

Pathways to Economic Mobility

FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants

Just Economics

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Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants program, Buncombe County requests proposals for community-based projects working toward outcomes in alignment with Strategic Plan focus areas.

Please refer to the Grant Guidelines published on the Strategic Partnership Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants for complete information about the grant program, including: Purpose; Funding; Eligibility; Timeline; Grant writing workshop; Review process; Awards; and more.

Applications are due by 5:00 on February 14, 2020.

BASIC INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION – Before completing the application, please tell us a little about the request.

Project Name*

Pathways to Economic Mobility

Strategy*

Recognizing that some projects will use more than one strategy, select the strategy that most closely applies to this project:

- Environmental Stewardship - High quality air, water, farmland and renewable energy for future generations
- Educated & Capable Community - A county where all people thrive and demonstrate resilience throughout their lives
- Vibrant Economy - A robust and sustainable economy that builds on homegrown industries/talent and provides economic mobility for all
- Resident Well-Being - A county where residents are safe, healthy, and engaged in their community

Vibrant Economy

Funding Request*

How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?

\$10,000.00

Grant Guidelines*

Have you read and understand the information presented in the FY2021 Grant Guidelines Strategic Partnership Grants?

Click here for the Grant Guidelines.

If no, please contact County staff to request assistance: Rachael Nygaard, (828) 250-6536 or rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org.

Yes

Nonprofit Status*

Upload proof of nonprofit status, such as IRS Determination Letter or documentation from the North Carolina Secretary of State. If this documentation is not available, briefly state the reason.

JE Tax Exempt Letter.pdf

Board of Directors*

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 2020.doc

APPLICATION

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Responses to these questions will be scored by the grant committee. Each question is worth 10% of the final score.

Organization*

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 center the voice of people most impacted by economic injustice and work to engage community members in dialogue about the decisions that affect their lives and the lives of our neighbors.

Over the past ten years we have accomplished a lot. We built the largest voluntary Living Wage Certification program in the country, with over 425 employers in Buncombe County certified as paying a living wage. We have raised the dialogue about living wages in our community and have participated in public

policy efforts around wages at the local and statewide level. We have educated and engaged hundreds of low-wage workers and people living on a low income through programs like our Voices for Economic Justice training, our impacted people's assemblies, and our public budget workshop. We initiated and lead the campaign to improve transit, Better Buses Together.

Need for the Project*

What is the main issue this project is established to address? What data or qualitative factors/stories are available to show that need?

Income disparity is a root cause of poverty. With the rising cost of housing in our area, the cost of living is disproportionately high compared to the average wage making it difficult for working families to survive. When workers and their families cannot meet their basic needs without help, a variety of problems arise. Families are forced to live in substandard housing, direct service organizations are overburdened with an overwhelming need, local businesses are less sustainable because local consumers have a decreased purchasing power, and community problems develop with rising poverty.

The main focus of our work is reducing poverty, addressing economic injustice, and removing barriers to economic self sufficiency. While our living wage work is most directly reducing poverty, our transit campaign and affordable housing work are removing barriers to economic mobility. Our work centers the needs and voice of people living in poverty to bring about needed change to reduce poverty.

Project*

Explain the project and how it will work. Include the overall purpose and any models or evidence-based practices that will be included. What specific activities and milestones are included in the project plan?

Our work is aimed at developing pathways to economic mobility by taking a multi-faceted approach. We work to involve the voices 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.

People Served*

How many people will be served by this project? Describe the people served, including demographics such as geography, income, race & ethnicity, age, etc.

In regards to our public engagement activities, we estimate that we will serve at least 60 new, primarily low-income people and at least 20 of them will become measurably involved with our organization's effort to bring about change and remove barriers to economic mobility. These individuals include participants in our Voices for Economic Justice training, our transit riders' assemblies, our workers assembly and our public budget workshop.

Our policy and systems change work is much harder to estimate, however, this work benefits many thousands of people in our community. For example, our Better Buses Together campaign successfully advocated for the route changes outlined in the first year of the City of Asheville's Transit Master Plan. These route changes provide greater frequency on many routes and are already demonstrating better on time performance. For the thousands of people who ride the bus, these improvements can reduce travel time to basic needs and increase their ability to maintain jobs.

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. In regards to our new Beyond Living Wages work, we do not have measurable targets outlined as of yet, but included this as part of this grant because we are committed to moving the needle on equitable workplace practices and supporting forward thinking business models. We know that our Living Wage Employer Certification Program and our Beyond Living Wages work combine to provide new pathways to economic mobility and self sufficiency for many of our neighbors.

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.

Results*

What results do you hope to achieve with this project? Be specific about how much impact the project will have in line with Commissioner focus areas.

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 Bi-Annual Transit Riders' Assemblies 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 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.

- *Creating a new agenda for affordable housing focused on tenant's rights

- *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

- *Initiate a new program area called "Beyond Living Wages" highlighting equitable business models and peer sharing of best practices for creating fair and just workplaces

Evaluation*

How will you know you have succeeded? Explain the project evaluation process, including specific measures that will be tracked.

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.

Collaboration*

List any formal and/or supportive partners. Describe their roles in the project. How will they make it stronger?

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

In regards to affordable housing, we partner with 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. We now have our own Affordable Housing Strategy Team focusing on Tenant's Rights, and we also plan to partner more deeply with the Asheville Buncombe Community Land Trust, Thrive Asheville, and Poder Emma. These organizations make our work in this area stronger by bringing experience in different aspects of the affordable housing issue.

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 partner organizations. We are also part of a coalition called ART-C working with business and organizational partners to expand on the vision for transit. ART-C includes Mountain True, Pisgah Legal, Children First/Communities in Schools, the Sierra Club, OLLI, UNCA, and AARP. These organizations make this project stronger by reaching a broader audience in support of transit and the understanding about how better transit is good for our whole community.

While no other local organization does Living Wage Certification, we work with other business organizations like Asheville Grown and Mountain BizWorks to connect with a larger base of business owners. Additionally, we are the convener of the Western Region of Raising Wages NC, an effort to support state policy and local efforts for living wages. The organizations and groups around this table help to make the work stronger by bringing more low-wage workers to the table.

Budget*

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Explain how grant funds will be used, specifically what type of expenses will be covered by County funds. Describe other sources of revenue, including type of funding, source, restrictions and status.

FY21_SPGrant_Budget_Form (1).xlsx

County grant funds are primarily spent on staff salaries for the 3 salaried staff who carry out this work, our Executive Director, our Living Wage Program Coordinator, and our Community Organizer.

Other County Funding*

List all other Buncombe County funding that is provided to your organization. For each item, list the project being funded, amount of funding, source (grant, departmental contract, etc.) and whether funding is to be renewed for FY2021.

Our fiscal year runs from January to December. Currently we have a Strategic Partnership Fund grant but no other County funding.

Sustainability*

How will the project continue to succeed after the funding of the grant? Explain your plan for making this an ongoing effort.

In 2019 we utilized the help of Western North Carolina Nonprofit Pathways and went through a Fund Development process. While we are just beginning to implement the plan, we feel more confident than ever in our ability to raise money through individual memberships. We know that our work with and for people living on a low income will not likely be fully sustainable and will most likely require continued grant funding from a variety of sources in the near future, we now have a plan to maintain a reserve in our budget and increase funding from a variety of sources.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONAL INFORMATION – This information will not impact grant scoring but will be helpful to the committee.

Partial Funding

If the project were to be offered a grant for partial funding, what factors would need to be considered?

If this grant request is only partially funded, Just Economics will continue to come up with creative solutions, while moving forward with our fund development plan and applying for other grants. Maintaining our programs is of the utmost importance.

Resource Support

Beyond this grant request, how can Buncombe County support your organization with this project and in strengthening your work?

We are grateful to work in partnership with Buncombe County around improving regional transit. Buncombe County acts as a model for other employers in the area and we're honored to work with the County to maintain a living wage for County staff and work toward other just workplace practices for County workers like a paid family leave policy.

Other

Is there anything else that you want the committee to know?

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- JE Tax Exempt Letter.pdf
- JEstaff& Board List 2020.doc
- FY21_SPGrant_Budget_Form (1).xlsx

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **MAR 22 2005**

JUST ECONOMICS
45 SARDIS RD
ASHEVILLE, NC 28806-9545

Employer Identification Number:
61-1403579
DLN:
17053057850055
Contact Person:
MICHAEL A LUDWIG ID# 31470
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

Dear Applicant:

Our letter dated JULY 2002, stated you would be exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and you would be treated as a public charity, rather than as a private foundation, during an advance ruling period.

Based on the information you submitted, you are classified as a public charity under the Code section listed in the heading of this letter. Since your exempt status was not under consideration, you continue to be classified as an organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, provides detailed information about your rights and responsibilities as an exempt organization. You may request a copy by calling the toll-free number for forms, (800) 829-3676. Information is also available on our Internet Web Site at www.irs.gov.

If you have general questions about exempt organizations, please call our toll-free number shown in the heading between 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Eastern time.

Please keep this letter in your permanent records.

Sincerely yours,



Lois G. Lerner
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Letter 1050 (DO/CG)

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Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Letter 1050 (DO/CG)



Staff and Board of Directors 2020

Name	City	Affiliation or Occupation	Position	email	Race	Gender
Vicki Meath	Asheville	Salaried Staff	Executive Director	vicki@justeconomicswnc.org	W	F
Carmen Ybarra	Weaverville	Salaried Staff	Community Organizer	carmenybarra@justeconomicswnc.org	L	F
Emma Hutchens	Asheville	Salaried Staff	Living Wage Program Coordinator	emma@justeconomicswnc.org	W	F
Diana Sierra	Candler	Buncombe County Family Justice Center	Chair	Diana_sierra@comcast.net	L	F
Julia McDowell	Asheville	Voices Leader/Just Folks	Vice Chair	Jamcdowell100@yahoo.com	B	F
Andrew Crosson	Asheville	Rural Support Partners	Treasurer	Andrew@ruralsupportpartners.com	W	M
Tracey Wold	Asheville	Voices Leader	Secretary	tracewold@gmail.com	W	F
Philip Cooper	Asheville	Upskill/Hired Power		changeagentcooper84@gmail.com	B	M
Tawnya Watts	Weaverville	Business Owner		tawnyawhea@gmail.com	B	F
Pat Horrocks	Asheville	Business Owner		pat@blackbirdframe.com	W	F
Elaine Long	Brevard	Living Wage Coalition of Transylvania Co.		elaineblong@yahoo.com	W	F
Paulina Mendez	Asheville	City of Asheville, Office of Equity and Inclusion		paulinam364@gmail.com	L	F
Diane	Allen	President ATU Local 128		atulocal128president@yahoo.com	W	F

Board Recruitment and Selection

Just Economics uses a board recruitment plan to select our board members. We start with a board demographic matrix and compare our existing board demographics with the ideal representation we would like to see on our board. We strive to have a board that is diverse in terms of race, gender, and socio-economic status with an emphasis on intentional representation from low-income people,

women, and people of color. We also strive to have representation from different sectors in our community including faith, labor, non-profits, and the business sector. We look for skills and experiences that would serve the organization well. Each board member reviews the board matrix. Any board member or Just Economics general member can make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for new board members. The Executive Committee members then meet with prospective board members and evaluates their interest, as well as what they can bring to the organization. The Executive Committee then makes a recommendation for invitations of new board members to the full board for a vote. If the new board candidate is approved, the invitation to officially join the Just Economics board is extended. New board members usually join the board in January or whenever there is a vacancy left by an outgoing board member.

Strategic Partnership Grants Proposed FY2021 Project Budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

Organization Name:	Just Economics
Project Name:	Pathways to Economic Mobility
Grant Amount Requested:	10,000

FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue	Amount	Committed or Pending?
Proposed Buncombe County Strategic Partnerships Grant	\$ 10,000	
List other sources: Z Smith Reynolds	\$ 40,000	committed
List other sources: CCHD	\$ 50,000	pending
List other sources: United Way of Asheville	\$ 10,400	committed
List other sources: Ben and Jerry's	\$ 20,000	pending
List other sources: Business and Faith Community donations	\$ 10,000	pending
List other sources: Individual Donations and Membership	\$ 31,000	
List other sources: Earned Income, Other small grants, and Other Fundraisers	\$ 30,000	
Total	\$ 201,400	

FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Grant	Other Funds	Total	Notes
Personnel	\$ 10,000	\$ 156,300	\$ 166,300	
Training		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	
Travel		\$ 1,300	\$ 1,300	
Supplies / Materials		\$ 4,200	\$ 4,200	
Meetings (Food, Interpreting, Child Care, etc.)		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	
Equipment / Furniture		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	
Printing / Marketing		\$ 500	\$ 500	
Licensing / Memberships / Dues / Subscriptions			\$ -	
Client Support			\$ -	
Contracts		\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
Professional Services (Legal, Accounting, etc.)		\$ 2,700	\$ 2,700	
Insurance and Bonds		\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	
Building Maintenance (Rent, Utilities, Repairs, etc.)		\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	
List other costs: postage		\$ 800	\$ 800	
List other costs: special event supplies and expenses		\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	
List other costs: bank service fees		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	
List other costs:			\$ -	
Total			\$ 201,400	

Overall Organization Budget	Amount	Notes
FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue	\$ 203,680	In 2019 we worked to rebuild our reserve that we had to draw from in 2018. In 2019, we had 2 unexpected staff changes and we saw savings during the transitions.
FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses	\$ 173,300	
FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount	\$ 200,666	Our fiscal year is from January through December
FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount	\$ 203,300	