

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

Project	Workforce Literacy Education
Organization	Literacy Council of Buncombe County

Amount Requested	\$25,000	Strategic Priority or Sustainability Goal	Diverse Workforce
New or Renewal Request	New	Commissioner Districts Served	All

Organization Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Literacy Council of Buncombe County's mission is to increase comprehensive literacy and English language skills through specialized instruction by trained tutors and access to literacy resources. We work to end the interconnected generational cycles of low literacy and poverty through four programs: Adult Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), the Augustine Project, and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. The Literacy Council is a member of the NC Literacy Association, our Program Directors are ProLiteracy-certified trainers, and the organization was awarded the 2013 Sector Stewardship Award from the NC Center for Nonprofits.
Project Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Literacy Council will provide reading and English language tutoring to 215 adults to improve their employability. We will provide one-on-one and small group instruction via 150 trained volunteer tutors using curricula that is evidence-based and contextualized to life and work. Instruction is tailored to our students' goals, including job- and industry-specific language instruction and preparation for the US Naturalization Exam and/or High School Equivalency exams. Lessons are provided at flexible times and locations to minimize barriers to success such as transportation, work schedules, and childcare.
People Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Literacy Education students are adults who are either English language learners or read, write, and/or spell below a basic skills level. Their ages range from 16 to 75, with 74% women and 26% men. Students live in all areas of Buncombe County, with the highest concentration being in West Asheville and Candler. While some students are unemployed and seeking work, 57% work one or more low-wage jobs and have a goal of earning a promotion or getting a better job.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 215 adults served, 80% will receive sufficient hours to be post-tested and 40% of post-tested students will improve literacy and English language skill scores by at least one instructional level. Within one year, 20 students will secure a new job or earn a promotion, 10 students will pass the U.S. Naturalization exam, and 3 students will earn a high school equivalency diploma.

Budget			
Amount Funded FY2019	n/a	Increase Request	n/a
Project Budget	\$125,476	Total Organization Budget	\$333,041
Other Funding Sources: Grants, donor program, corporations, fundraising events, endowments			

Additional Information

Workforce Literacy Education

FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants

Literacy Council of Buncombe County

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Application Form

Question Group

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.

Workforce Literacy Education

Amount Requested*

\$25,000.00

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.

The Literacy Council of Buncombe County's mission is to increase comprehensive literacy and English language skills through specialized instruction by trained tutors and access to literacy resources. We work to end the interconnected generational cycles of low literacy and poverty through four programs: Adult Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), the Augustine Project, and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Serving approximately 350 students with individualized tutoring and 2,000 free book recipients, we are the third largest literacy nonprofit/Community Based Organization in the state of North Carolina. The Literacy Council is a member of the NC Literacy Association, our Program Directors are ProLiteracy-certified trainers, and the organization was awarded the 2013 Sector Stewardship Award from the NC Center for Nonprofits.

Project Description

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

The Literacy Council will provide reading and English language tutoring to 215 adults to improve their employability. We will provide one-on-one and small group instruction via 150 trained volunteer tutors using curricula that is evidence-based and contextualized to life and work. Instruction is tailored to our students' goals, including job- and industry-specific language instruction and preparation for the US Naturalization Exam and/or High School Equivalency exams. Lessons are provided at flexible times and locations to minimize barriers to success such as transportation, work schedules, and childcare. Of the 215 adults served, 80% will receive sufficient hours to be post-tested and 40% of post-tested students will improve literacy and English language skill scores by at least one instructional level. Within one year, 20 students will secure a new job or earn a promotion, 10 students will pass the U.S. Naturalization exam, and 3 students will earn an HSE diploma.

Key Steps*

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

- * Retain existing tutors and students (Milestone: 80% retention rate)
- * Recruit new volunteer tutors (Milestones - monthly: one community presentation, 2,000 social media post-reaches, and two media listings/articles)
- * Provide new students with an assessment, program overview, and assistance in setting employment goals (Milestone - monthly: intake 15 new students)
- * Train new volunteer tutors on teaching methods, materials, and lesson personalization. (Milestone - bi-monthly: train 12 new tutors)
- * Match students with trained volunteer tutors, ensuring that they meet for two hours each week for a year (Milestone - serve 215 students)
- * Provide support services to volunteer tutors (Milestone - monthly: conduct two in-service trainings, three resource e-newsletters, and 20 one-on-one Program Director consultations)
- * Assess students through quarterly progress reports and annual post-tests (Milestone - post-test 170 students with 68 improving by a full instructional level)

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](#).

The Workforce Literacy Education program will serve adults across Buncombe County, in all three Commissioner Districts. Districts 1 and 3 have a higher percentage of participation than district 2, with a large concentration of students living in West Asheville, Candler, and Arden.

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.

Workforce Literacy Education students are adults who are either English language learners or read, write, and/or spell below a basic skills level. Their ages range from 16 to 75, with 74% women and 26% men. Students live in all areas of Buncombe County, with the highest concentration being in West Asheville and Candler. While some students are unemployed and seeking work, 57% work one or more low-wage jobs and have a goal of earning a promotion or getting a better job.

Approximately 75% are immigrants. A majority of these students are Latinx, and others are Eastern European. They represent a range of educational, native-language literacy proficiency, and ethnic backgrounds. The remaining 25% are native English speakers who often have a learning difference such as dyslexia and/or dropped out of high school before receiving a diploma.

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?

A-B Tech provides HSE and English language education to adults. Our programs differ in class size, class times/locations, and instructional methods. The programs are complementary. A-B Tech meets the needs of higher-level students who can attend class at specific times/locations, and we meet the needs of students who need individualized instruction and scheduling. Our programs work meaningfully together. We:

- * Cross-refer students to meet each student's unique needs
- * Maintain a board seat for a representative from A-B Tech's Department of Transitional Studies
- * Host an annual tutor training with a guest speaker from A-B Tech

To partner with NCWorks for the benefit of Workforce Literacy Education students, we:

- * Host an annual tutor training with a guest speaker from NC Works
- * Publish a blog post about NC Works services

Partnerships with 16 schools, churches, libraries, nonprofits, and community centers provide a variety of tutoring locations throughout Buncombe County.

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?

The Literacy Council's Program Directors are the staff members responsible for carrying out the key steps of the project with support from the ESOL Specialist.

Rebecca Massey, Adult Education Director, has an MA in English and experience in multi-sensory language instruction, volunteer recruitment, volunteer training, and tutoring adults.

Erin Sebelius, ESOL Director, is Spanish/English/German trilingual and has an MA in Cross-Cultural Education. She has led our ESOL program for 12 years, during which time the program has experienced growth in students served, post-test completion rates, and post-test improvement rates.

Irina Khasanova, ESOL Specialist, is Russian/English bilingual and has an MA in physics. She has 18 years of ESOL experience. Irina reflects the community that we serve in that she is an immigrant, is a former Literacy Council student, and has taken and passed the U.S. Naturalization Exam.

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.

Success will look like: 215 adults served with 80% receiving sufficient hours to be post-tested and 40% of post-tested students improving literacy and English language skill scores by at least one instructional level. Within one year, 20 students secure a new job or earn a promotion, 10 students pass the U.S. Naturalization exam, and 3 students earn an HSE diploma.

We will measure results through administering the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) test according to test manufacturer guidelines, as well as by collecting quarterly data on student achievements through tutor reports.

The Literacy Council has been providing specialized literacy and English language instruction to adults for more than 30 years. We have made concerted efforts over the past ten years to provide increased alignment with workforce preparedness activities based on recommendations from the NC Community College System and models from other Community Based Organizations.

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?

Fiscal/Program Year: July 1 to June 30

The Literacy Council's Adult Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages programs (which serve Workforce Literacy Education students) are supported through a federal grant from the NC Community College System. Due to the re-authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and a change in the state-wide funding formula, this funding is changing. In 2018/19, our allocation was reduced and we expect it to be reduced again in 2019/20. A Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant would ensure that these critical services providing educational opportunities that contribute to a diverse community workforce will continue to meet the needs of our community.

Other grant funds that support this project include: United Way of Asheville-Buncombe County and Dollar General Literacy Foundation. We have a robust individual donor program and two successful annual fundraising events that can support the balance of the project budget.

Sustainability*

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

The Literacy Council has provided literacy tutoring to adults for more than 30 years and English tutoring to immigrant adults for more than 20 years. We are one of the only organizations in Buncombe County that provides US Naturalization exam tutoring. We receive financial support through the NC Community College System, a variety of private and corporate foundations, individual donors, faith-based communities, local businesses, and annual special events. Due to funding changes at the federal and state level, we are working to further diversify funding and build sustainability. Our board and staff have worked for the past two years to develop strategies and initiatives to build financial resiliency. One of many strategies is to apply for county- and city-level funding to support our critical community services.

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_LCBC_2-2019.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.

LCBC Audit 2017-18_FINAL.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.

LCBC US Tax Return 2017-18_FINAL.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.

LCBC Board of Directors 2018-19.docx

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

Ashley V. Lasher - February 8, 2019

Other attachments or supplemental information may be submitted to Rachael Nygaard at rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-budget_LCBC_2-2019.xlsx
- LCBC Audit 2017-18_FINAL.pdf
- LCBC US Tax Return 2017-18_FINAL.pdf
- LCBC Board of Directors 2018-19.docx