



**ADDENDUM #1**

**March 25, 2022**

**TO: ALL POTENTIAL BIDDERS**

**FROM: RON VENTURELLA, BUNCOMBE COUNTY PROCUREMENT MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: ADDENDUM #1 FOR RFP CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS**

The following changes, revisions, additions, and/or clarifications to the plans and/or specifications are hereby made a part of the original documents.

**Addendum # 1**

The following questions were asked by potential bidders (listed in no particular order):

Question: As an emergency responder, can a food bank apply for capital investments as an essential public service provider?

Answer: Proposed projects may include capital expenditures and/or programs & services within the ten categories specified in the RFP: Affordable Housing; Aging/Older Adults; Business Support/Economic Development; Environment/Climate; Homelessness; K-12 Education; Infrastructure and/or Broadband; Mental Health/Substance Use; NC Pre-K Expansion; and Workforce. Food security is not a specified category; however, a food bank could propose a project under another category.

Question: Please comment on what types of projects the county is interested in funding in the "for profit" arena.

Answer: For-profit businesses are not eligible for Buncombe County Recovery Funds. An eligible entity (public or nonprofit organization) could act as a fiscal agent for a project that includes for-profit businesses. Grants or subgrants to businesses are an eligible activity per U.S. Treasury guidance as long as it meets all other requirements of the funding.

Question: I would like to ask if Safety Communities and Healthy community is Important.

Answer: Buncombe County's mission is to promote a healthy, safe, well-educated and thriving community with a sustainable quality of life, a submission to support such initiatives would be considered.

Question: Please explain the nature of Buncombe County's consultation with the City of Asheville which is awarding ARPA funds in a separate process. Many applicants will be applying to both entities. Do you advise applicants create completely different projects to submit to city and county?

Answer: Buncombe County has been working closely with The City of Asheville staff and leadership to ensure there is alignment in our processes. This includes sharing information about each organization's application and award process, as well as discussing mutually supported projects that are requesting funding from the City and County. This has already been demonstrated through awards made from both organizations to certain Recovery Funding projects that applied for funding from the City and County.

Question: It is my understanding that for the Recovery Funding RFP, projects that were submitted under the previous Recovery Funding RFP are eligible for re-submission. However, will the new focus areas receive priority funding?

Answer: All previous applications are eligible for resubmission. The Board of County Commissioners has named specific priority categories for the second RFP process. Proposed projects must fit within the following submission categories:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging/Older Adults
- Business Support/Economic Development
- Environment/Climate
- Homelessness
- K-12 Education
- Infrastructure and/or Broadband
- Mental Health/Substance Use
- NC Pre-K Expansion
- Workforce

Question: From the first round of funding, were any projects in the environment/climate category funded? The link (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/common/community-investment/grants/covid-recovery-funding/funded-projects.pdf>) shows that no awards have been made to environment/climate projects thus far. Is that because you have received no applications in that arena, or because evaluators have found higher priority recovery projects in human services, infrastructure, or other categories? Among applications received to date, awards have been made to what top 5 categories?

Answer: The categories that are detailed in the link are reflective of how projects that have received funding thus far fit into the categories provided by the U.S. Treasury. Since the first RFP process, U.S. Treasury issued guidance allowing counties more flexibility for how funds are used, and Buncombe County Commissioners defined Environment/Climate as a category for this RFP process.

The top 5 categories receiving funding thus far include:

- Housing
- Broadband
- Small Business Economic Assistance
- Mental Health/Substance Use Services
- COVID-19 Public Health Expenses

Question: We have applied for a Strategic Partnership Grant and Tipping Point Grant for our two FY22 priority objectives. Since we do not know the outcome of those applications, would applying for a grant from these monies for the same projects negatively impact the outcomes of either this or our earlier applications.

Answer: Every RFP and grant process that Buncombe County operates stands alone, meaning organizations are welcome to apply for any individual grant or competitive bidding process without impacting the outcome of a separate application.

Question: Does the County have a rubric that will be used to decide awards?

Answer: There is an evaluation rubric that will be used for all proposal reviews, which was also used for the first RFP process. All evaluated categories will have the same scoring weights associated. The

evaluation criteria are: Project Plan; Statement of Need; Link to COVID-19; Population Served; Results; Evaluation; Equity Impact; Project Partners; Organizational Capacity; and Budget.

Question: Is there a suggested starting date for project proposals (or, what would the earliest date of funding be - May?)?

Answer: We anticipate the first awards from this RFP process to be announced in late May/early June with continuing rolling awards made. There is not a suggested starting date for projects, and we will work with each awarded organization to determine a practical period of performance. However, all funds must be obligated no later than December 31, 2024 and expended no later than December 31, 2026.

Question: Is there a suggested budget request range?

Answer: There is no minimum or maximum amount for budget requests. We encourage you to use the application to communicate the needs of your project to us through the "Budget" section and other response fields.

Question: Our organization is a fairly large non-profit, with several different units of work. I understand that you are asking for only one application per organization, but with different units, are there any exceptions?

Answer: All external community organizations are limited to one application.

Question: As this is a one-time grant, if we are asking for support with personnel costs as capacity building support, is that a problem as this might be ongoing, not a one-time cost?

Answer: Although this is one-time funding, awarded projects are able to occur over a multi-year period of time.

Question: Where do new media onboarding and web3, blockchain, and NFTs fit?

Answer: The County is not specifying certain types of activities or expenses that can be proposed, as long as projects fit within one of the ten categories specified in the RFP and are allowable under federal funding guidance and NC law.

Question: Can lost revenues, which delayed contracting for administration be included?

Answer: Projects must include a period of performance beginning sometime after the date of the award and ending no later than December 31, 2026. Within that timeframe, organizations can use funds for programs, services and or capital expenditures, including those that might have been otherwise covered by revenue lost as a result of the pandemic. Administrative costs are allowable.

Question: New organizations, particularly ethnic minority led ones do not have some of the experience guidelines which have been detailed, how can we lead these initiatives without being absorbed by a large majority-controlled entity or is the equity requirement less important? How will this work?

Answer: There is not a requirement for how long an organization must have been operating to be eligible for funds. It is a goal to be inclusive of organizations of all types. The source of funds for this contract will be federal funds subject to a high level of compliance requirements, and we encourage bidders to include organizational capacity building into proposed project plans and budgets.

Question: We are a food security organization (and provide health and wellness classes) to disproportionately impacted populations. It seems like food doesn't exactly fit into the categories. So I'm not sure if we're a good fit.

Answer: Proposed projects must fit within one of the ten categories specified in the RFP. Food security is not a specified category, however an organization that works in the food security arena could propose a project under another category.

Question: I would love it if someone could speak more to the subject of equity. The different types and which ones the County may prefer to focus on remedying.

Answer: These Recovery Funds are infused with the spirit and purpose to include service to populations that experienced impacts and disproportionate impacts of the public health emergency and negative economic outcomes. One type of equity mentioned in [the Final Rule](#) is the disproportionate effect of the pandemic on people of color. Buncombe County is committed to equity as both an organizational value and foundational focus area within our strategic plan. Buncombe County's Racial Equity Action Plan defines equity the state of being just, impartial and fair and states that racial equity is achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and outcomes for all groups are improved. All types of equity are included in the scope of this RFP. Buncombe County is seeking project that seek to build a just, equitable and sustainable COVID-19 recovery.

Question: We submitted a proposal in the last RFP process; we want to revise this proposal to submit. Can we edit the last submission and submit, or will we need to start over the submission in the form layout?

Answer: All applications submitted through the previous RFP process have been changed to a "draft" status in the application portal and can be edited and resubmitted no later than April 12, 2022, at 12:00PM. For assistance with the application portal, please contact Angelyn Johnson at [Angelyn.Johnson@buncombecounty.org](mailto:Angelyn.Johnson@buncombecounty.org) or (828) 250-4175.

**END OF ADDENDUM #1  
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