



Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment

I. Purpose

People and neighborhoods are impacted by race, poverty, and historical trauma that has resulted in racial disparities. These factors create barriers to educational achievement, economic success and even impact the health of newborn babies. From early on, these cumulative pressures impact children, hampering the development of the necessary social, emotional, educational, and work skills to achieve well-being. As a community, we cannot leave this talent behind. We need every child in our community to realize their potential and contribute to our community.

What we have learned is that health, safety, and well-being are culturally created rather than professionally prescribed. If we want to improve the economic opportunity, health and safety of communities then we must engage with communities in ways that allow them to lead. We also know that focusing on individuals alone will not address the pervasive effects of race, poverty and trauma. We must recognize that children and families live in communities and that healing begins within these communities. Three factors that determine the environmental conditions within communities are economic and educational opportunities, people, and place. By focusing on these factors and harnessing the talents of community members, we can build a more vibrant economy and more resilient neighborhoods.

Named for social justice champion Isaac Coleman, the Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment Grant calls for targeted investments in our communities that are currently working toward eliminating racial disparities and to champion equitable opportunity. Our goal with this investment is to rebuild the health, safety, and well-being of our communities.

II. Funding

Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment funding is budgeted annually, and the amount available for FY2021 is \$500,000, subject to budget adoption. Grants through this program will be made for a 3-year period with annual renewal subject to project performance and budget availability. Annual awards will range from \$50,000 to \$150,000; modifications to the amounts requested may be made based on pool of proposals.

III. Eligibility

To be eligible for an Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment Grant, an organization and or project must meet the following criteria:

- a. **Nonprofit.** Organizations must be incorporated as nonprofit organizations, classified as tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service. Organizations must operate in Buncombe County with service to Buncombe County. If an organization does not meet these criteria, it may partner with another organization to serve as a fiscal agent to administer grant funding.
- b. **Public Purpose.** Projects must meet a public purpose and fall within County authority to fund per NC General Statutes, to be affirmed by review by Buncombe County legal department before grant award.



- c. **Application.** Organizations must submit a grant application through the online grant software before the application deadline. No late applications will be accepted.
- d. **Projects.** Funded projects should align with the THRIVE model, which include:
- i. To increase **Equitable Opportunity**
 - Economic growth in communities
 - Educational improvement in communities
 - ii. **People:** to increase social capital in communities by increasing trust among communities members and by supporting the ability of communities to work together for a common goal.
 - by increasing the self-organization of community members toward a shared goal
 - by increasing the capacity of community leaders
 - iii. **Place:** to improve the built environment of communities to create safe open spaces that bring people together
 - To ensure the built environment supports messages of success around health, safety and wellbeing
 - To use the arts and cultural identity to provide a sense of “place” for communities, bringing them together around cultural pride and ownership
 - iv. Prevention Institute THRIVE Model:
[http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/uploads/THRIVE overview and background.pdf](http://www.preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/uploads/THRIVE%20overview%20and%20background.pdf)
- e. **Equity.** Project and or organizations should also employ strategies for eliminating racial inequities.

IV. Timeline

February 3, 2020	Grant application opens
February 11, 2020	Optional grant writing workshop - 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
February 13, 2020	Optional grant writing workshop - 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
February 17, 2020	Optional grant writing workshop - 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
March 6, 2020	Applications due by 5:00 pm
March 16 - 20, 2020	First Review Team meeting - select FY21 finalists
March 23 - April 3, 2020	Site Visits for Finalists
April 6 - 10, 2020	Final Review Team meeting - select FY21 grantees
April 24, 2020	Funding recommendations due to County budget office
May 5, 2020	Committee grant recommendations shared with Board of Commissioners as part of pre-meeting
May 19, 2020	Committee grant recommendations published with County Manger’s budget message
June 2, 2020	Public hearing on budget as part of Board of Commissioners regular meeting
June 16, 2020	Grant awards finalized with County budget adoption during Board of Commissioners regular meeting
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Funding year

V. Application Process

Organizations are required to apply online through Buncombe County’s grant software, which can be accessed at buncombecounty.org/apply or linked through the Strategic Partnership Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants. **Applications are due by 5:00 pm on March 6, 2020.**

Grant writing workshops (optional for applicants) will be held on February 11, 2020, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm February 13, 2020, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, February 17, 2020, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, NC, in the ground floor conference room. Free parking will be available in the County garage at 164 College Street. In the case of inclement weather, an announcement will be posted on buncombecounty.org/grants and the workshop will be rescheduled for the following week.

VI. Required Elements

The application consists of a questionnaire, primarily of questions requiring a narrative response. Applicants are also required to complete and upload a budget form. Proof of nonprofit status, such as IRS Determination Letter or documentation from the North Carolina Secretary of State, will be required at the time of application.

VII. Review Committee

Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment Grant to review committee will consist of seven (7), who will:

- a. Apply through an application process open to the public;
- b. Be appointed annually by the County Manager;
- c. Abide by the conflict of interest policies, to include not serving on the Board of Directors or staff of an applicant organization within the past two (2) years;
- d. Utilize a standardized, points-based scoring system to review grants; and
- e. Participate in ongoing monitoring of grant initiatives.

VIII. Review Criteria

The Committee will consider the following criteria:

- Project is community-driven, and buy-in is demonstrated
- Outcomes include equitable opportunities focused on education and economic success
- Outcomes results include increased social networks, community trust and increased capacity to connect, lead and self-organize
- Clear and realistic methods toward achieving project goals
- Demonstrates informal and formal connections with other community members and organizations that support strategies developed to advance racial equity
- Budget is clear, sufficient with proposed plans and within \$150,000 range of grant threshold

IX. Awards

Grant recommendations prepared by the Committee will be submitted for a vote of approval from the Board of Commissioners. The list will be published as part of the County Manager’s recommended budget, and copies of the grant applications will be made available online. Grant awards will be finalized with budget adoption.

County Commissioners will not serve on any board or organization seeking funding from County Government unless said service is a requirement through legislation or legal agreement.

X. Performance Contracts

All grant awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables, and reporting measures.

FY2021 contracts will be for the period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. All funds must be spent or returned to the County by June 30, 2021.

Contracts will also include standard indemnification and insurance expectations, which lists the minimum insurance coverage which Contractors agree to procure and maintain. Required insurances and levels vary depending on the nature of the project and can include types such as: Worker’s Compensation; Commercial General Liability; Employer’s Liability; Professional Liability; etc. The County will collect and review certificates of insurance as part of contract compliance.

In addition to the standard contract expectations for all organizations doing business with the Buncombe County, nonprofits receiving grant funds must also:

- a. Open their books for the contracting department;
- b. Submit copies of annual IRS tax filings (Form 990s); and
- c. Submit annual financial statements based on a tiered structure, consistent with industry standard practice:
 - Audit: Organizations with annual revenues of \$300,000 or greater must submit financial statements audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.
 - Review: Those with revenues between \$100,000 and \$300,000 must submit financial statements reviewed in accordance with applicable Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services (SSARS).
 - Compilation: Those with revenues of less than \$100,000 must submit non-disclosure financial statements compiled in accordance with applicable SSARS.
 - Nonprofit agencies that may have challenges with these expectations have the option to work with staff in finding alternative proof of financial standing

Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County throughout the year, including review of financial and programmatic reporting. Performance results will be published online in funded projects dashboard. Approval of renewal grant funding requests shall be contingent on meeting performance criteria.

XI. Minority Business

Buncombe County’s adopted Minority Business Plan encourages participation by minority and women owned businesses. Buncombe County policy is to provide minority contractors an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of its contracting and procurement programs, and to prohibit any and all discrimination against persons or businesses in pursuit of these opportunities. Minority Business Plan questions may be directed to Buncombe County Procurement at (828) 250-4154. Sources for certified minority firms are available at <http://www.doa.nc.gov/hub>.

XII. Lead Department/Division

Staffing for this grant program is provided by Buncombe County's Strategic Partnerships Department.