 year funding
Dogwood	\$ 200,000.00	Pending	Received \$200,000 in 2021 with \$50K allocated to programming costs
Thomas P. Waters Foundation	\$ 20,000.00	Pending	Received annually since 2017
Pisgah Investments	\$ 26,000.00	Confirmed	4 year pledge
Soulku	\$ 60,000.00	Pending	Received annually since 2018
Art Affair	\$ 295,000.00	Pending	Raised over \$943K in the past 4 Art Affairs
List other sources here			
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Total	\$ 1,704,530.00		

Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Recovery Funds	Other Funds	Total	Capital or Operating Expense?	Notes
College Bound and STEAM Director	\$ 406,190.00		\$ 406,190.00	Operating	Cost of employee for 4 years
Academic Coordinator (Tutoring & Assessment Focus)	\$ 364,490.00		\$ 364,490.00	Operating	Cost of employee for 4 years
Van Purchase	\$ 75,000.00		\$ 75,000.00	Capital	One time expense
4 years of taxes	\$ 2,250.00		\$ 2,250.00	Operating	
4 years of insurance	\$ 4,400.00		\$ 4,400.00	Operating	
4 years of gas	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 20,000.00	Operating	
4 years of Maintainance	\$ 7,200.00		\$ 7,200.00	Operating	
Student Tutoring - 4 years		\$ 360,000.00	\$ 360,000.00	Operating	Approximately 214 hours of tutoring for 17 students 3x per week
Student Psych-Ed Assessments - 4 years		\$ 112,800.00	\$ 112,800.00	Operating	1 student per month for 4 years totalling 48 students
College Tours - Annually for 4 years		\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	Operating	Annual group tours for 5-10 students
STEAM Activites - 4 years		\$ 88,000.00	\$ 88,000.00	Operating	Budgeted \$22K annually for 4 years
College Scholarships - 4 years		\$ 224,000.00	\$ 224,000.00	Operating	\$7K annually for 8 students
List expenses here			\$ -		
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Total			\$ 1,704,330.00		