

**Buncombe County FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants  
Application Summary Sheet**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Pathways to Economic Mobility</b>
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Just Economics</b>

<b>Amount Requested</b>	\$10,000	<b>Strategic Priority or Sustainability Goal</b>	Diverse Workforce
<b>New or Renewal Request</b>	New	<b>Commissioner Districts Served</b>	All

<b>Organization Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mission is to educate, advocate, and organize for a just and sustainable local economy that works for all in Western North Carolina. Just Economics has three primary areas of work: Policy Advocacy, Living Wage Employer Certification, and Grassroots Leadership Development. Focused on the issues of living wage, affordable housing, and better transit.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans to engage people most impacted by disparities in our local economy through Voices for Economic Justice workshop series as well as impacted peoples' assemblies and our public engagement workshops. Grassroots leadership development and community engagement activities are meant to involve low-income people in meaningful dialogue around community change efforts aimed at removing barriers to employment including housing and transportation.</li> <li>Living Wage Employer Certification program is aimed at raising the wage floor to a living wage.</li> </ul>
<b>People Served</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work is centered around low-wage workers and people most impacted by economic injustice. Women and people of color are disproportionately represented among the lowest paid workers. Estimating to serve at least 60 new people and at least 20 of them will become more involved with organization's effort to bring about change and remove barriers to economic mobility. About 500 more workers will be covered under Living Wage Certification Program.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project is one year of a multi-year approach to bringing about the vision laid out in our organization's strategic plan. Will measure both the quantitative and qualitative results of our work. Quantitative results indicate how many community members attend our engagement activities and how many people are impacted by the results of our systems change. Additionally, database will record how many employers are Living Wage Certified, how many employees are covered, and how many received wage raises. Will also conduct participant evaluations and interviews to collect qualitative results.</li> </ul>

<b>Budget</b>			
<b>Amount Funded FY2019</b>	n/a	<b>Increase Request</b>	n/a
<b>Project Budget</b>	\$101,112	<b>Total Organization Budget</b>	\$180,000
<b>Other Funding Sources:</b> City of Asheville, United Way, Foundation Grants, Sponsorships			

<b>Additional Information</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous recipient of a County Strategic Partnership Grant, \$10,000 in FY2018; not funded in FY2019</li> </ul>	

# Pathways to Economic Mobility

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## *FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants*

### ***Just Economics***

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### ***Ms Vicki Lynn Meath N/A***

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# Application Form

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## Question Group

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Please complete the form below and upload the required files for your application. Organizations submitting more than one project must complete one submission form for each project. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Priority is given to nonprofit organizations with projects that contribute to Buncombe County's strategic priorities or sustainability goals.

For FY2020, no Strategic Partnership Grant applications will be considered for the strategic priorities "Affordable Housing" or "Early Childhood Education." Funding for affordable housing projects is managed through Buncombe County's Affordable Housing Services Program. Funding for early childhood projects will be managed through the newly forming Early Childhood Education and Development Fund.

### Project Name\*

Name of Project.

Pathways to Economic Mobility

### Amount Requested\*

\$10,000.00

### Strategic Priority\*

Which of the following priorities best reflects the primary goal of your project?

Buncombe County Commissioners are dedicated to strengthening the quality of life for everyone by setting new fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible goals that will guide decisions and improve our community for future generations. The Board has committed to strategic priorities as a guide to shape partnerships and investments of resources to insure a healthy, safe, well-educated, thriving and sustainable community.

Details about the Strategic Priorities are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Diverse Community Workforce

### Strategic Priority - Other Sustainability Goal

If you selected "Other Sustainability Goal" from the list of Strategic Priorities, please list it here.

Details about the Sustainability Goals are available at [THIS LINK](#).

## Organization Description\*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

Just Economics' mission is to educate, advocate, and organize for a just and sustainable local economy that works for all in Western North Carolina. Just Economics has three primary areas of work: Policy Advocacy, Living Wage Employer Certification, and Grassroots Leadership Development. We are focused on the issues of living wage, affordable housing, and better transit. We are intentional about not just advocating for, but advocating with marginalized communities to bring about change.

Over the past ten years we have accomplished a lot. We built the largest voluntary Living Wage Certification program in the country and are teaching other communities how to do the same. We worked with the City of Asheville and Buncombe County to create and pass Living Wage policy. We have trained more than 200 grassroots leaders through our Voices for Economic Justice program, and graduates of that program initiated the Peoples' Transit Campaign working with the City to build better buses together.

## Project Description

What do you propose to do? What is your plan? What are your goals?

Our work is aimed at developing pathways to economic mobility by taking a multi-faceted approach. We work to involve the voice of low-income people in public policy and planning aimed at removing barriers to employment while at the same time, working to increase the number of living wage jobs.

We plan to engage people most impacted by disparities in our local economy through our Voices for Economic Justice workshop series as well as our impacted peoples' assemblies and our public engagement workshops. Our grassroots leadership development and community engagement activities are meant to involve low-income people in meaningful dialogue around community change efforts aimed at removing barriers to employment including housing and transportation.

Finally, our Living Wage Employer Certification program is aimed at raising the wage floor to a living wage. As we increase the number of jobs paying a living wage in the Asheville region, we open opportunity to economic mobility.

## Key Steps\*

How will the project work? What are specific activities and milestones that your project entails?

We plan to build on our successes of the past and initiate new efforts based on what we have learned. Activities include:

- \*Conducting a Fall session of Voices for Economic Justice (8 weeks), our leadership and community organizing training for people living on a low-income.
- \*Hosting a Transit Riders' Assembly to gather input used to guide the work of our campaign leaders.
- \*Host at least 2 public engagement workshops focusing at least 1 on the public budget process.
- \*Help lead a local area Workers' Assembly

We will then engage leaders in our work to remove barriers to economic mobility by:

- \*Working with our Peoples' Transit Campaign leaders to develop an annual plan for our Transit Work with specific, measurable, and achievable goals.
- \*Continuing our work with Family Friendly Affordable Buncombe

In regards to increasing the number of living wage jobs, we will:

\*Certify 50 new employers over the year

\*Continue participation with the New Economies Coalition.

### Area Served\*

Which areas of the County will be served by this project? Which Commissioner District(s) will be served?

A Buncombe County Commissioner district map is available at [THIS LINK](#).

All

### People Served\*

Who are the members of our community this project will serve? How many people will be served? Include demographics, including age, area median income, race, neighborhood and/or school.

Our work is centered around low-wage workers and people most impacted by economic injustice. Women and people of color are disproportionately represented among the lowest paid workers.

In regards to our public engagement activities, we estimate that we will serve at least 60 new people and at least 20 of them will become more involved with our organization's effort to bring about change and remove barriers to economic mobility.

Our policy and systems change work is much harder to estimate, however, this work benefits many thousands of people in our community. For example, as lead advocates working with the City of Asheville to bring about Sunday bus service, we know thousands of bus riders are impacted. We heard from people who now do not need to spend their whole day's pay on a cab to work on Sunday just to keep their job.

Finally, while the number of employees vary by employer, we estimate that about 500 more workers will be covered under our Living Wage Certification Program.

### Partners\*

Which other organizations are you working with to reach your goals? What other local organizations provide similar services or serve similar beneficiaries, and how do you work together?

As a small organization, we leverage our resources by partnering with other organizations when appropriate.

In regards to affordable housing, we partner and follow the lead of the Success Equation, a project of Children First/CIS, as a key member of the Housing Team and we are also involved in the Family Friendly Affordable Buncombe coalition.

With our Peoples' Transit Campaign, we have taken the lead involving transit-dependent residents in working to build a better bus system and we work with several organizations interested. We are also part of a coalition called ART-C working with business and organizational partners to expand on the vision for transit.

While no other local organization does Living Wage Certification, we are the convener of the Western Region of Raising Wages NC, an effort to support state policy and local efforts for living wages. We are also

working with the New Economies Coalition to support more just, sustainable, and democratic economic development.

## Personnel\*

Who is responsible for the project? Briefly describe project leaders and the role each will play in the project. How do these leaders reflect the population or community that you serve?

Our work is led by grassroots leaders and community members who make up our committees. The primary committees involved are the Grassroots Leadership Development Committee, the Policy Advocacy Committee, the Certification Committee, and our Peoples' Transit Campaign Team. The Peoples' Campaign Team is 100% led by necessity bus riders. Our Grassroots Leadership Development Committee is primarily made up of low-income people who have participated in our Voices for Economic Justice program. Our Policy Advocacy Committee and our Certification Committee are both diverse groups of community members.

Our staff supports the work of our committees. Our three key staff members involved in this work include Amy Cantrell, Carmen Ramos Kennedy, and Vicki Meath. Amy is our Community Organizer and is the founder of Beloved. Carmen is our Living Wage Program Coordinator and is also the head of the local NAACP. Vicki is the Executive Director and oversees our policy advocacy work.

## Success\*

How will you measure results? What will success look like? How will you document the impact of your project? Include whether there is a model that serves as basis for project design.

Policy work, systems change, and grassroots public engagement is often long-haul work worth the effort. This project is one year of a multi-year approach to bringing about the vision laid out in our organization's strategic plan.

We will measure both the quantitative and qualitative results of our work. Our quantitative results indicate how many community members attend our engagement activities and how many people are impacted by the results of our systems change. Additionally, in our database we record how many employers are Living Wage Certified, how many employees are covered, and how many received wage raises. We also conduct participant evaluations and interviews to collect qualitative results of our work. We document these in reports to our board and committees and use these results to shape our work moving forward.

In general, we use Popular Education models and grassroots community organizing best practices as the basis for project and workshop designs.

## Funding\*

What is your plan for finding the balance of the project budget? What is your funding timeline and what are your other sources of support?

Our work is intersectional and multi-year. Our work is also on-going. Just Economics is on a January to December fiscal year and the work in this project that takes place in 2019 is close to being fully committed. This project will be fully funded through June 30th, of 2020 if we receive the requested funds from the City of Asheville, the Buncombe County Service Foundation and the United Way. We are currently in the process of applying for all three funding requests.

## Sustainability\*

How will this project be maintained? Please describe funding sources and how you plan to sustain the project in future years.

We have been working on our financial sustainability plan and have enlisted the help of WNC Nonprofit Pathways to create a Fund Development Plan for our organization. So far our fundraising plan has been working well and we are getting to a more sustainable financial place. The fundraising for this project and the fundraising for our organization as a whole includes diverse sources from grants to earned income and individual donations.

Just Economics is on a January-December fiscal year and our 2019 grassroots fundraising goal is in line with the grassroots fundraising goals we have met the past two years. To date, we have secured 77% of grant funding for the current calendar year. Our current grant funders for programmatic work include the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, United Way, the Western North Carolina Community Foundation, Fund for Democratic Communities, Catholic Campaign for Human Development and the Ben and Jerry's Foundation.

## ATTACHMENTS

### Project Budget\*

Download the budget form at **THIS LINK**.

Complete the budget form for this project and the overall organization.

Save it to your computer, then upload it.

strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-budget-JE.xlsx

### Financial Statements

Upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements.

All financial statements must be audited, reviewed or compiled by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

Just Economics 2017 Compilation Final Report.pdf

### IRS Form 990

Upload a copy of the 990 nonprofit tax reporting form that you most recently completed.

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

JE 2017 Form 990EZ Final for Public Inspection.pdf

## Board of Directors List

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors.

If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

JEstaff& Board List 2019.doc

## Authorized Signatory

By typing in below the name of the authorized signatory and date of submittal, you acknowledge that your governing body has authorized this application, that it is true and current to your knowledge. As a condition of any grant awarded, this organization will provide all information in the manner described in the contract to be executed between the organization and Buncombe County or its designee, including program and financial reporting.

Name & Date

Vicki Meath 2/7/19

Other attachments or supplemental information may be submitted to Rachael Nygaard at [rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org](mailto:rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org)

## File Attachment Summary

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### ***Applicant File Uploads***

- strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-budget-JE.xlsx
- Just Economics 2017 Compilation Final Report.pdf
- JE 2017 Form 990EZ Final for Public Inspection.pdf
- JEstaff& Board List 2019.doc