

04

BUSINESS GRANTS



PROJECT #238

Kent County Nonprofit Resource Alignment



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$65,000

Maximum Cost: \$70,000

ARPA Request: \$65,000

Submitter Info

Name: Candace Cowling

Organization: Family Futures

Project Overview

Funding Group: Improving Government Operations

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

No committed source of match funding to date.

Partnership

This project will engage several nonprofit service organizations, local foundations, and other public entities. Family Futures will lead the commissioning of the planning process, but the intent is to share ownership of the process with all participating organizations.

Identify the need for the proposed project

Family Futures, like many nonprofits, experienced a sudden shift in operations when COVID forced employees to begin working remotely. As the pandemic progresses, we have now embraced a hybrid work model and will likely continue to offer opportunities for employees to work remotely, both to mitigate ongoing transmission of COVID and as an employee-centric benefit. Based on our conversations with other nonprofit leaders, we are not alone. Due to this shift, organizations no longer have the same need for office space and believe this could be an opportunity for area nonprofit organizations and the public sector to further align resources. In addition to local anecdotal evidence, national research supports this need. According to a recent Gallup poll (Feb. 2022), approximately half of the U.S. full-time workforce report that their current job can be done remotely working from home, at least part of the time. Before the pandemic, very few remote-capable employees worked exclusively from home (8%), while about one-third had a hybrid work arrangement. Now, most remote-capable employees work from home at least part of the time, with 42% having a hybrid schedule, and 39% working entirely from home. These changes present an opportunity to create a paradigm shift, rethinking the way organizations have traditionally operated, reducing operating costs resulting in more resources for the provision of services. Colocation and alignment of resources will create synergy among organizations, helping to better align resources to those we serve.

Brief Description

Family Futures is seeking funding to commission an entity to facilitate a planning process for Kent County nonprofit and public sector organizations to help identify opportunities to align resources, such as shared space/occupancy and colocation. This planning process will enlist the support of a consultant to work across organizational boundaries to facilitate a comprehensive planning process. This process will include an inventory of current resources (office space) and remote/hybrid models of organizations. The assessment will review organizational needs based on different modes of work: in-person and together (in-person meetings), inperson and alone (working on-site), remote and together (online meetings and collaboration), and remote and alone (asynchronous work). In addition to this assessment, the study will offer nonprofit and public entities with resources to plan for the future of a hybrid workplace. Not only can organizations realize a cost savings by reducing operating costs, but it is anticipated that a hybrid work model will be necessary for organizations to compete for available talent, as the majority of remote-capable employees prefer a hybrid/remote option.

Long-Term Benefit

This initiative will result in increased collaboration among organizations, reducing operating costs and improving outcomes. In addition to colocation of staff and resources, there is long-term potential to create synergy among partnering organizations. Organizations will have an opportunity to rethink the ways in which they serve the community and those most in need, adapting organizational structures to be more responsive to the diverse needs of the individuals served.

Intended Beneficiary

The direct beneficiaries of this project are area nonprofit and public sector organizations. Indirectly, the project will benefit those each entity serves by increasing the amount of resources devoted to the provision of services rather than administration/occupancy costs.



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$65,000
Maximum Cost: \$70,000
ARPA Request: \$65,000

Submitter Info

Name: Candace Cowling
Organization: Family Futures

Project Overview

Funding Group: Improving Government Operations
Project Theme: Business Grants
Project Status: New Project
Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

No committed source of match funding to date.

Partnership

This project will engage several nonprofit service organizations, local foundations, and other public entities. Family Futures will lead the commissioning of the planning process, but the intent is to share ownership of the process with all participating organizations.

Estimated Cost

\$65,000 - \$70,000

Project Management Experience

Family Futures has a strong track record of leading large countywide projects. Family Futures is a current Kent County Ready by Five Early Childhood millage service provider, serving thousands of families each year through our evidence-based Kent County Healthy Families home-visiting initiative and our Connections program. In addition to direct service provision, Family Futures also facilitates county-wide initiatives, such as the Home Visitor Provider Network and is an active member of Kent County collaborative initiatives, such as KConnect and the Great Start Collaborative.

Federal Funds Experience

Family Futures is experienced in managing federal awards both as a direct recipient and subrecipient of funding. Due to the amount of federal funding received each year, Family Futures already conducts a single audit and is in compliance with Uniform Guidance requirements. Current/past federal funding includes the Promise Neighborhood program and the Encouraging Family Foundations initiative.

Studies on Impact

Yes. There is a body of research to support the practice of nonprofit resource sharing and the colocation of resources/staffing. Examples - Vinokur-Kaplan, D. (2017, December). New Public Governance, Social Services, and the Potential of Co-Located Nonprofit Centers for Improved Collaborations. Eisinger, S. M., & Vinokur-Kaplan, D. (2019). Shared Space and the New Nonprofit Workplace.

Guidehouse Ranking Notes



Eligibility



Sustainability



Feasibility

Small business support is eligible



PROJECT #293

Prevention Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$2,813,000

Maximum Cost: \$2,813,000

ARPA Request: \$2,813,000

Submitter Info

Name: Sonia Noorman

Organization: West Michigan Partnership for Children

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

Bethany Christian Services;
Catholic Charities West Michigan; D.A. Blodgett-St Johns; Samaritas; Wellspring Lutheran Services

Identify the need for the proposed project

Approximately 9500 of Kent County residents participated in prevention services last year through Bethany Christian Services, Catholic Charities West Michigan, D.A. Blodgett-St Johns, Samaritas and Wellspring Lutheran Services. Over 1,000 parents had children placed in foster care in fiscal year 2021. Families whose children were removed were often involved in a variety of prevention services or some were not involved in any. Currently there isn't a great way to determine what services really address the needs that put children at risk of removal. This project will provide information on what services are being utilized and have positive outcomes for children and families. Due to the siloed nature of referral systems and services provided, and the large number of agencies providing the services, there are challenges ensuring families are engaged in prevention services that will address the needs of the family. This can make it difficult to know what referrals have been made for an individual family, if a referral was successful, and what services were provided to the family. At a systems-level, it also makes it difficult to coordinate services, understand services needed, know what programs are responsive and impactful, and identify service gaps. WMPCC's partnership with the five agencies will allow for a seamless incorporation of prevention program monitoring and evaluation. WMPCC will hire a team of Data Quality Analysts, Utilization Analysts and Performance and Quality Improvement Coordinators and will utilize technology platforms (for example, FindHelp and Five Points). The project will assess and securely share the needs of families across contractual programs, actively track referral activity to ensure barriers are removed to families receiving services. Data analytics will be performed at a systems-level, ensuring the most efficient and effective coordination of services, development of best practices around engagement and service provision, as well as increased knowledge regarding which programs are responsive and lead to best outcomes. Racial and ethnic disparities will be identified and analyzed to ensure the impacts of systemic racism are addressed. Phase one of this project would be focused on the five foster care providers to establish strong data analytic platforms. Phase two would bring in other agencies who provide prevention services to more fully encompass the breadth the prevention services.

Brief Description

This funding would support a team of Utilization and Data Quality Analysts and Performance and Quality Improvement Coordinators who would lead systemwide prevention program monitoring and evaluation. Utilization Analysts monitor, analyze, and report on significant utilization trends, patterns, and impact on resources as well as identify service needs and gaps in service array. Data Quality Analysts develop and analyze dashboards and data visualizations for partners and stakeholders, as well as conduct validation testing of internal and external data and work with appropriate stakeholders to correct discrepancies in the data. Performance and Quality Improvement Coordinators assist with developing and implementing strategies, plans, and tools for monitoring and continuous quality improvement of the referral process, prevention services and share best practices.

Long-Term Benefit

Kent County would have an integrated referral system with ongoing analysis of 1) the responsiveness of service delivery by providers, 2) engagement of parents, and 3) outcomes for children and families. This project would strengthen Kent County families through ensuring prevention services are provided in the communities that need them, are meeting intended outcomes, and continue to reduce the number of children who experience foster care in Kent County.



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$2,813,000

Maximum Cost: \$2,813,000

ARPA Request: \$2,813,000

Submitter Info

Name: Sonia Noorman

Organization: West Michigan Partnership for Children

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

Bethany Christian Services;
Catholic Charities West Michigan; D.A. Blodgett-St Johns; Samaritas; Wellspring Lutheran Services

Intended Beneficiary

Children at risk of removal from their familial home will be the primary beneficiary of services, as well as the families of these children. The goal is to keep children safely at home with their families and ensure families receive the support they need.

Estimated Cost

\$2,813,000.00 for three years

Project Management Experience

For the past five years, WMPCC has administered foster care and adoption services in Kent County through subcontracts with over 30 providers.

Federal Funds Experience

WMPCC has completed quarterly cost reports with the State which includes all revenue and expenses and includes federal funds. Staff at the agency have been trained in managing federal grants.

Studies on Impact

n/a

Supporting Documentation

- [1. Letter of Support #1](#)
- [2. Letter of Support #2](#)
- [3. Letter of Support #3](#)
- [4. Letter of Support #4](#)
- [5. Letter of Support #5](#)

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Individuals or communities served aligns with Treasury guidelines' definition of 'impacted' or 'disproportionately impacted'. Could also be support to non-profits.

 **Sustainability**

Lacking guaranteed funding after 2026 though partners were identified

 **Feasibility**

PROJECT #225

Innovative Strategies for Economic Growth in the Kent County Minority Business Community



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$6,000,000
Maximum Cost: \$6,500,000
ARPA Request: \$6,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Duc Nguyen Abrahamson
Organization: Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce, West Michigan office

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development
Project Theme: Business Grants
Project Status: New Project
Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

No

Partnership

No

Identify the need for the proposed project

In 2020, two of this project's current team members, Crystal Bui (Asian Community Outreach) and Bing Goei (West Michigan Asian American Association), worked with Kent County and the City of Grand Rapids on two separate projects to provide economic assistance to businesses impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Our team members led efforts to conduct outreach and provided technical assistance to Asian-owned small businesses in Kent County and the teams we led helped over 130 businesses obtain relief funds from Kent County and from the City of Grand Rapids. In addition, our team members organized seminars and resources for business owners in our community during the pandemic. Through their work assisting businesses during the pandemic, they identified areas that were particularly challenging for minority business owners, including but not limited to: adoption and use of technology in business operations; access to capital; poor business record-keeping and need for professional consulting services such as accountants and attorneys.

Brief Description

A wraparound program targeted towards businesses owned by members of historically underserved groups in Kent County, such as minority and women-owned businesses. The program's goals are providing opportunity, advancement, and transformation for new and existing businesses in Kent County. Specifically, our business consultants will work with qualified individuals and businesses to ascertain their capital requirements and provide financial assistance for start-up or expansion expenditures; ascertain their technology needs and provide financial assistance for the adoption and implementation of new technology in their operations; and help them secure professional services for their legal, accounting, or other business needs through the retention of skilled professionals in Kent County. In addition, the proposal will create a technology center located in a designated Smart Zone within the city of Grand Rapids to provide business owners with access to technology services for their business operations, such as 3D printing. The program will provide financial assistance and professional consultation to both new and existing small to micro-sized businesses, with the goal of stimulating business creation and development. The Chamber, with its expansive network and resources, can offer consultation for minority investors that seek resources and opportunities for mid-seized ventures, and for foreign investors and companies that seek to do business in Kent County.

Long-Term Benefit

The main long-term benefit of the proposed project is economic growth for Kent County – the project will facilitate the creation of new small businesses and the expansion of existing small businesses. In addition, we will utilize the Chamber's network and resources to help grow new international small businesses in Kent County, increase opportunities to bring new international investments to support small businesses in Kent County, and recruit international talent to Kent County.

Intended Beneficiary

Entrepreneurs and existing small business owners from communities with that are historically underserved or groups with specific barriers (e.g., language barriers, lack of sophistication, lack of formal education) including but not limited to minorities and women.

Estimated Cost

\$6 - \$6.5 million



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$6,000,000
Maximum Cost: \$6,500,000
ARPA Request: \$6,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Duc Nguyen Abrahamson
Organization: Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce, West Michigan office

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development
Project Theme: Business Grants
Project Status: New Project
Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

No

Partnership

No

Project Management Experience

Team members (Crystal Bui, Asian Community Outreach) and Bing Goes (APACC West Michigan Operations Manager, West Michigan Asian American Association, Inc) previously worked with Kent County and the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce on the Kent County Small Business Recovery Program. The fiduciary organization on that program (the West Michigan Asian American Association or "WMAAA") received funds from Kent County to assist the GR Chamber in conducting outreach and providing technical assistance to struggling Asian-owned businesses in Kent County. WMAAA hired nonprofit directors from another community organization, Asian Community Outreach (ACO), to manage the project. The GR Chamber was the organization administering the recovery program for Kent County. Our members led teams that helped over 130 small businesses secure grants. Most of the business owners were unsophisticated and the initial applications were poorly written and missing required documentation. Our team worked with business owners to obtain the required documentation and submit complete and compelling applications. Our team also served as the liaison between the Asian business owners and the GR Chamber for follow-up requests. In addition, staff at the GR Chamber asked our team members to reach out to Asian business owners who did not apply for relief through our assistance but were otherwise unreachable or needed assistance with their applications. In addition to helping clients that approached them, our team members helped several businesses that did not apply through their assistance project. The team was a helpful partner to the GR Chamber of Commerce because they facilitated the objectives of the program with a community that is harder to work with due to language barriers.

Federal Funds Experience

APACC in partnership with National ACE received CARES Act funding to provide educational webinars and help small businesses navigate through COVID shutdowns, apply for PPP, and provide virtual resources and networking opportunities to small businesses. We were able to reach 225 clients.

Studies on Impact

Our team has designed this project based on their experience working with past county relief programs. With regard to the creation of a technology center in a designated Smart Zone for small and start-up businesses, a 2020 article from the Journal of Responsible Innovation discussed the "digital divide," or inequality in the information communications technologies in certain communities. The article noted that with the emergence of computers and the internet in the 1990s, companies that adopted ICTs became more competitive and efficient. According to the article, "With the rise of ICTs, it became clear that wealthy parts of society had more access to the technology while less affluent areas of the world were left behind. The 'digital divide' grew." The article noted that innovators and gov't officials have spent significant time battling the 'digital divide' with varying degrees of success, including providing computers to marginalized groups, incorporating ICTs in education and training, and changing economic incentives for companies to invest in ICTs infrastructure in low income communities. See <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/23299460.2020.1808151>

Supporting Documentation

- [1. Funding Sustainability](#)
- [2. G4G Kent County](#)
- [3. ARPA Response Letter](#)



Guidehouse Ranking Notes



Eligibility



Sustainability



Feasibility

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$6,000,000
Maximum Cost: \$6,500,000
ARPA Request: \$6,000,000

This will be limited to existing businesses.


Shows ability to fund programs going forward.

Submitter Info

Name: Duc Nguyen Abrahamson
Organization: Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce, West Michigan office

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development
Project Theme: Business Grants
Project Status: New Project
Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

No

Partnership

No

PROJECT #252

County of Kent Microbusiness Capacity Building Program



Identify the need for the proposed project

Microbusinesses and small businesses face unique challenges in today's economy, from staffing and supply shortages, to navigating the complex world of grants and loans for recovery and relief. Many communities lack a centralized place for businesses to discover and apply for crucial capacity-building programs. With FORWARD, our team of experienced, knowledgeable thought leaders, domain experts, operations and support staff, and community partners will quickly implement and launch the County of Kent Microbusiness Capacity Building Program to connect microbusinesses with targeted grants and programs intended to help them thrive. There have been several publications measuring the impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures – such as mandatory closures in the early stages of the pandemic and social distancing, health and sanitation requirements, and downward demand shifts thereafter – on microbusinesses. A 2020 study published in the Journal of Economics & Management Strategy found that “the number of active business owners in the United States plummeted by 3.3 million or 22% over ... February to April 2020.” This decline disproportionately impacted businesses owned by women and BIPOC. Many microbusinesses and small businesses simply shuttered; the remaining faced and continue to face significant challenges in recovery and rebound. The US Treasury Department has been providing assistance to small businesses across the country in the form of tax credit, emergency capital investment, and paycheck protection programs. However, many of these programs can be inaccessible to microbusinesses and small businesses; moreover, the benefits from these programs may not be felt immediately. These types of businesses often need short-term capital injections to stay afloat. In our experience in administering COVID-19 recovery/relief programs, we find that local assistance offered by municipalities are more accessible, timely, and successful for microbusinesses, small businesses, and nonprofits. (Please see our answers in the Organizational Capacity section for details and outcomes on the assistance programs we have administered.) Our leadership, operations, and support team are well-versed in these types of civic programs, economic recovery efforts, customer service, and information technology. In addition, our team members have years of professional and lived experience in economic development, community development, homelessness, housing, emergency management, and other related fields. They understand firsthand the circumstances and challenges faced by County businesses and will work closely with staff and partners to ensure optimal operations. Since 2015, LiveStories has worked with more than 350 local, state, and federal governments and agencies to become a trusted steward of community programs across the United States. Funding has assisted businesses with recovering from challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including periods of shutdown, declines in revenue, or increased costs. In addition, funds support a robust local economy by providing direct assistance and access to additional real-time resources, all pushed to the applicants based on eligibility provided in their profiles. We currently administer more than \$35 million in small business and nonprofit assistance/grant programs and distribute \$2 million in assistance payments every week. We have seen the impact of these types of programs on the communities and are interested in doing the same for the County

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$250,000

ARPA Request: \$250,000

Submitter Info

Name: Raven McShane

Organization:

Geocko, Inc. dba LiveStories

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Brief Description

LiveStories is proposing the County of Kent Microbusiness Capacity Building Program to provide capacity building, support, and funding to local businesses and microenterprises. Key elements of the program include: - Direct Assistance Grants: \$5,000 mini-grants for eligible microbusinesses located within the County. Eligible expenses include business rent/mortgage, payroll, infrastructure improvements, and operating expenses for products or services. - Customer Support Center: Customer service and referrals for inbound inquiries from businesses. Available Monday through Friday, from 8 AM to 6 PM ET, and can be reached via telephone, secure online chat, and email. Online Portal: Leverages our FORWARD portal. The program directory within the portal was designed to connect businesses to any federal, state, and local resources for which they may be eligible. Portal allows businesses to search, apply, and track applications for those resources. While this program is available to all businesses with 50 or fewer employees, the program may focus outreach efforts on target industries, as defined by the County. The program provides \$5,000 grants and is expected to assist 45 businesses with grant funding and capacity building. Grants may be used for business rent/mortgage, payroll, infrastructure improvements, and operating expenses. Eligible businesses will also receive access to up to 25 additional state, local, and federal small business resources and programs.



Long-Term Benefit

We believe that our proposed model provides the County with a scalable, efficient, and cost-effective solution that will provide direct assistance to local microbusinesses, as well as connect these businesses with needed additional resources, resulting in a marked increase in capacity and sustainability for the County's economy. We anticipate that this program will support 45 microbusinesses.

Intended Beneficiary

This program is intended to benefit microbusinesses within the County.

Estimated Cost

The estimated costs for this program is \$250,000. LiveStories' total cost represents 9.5% of the funds being made available for this program. The following is a breakdown of the services and associated costs for program delivery and management has been provided below: Small Business Grants: \$226,250.00 / Project Administration: \$3,750.00 / Portal Development: \$2,500.00 / Marketing/Outreach: \$3,750.00 / Application Intake: \$7,500.00 / Payment Services: \$6,250.00. We will work with the County to finalize the costs before the start of the project.

Project Management Experience

LiveStories was established in 2015 and is headquartered in Seattle, Washington. Since our inception, we have worked with more than 350 local, state, and federal governments and agencies to become a trusted steward of business assistance programs across the United States. Our FORWARD solution helps our customers streamline community development, communication, and compliance to maximize their recovery efforts. In addition, our significant experience in working with these types of programs and resources – including outreach, marketing, staffing, platform, operations, and capacity – makes us well-equipped to successfully administer our proposed County of Kent Microbusiness Capacity Building Program from Day 1. Because we are doing this work in communities across the United States, we have been able to establish best practices, efficiencies, and capabilities that translate to quicker, effective, and robust program implementation and management. Highlights of LiveStories' qualifications and unique capabilities include the following: - Administering assistance programs like ARPA, CARES, CDBG, and CSLFRF. Our integrated approach uses a modern technology stack and a team of experts to provide end-to-end program management support, streamline and automate manual processes, and reduce program costs. Our extensive capacity incorporates training and coaching internal and external key personnel on how to effectively manage grants, including fiscal and programmatic reporting requirements, the scope of services, terms, coordinate and participate in external funder audits, including preparation of review materials and outcome/benchmark reports, and other related activities. - Managing large-scale coronavirus-related assistance programs. We have experience deploying and managing multi-million dollar assistance programs for households, businesses, and nonprofits. Our offering includes full administration and management of assistance programs, including connecting applicants to the County's program and other resources, collaborating with local partners to design programs, developing applications, collecting and reviewing applications, distributing funds, providing application and technical assistance, providing ongoing reports to leadership, and following all document retention requirements. - Providing trauma-informed, compassionate support to people in need. Housing instability and homelessness are traumatic events for people who find themselves suddenly struggling. People in need of assistance programs like the County's program may be under high levels of stress and anxiety, which is why we are compassionate, empathetic, and understanding at both the organizational and customer service levels. If needed, we will work with our customers to design assistance programs that mitigate barriers and burdens to assistance. In addition, our support center team is trained to navigate applicant interactions with respect and empathy toward an applicant's situation, which has been key to diffusing any tension and refocusing the interaction on getting the assistance they need. - Targeted program outreach. We will work with the County to develop program-specific communications and outreach plans to enhance awareness of the programs we administer, especially in historically disadvantaged and marginalized communities. This collaboration allows us to amplify the reach and capacity of the County's program, connect with a greater number of applicants, and provide culturally and linguistically sensitive service to applicants. - Mitigation of barriers to access for diverse ethnic backgrounds. Our culturally and linguistically sensitive and relevant outreach, as well as simple and intuitive processes paired with customized technical assistance, ensures that target communities can effectively navigate the program and any other resources and programs that the County may make available to them. - Monitoring and learning in real time about the needs and impact

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$250,000

ARPA Request: \$250,000

Submitter Info

Name: Raven McShane

Organization:

Geocko, Inc. dba LiveStories

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a



Federal Funds Experience

The majority of the assistance and grant programs we have been contracted to administer are federally funded. Because of our significant experience in working with these types of programs, we are well-equipped to administer the County’s program effectively and will ensure that the program adheres to all required rules, regulations, and guidance.

Studies on Impact

Yes. There have been several publications measuring the impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures – such as mandatory closures in the early stages of the pandemic and social distancing, health and sanitation requirements, and downward demand shifts thereafter – on microbusinesses. A few publications have been cited below. - Fairlie, Robert. “The Impact of Covid-19 on Small Business Owners: Evidence from the First 3 Months after Widespread Social-Distancing Restrictions.” Journal of Economics & Management Strategy, John Wiley and Sons Inc., 27 Aug. 2020, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7461311/>. - Lewis, Pamela. “Supporting Microbusinesses in Underserved Communities during the COVID-19 Recovery.” Brookings, Brookings, 9 Mar. 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/supporting-microbusinesses-in-underserved-communities-during-the-covid-19-recovery/>. - “NFIB Covid-19 Survey: Small Business Recovery Remains Fragile.” NFIB, 27 Apr. 2021, <https://www.nfib.com/content/press-release/coronavirus/nfib-covid-19-survey-small-business-recovery-remains-fragile/>. - “Assistance for Small Businesses.” U.S. Department of the Treasury, 13 Apr. 2021, <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-small-businesses>.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$250,000

ARPA Request: \$250,000

Submitter Info

Name: Raven McShane

Organization:

Geocko, Inc. dba LiveStories

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Small business support is eligible

 **Sustainability**

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

 **Feasibility**

PROJECT #286

Equitable, Healthy and Zero Carbon Buildings Initiative (E.H.Zero) Housing Renovation Pilot Program



Identify the need for the proposed project

In 2017, the City of Grand Rapids (City) was one of twelve cities selected to participate in the Zero Cities Project (ZCP) to develop an actionable and equitable roadmap to achieve a zero net carbon building sector by 2050. The ZCP was based on having a policy process informed by technical analysis that was to include community collaboration and a focus on equity. The City partnered with the U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan (USGBCWM) and the Urban Core Collective (UCC) on the ZCP. In partnership with Architecture 2030, our baseline building assessment showed that single family homes make up more than 50% of the building square footage and 37% of all building sector emissions in the city of Grand Rapids. Nationally, a household that spends more than 6% of total income on energy bills is considered energy burdened. The UCC completed a Grand Rapids Equity Assessment which found that Kent County households below 50% of the federal poverty level spend about a third of their income on home energy bills and all households under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level spend more than 6% on energy bills. The assessment also demonstrates that residents of color live in households with the greatest amount of lead in paint, have the least amount of wealth accumulation, and are in areas with the least amount of green space. The UCC also surveyed residents and identified barriers to participation in local home repair, energy efficiency and weatherization programs. The ZCP partners also concluded that a whole homes navigator program offered via trusted community based organizations that addresses all of a household's needs at one time is needed to streamline referrals to existing programs that are offered separately by different organizations (utility energy efficiency and rebate programs, residential health assessments and improvements, home repair services, weatherization programming, water/sewer bill assistance, etc.). In 2021, the ZCP was completed and the partners agreed to continue the work by launching the Grand Rapids Policies and Programs for Equitable, Healthy, and Zero Carbon Buildings Initiative (E.H.Zero).

Brief Description

One of the goals of E.H.Zero is to demonstrate what affordable lowto zero-carbon homes could look like in Grand Rapids while addressing equity, health, financial stability, and local resilience to climate change. This is to be accomplished through a renovation pilot of approximately ten diverse homes to receive wrap-around repairs and services to improve energy efficiency, climate resiliency, housing affordability, and health. The homes will be a mix of renters, home owners, and housing types, and will be located within the Neighborhoods of Focus. This renovation pilot will also seek to eliminate barriers for the households to leverage all available and applicable home repair services related to energy efficiency and improved health and safety. After completion of the pilot, we intend to create a full-blown "Whole Homes Navigator" program that can be used to support households across the entire county. E.H.Zero partners have welcomed GreenStar to the team, a collaborative of GreenHome Institute, Seeds of Promise, Building Bridges, and Elevate who will be paid \$100,000 to manage the pilot. An estimated \$340,000 is needed to conduct the renovation pilot (~\$30,000 per home for 10 homes, \$40,000 more for Greenstar management).

Long-Term Benefit

In the long run, this project will contribute to local advancement of what healthy, affordable, energy efficient, and climate resilient homes can look like in West Michigan. Residents in need will directly benefit from energy savings and improvements to the health and safety of homes. Our community as a whole will benefit from reducing carbon emissions from buildings which contribute to air pollution and accelerating climate change. Access to programs addressing the "Whole Home" will improve.

Intended Beneficiary

Low-income residents experiencing high energy burden located within the City of Grand Rapids' Neighborhoods of Focus.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$400,000

Maximum Cost: \$400,000

ARPA Request: \$340,000

Submitter Info

Name: Cheri Holman

Organization: U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Existing Project

Matching Funds: 51-75%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

Urban Core Collective, City of Grand Rapids, GreenHome Institute, Seeds of Promise, Building Bridges Professional Services, Elevate Energy



Estimated Cost

400000

*Source of Funding

Possibly. Our partner, the City of Grand Rapids, has applied for State MI-HOPE program funding but has not heard back yet. We requested \$250,000 for the E.H.Zero pilot (\$25k each in repairs for 10 homes).

Project Management Experience

The U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan (USGBC-WM) has several large projects (past & present). A current project is the state-wide Michigan Battle of the Buildings which includes over 1500 buildings representing over 250 million square feet of commercial/industrial real estate competing to be the annual biggest loser of energy/carbon. This project was launched in 2014 and continues to grow. The USGBC-WM facilitated a 4 year project called the Energy Assistance Program funded by the State of Michigan to provide ASHRAE Level audits to educational institutions, houses of worship, non-profits, and small businesses. The USGBC-WM acted as an owners representative contracting with local auditors to provide strategic plans for 20 buildings in Kent County. The USGBCWM hosted the Drawdown Michigan conference in 2019 bringing together 43 partner organizations and more than 500 community members for the largest conference focused on climate change in West Michigan.

Federal Funds Experience

The U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan (USGBC-WM) has managed several State of Michigan grants for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction. These grants have ranged from \$15k to \$180k and were dollars provided to the State of Michigan by the U.S. Federal Government. So, while the USGBC-WM has never applied directly for a federal grant, we have had to meet the State of Michigan requirements which are in line with their federal reporting requirements.

Studies on Impact

Many studies link the negative impacts of burning fossil fuels to health, such as those referenced on the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health website. The U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan website includes a Zero Carbon Resource library featuring information on buildings and healthy and best practices from national organizations such as RMI, New Buildings Institute and ACEEE.

Supporting Documentation

[Letters of Support](#)

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$400,000

Maximum Cost: \$400,000

ARPA Request: \$340,000

Submitter Info

Name: Cheri Holman

Organization: U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Existing Project

Matching Funds: 51-75%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

Urban Core Collective, City of Grand Rapids, GreenHome Institute, Seeds of Promise, Building Bridges Professional Services, Elevate Energy



Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 Eligibility

 Sustainability

 Feasibility

If the individuals or communities served were narrowly tailored - this would be eligible.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$400,000

Maximum Cost: \$400,000

ARPA Request: \$340,000

Submitter Info

Name: Cheri Holman

Organization: U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Existing Project

Matching Funds: 51-75%

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

Urban Core Collective, City of Grand Rapids, GreenHome Institute, Seeds of Promise, Building Bridges Professional Services, Elevate Energy



PROJECT #193

Community Insight and the Kent County Community Data Trust

Identify the need for the proposed project

The Johnson Center for Philanthropy has been providing easy access to community data for more than ten years. In summer 2021, the Johnson Center launched Community Insight (link: <https://johnsoncenter.org/community-insight>), a new interactive, online dashboard for displaying data about local communities, understanding community opportunities and needs, and targeting efforts for advancing equity. Community Insight has a limited set of data for each county in the United States. Since the launch, we have received calls each month from Kent County residents, nonprofits, and local government officials looking for more granular data across Kent County because Community Insight does not include neighborhood-level information. The center's well-known, and frequently accessed, community fact sheets – which only cover neighborhoods in the City of Grand Rapids – still use data from 2017. (link: <https://data.johnsoncenter.org/community-profiles>) We have received very positive feedback on the new Community Insight platform. Unlike the static (and outdated) neighborhood profiles, Community Insight allows users to create custom dashboards to further their understanding of community opportunities and focus efforts for advancing equity. Expanding the neighborhood information county-wide is a direct response to monthly requests to the Johnson Center from the community.

Brief Description

This project would give us capacity to upload and maintain expanded data for Kent County by census tract, and combine those tracts into neighborhoods countywide. This will (1) update existing neighborhood fact sheets with current American Community Survey (ACS) data, (2) expand the fact sheets across Kent County at the census tract level, (3) append 2020 Census data (when released in 2023), (4) provide annual ACS data updates through 2026, and (5) launch the Kent County Community Data Trust. Community Insight (link: <https://johnsoncenter.org/community-insight>) is an interactive, online platform for displaying data about local communities, understanding community opportunities and needs, and targeting efforts for advancing equity. The platform draws on multiple datasets from a range of systems and institutions on topics such as education, health, economic opportunity, and population demographics. The Kent County Community Data Trust (link: <https://www.wearedatawise.com/our-work/community-data-trust>) is a new entity/virtual team that would convene technical and legal leadership to advise community organizations on the interoperability of critical data systems. Improved, interconnected systems are needed both to support aggregate analysis of Kent County's social and educational services, and – with appropriate consent and oversight – to support better alignment among services to individuals and families.

Long-Term Benefit

Community data is frequently siloed across organizations; this project brings these disparate sources under a shared framework (the Community Data Trust). A critical second benefit is expanding the neighborhood-level data across Kent County, putting maps, trend charts, and detailed tables into the hands of every resident. This combination means data about Kent County communities – from the ACS, Community Health Needs Assessment, etc. – can be more quickly loaded and shared with the public.

Intended Beneficiary

Members of the public – especially neighborhood groups and nonprofits – as well as reporters, community advocates, and high school and college students completing community-based research and volunteer projects will benefit most from this proposed project.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$958,800

Maximum Cost: \$958,800

ARPA Request: \$758,800

Submitter Info

Name: Jeff Williams

Organization: Johnson Center for Philanthropy, GVSU

Project Overview

Funding Group: Quality of Life

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

Match and/or in-kind from existing work with W.K. Kellogg Foundation and UEd Promise Neighborhoods, along with program revenue described in the addendum.

Partnership

Kent County ENTf, DataWise, Family Futures, KConnect, WMU SE Grand Rapids Promise Neighborhoods



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$958,800

Maximum Cost: \$958,800

ARPA Request: \$758,800

Submitter Info

Name: Jeff Williams

Organization: Johnson Center for Philanthropy, GVSU

Project Overview

Funding Group: Quality of Life

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

Match and/or in-kind from existing work with W.K. Kellogg Foundation and UEd Promise Neighborhoods, along with program revenue described in the addendum.

Partnership

Kent County ENTF, DataWise, Family Futures, KConnect, WMU SE Grand Rapids Promise Neighborhoods

Estimated Cost

\$179,155 in year 1; \$185,997 in year 2; \$193,118 in year 3; \$200,529 in year 4; inclusive of data loads, staffing, secure hosting and infrastructure fees, and custom programming. Four year total as currently scoped would be \$758,800. It is important to note that this project could be scaled up or down based on available funding because the primary driver of cost is the breadth and depth of data selected for the expanded neighborhood fact sheets.

Project Management Experience

The Johnson Center is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, and has a wealth of experience with large scale, county-wide and regional efforts. We are currently the lead evaluator for projects in Battle Creek Public Schools, as well as the Grand Rapids programs of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Federal Funds Experience

Currently, the Johnson Center is the lead evaluator and data manager for the five-year Promise Neighborhoods Initiative in Southeast Grand Rapids, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, the Johnson Center is engaged on a three-year, federally-funded grant to the Michigan Community Service Commission. Senior staff at the center have experience with federally funded projects, including prior work for the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Studies on Impact

There is a wealth of prior academic and practitioner research on community engagement and participatory decision making. Specifically for this project, which centers on the use of data by neighborhoods and nonprofits as a tool for community development and community improvement, we recommend reports from entities such as the Elevate Data for Equity program at the Urban Institute (link: <https://www.urban.org/elevate-data-equity>), including the research brief, "Investing in Data Capacity for Community Change." (link: <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/investing-data-capacity-community-change>) The Johnson Center is proud to serve as one of only two Michigan-based partners in the National Neighborhood Indicators Project, also housed at the Urban Institute, which furthers the link between quality data and engaged communities. (link: <https://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/about-nnip/about-network>) The power of data in the hands of communities is also demonstrated by other programs, such as the National Equity Atlas (link: <https://nationalequityatlas.org/>) and the Pandemic to Prosperity project of the National Council on Citizenship. (link: <https://www.pandemictoprosperty.org/>)

Supporting Documentation

- [1. Letters of Support](#)
- [2. Additional Information](#)



Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 Eligibility

 Sustainability

 Feasibility

Eligible under revenue replacement. Additional information will be needed if the proposal moves forward in the process.

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$958,800

Maximum Cost: \$958,800

ARPA Request: \$758,800

Submitter Info

Name: Jeff Williams

Organization: Johnson Center for Philanthropy, GVSU

Project Overview

Funding Group: Quality of Life

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

Match and/or in-kind from existing work with W.K. Kellogg Foundation and USEd Promise Neighborhoods, along with program revenue described in the addendum.

Partnership

Kent County ENTf, DataWise, Family Futures, KConnect, WMU SE Grand Rapids Promise Neighborhoods

PROJECT #332

Estate Planning Social Justice Program



Identify the need for the proposed project

Lack of diversity in estate planning perpetuates the wealth gap. White adults in America are about twice as likely as nonwhite adults to have a will (51% vs. 28%). National statistics show that overall, only 27.5% of Black and Hispanic Americans have a will, up from 25.9% in 2020. The result is that Black and Hispanic Americans are missing out on the largest wealth transfer in history. Over the next 25 years, an estimated \$68 trillion will be transferred from U.S. households to heirs and charity, according to an analysis of high net worth and ultra-high net worth markets by consulting group Cerulli Associates. We need to promote economic equity and innovation by creating intentional programming to capture these residents before end of life, because the younger we reach the communities the greater the impact we can have.

Brief Description

AQUME Foundation will hire two full-time attorneys and one administrative support aide to work over three years to provide the following free and/or reduced priced estate planning documentation for income eligible BIPOC residents of Kent County, MI: Durable power of attorney: This document lays out who can make financial decisions for you in the event you are incapacitated. Health-care power of attorney: This designates someone to handle your medical decisions if you become sick and can't make them for yourself. Living will: Also called an advanced directive, a living will is a document that expresses your wishes for medical treatments you would or would not want to use to keep you alive, like resuscitation and intubation. Trusts: Established to provide legal protection for the trustor's assets, to make sure those assets are distributed according to the wishes of the trustor, and to save time, reduce paperwork and, in some cases, avoid or reduce inheritance or estate taxes thus saving dollars for the estate.

Long-Term Benefit

Positioning hundreds of Black and other BIPOC residents to reap the benefits of generational wealth and asset distribution planning for their loved ones and business holdings. This initiative will normalize the conversation at all stages of life and combat the abysmal national statistics of Black and other BIPOC residents estate statistics.

Intended Beneficiary

Low-moderate income BIPOC residents of Kent County, MI.

Estimated Cost

\$750,000

Project Management Experience

While AQUME Foundation is a new organization and has not been awarded a county wide project to date, the President successfully led a 4.5 million dollar three year federal grant that spanned Kent County wide in 4 emergency rooms, 8 behavioral health facilities, and 2 labor and delivery room departments to access the populations social determinants of health needs and referrals. federal grant from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS). Under my leadership, our organization was always one of the top third performing sites across the nation, out of 34 other sites. We are extremely confident in our ability to effectively manage this grant request.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$750,000

Maximum Cost: \$750,000

Submitter Info

Name: Ciarra C. Adkins

Organization:

AQUME Foundation

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a



Federal Funds Experience

While AQUME Foundation is a new organization and has not been awarded a federal grant to date, the President and Director of Operations have over 30 years combined experience in administering and managing multi-million dollar federal grants in Kent County, MI.

Studies on Impact

n/a

Supporting Documentation

[Supplemental Answers](#)

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$750,000

Maximum Cost: \$750,000

ARPA Request: \$700,000

Submitter Info

Name: Ciarra C. Adkins

Organization:

AQUME Foundation

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

Potentially \$50K in AQUME Foundation endowment dollars if we are awarded the ARPA grant.

Partnership

No

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Potentially eligible in certain contexts - need to understand relationship to COVID impact as general economic development is not allowable.

 **Sustainability**

No clear funding beyond 2026

 **Feasibility**

PROJECT #18

Black Wallstreet Grand Rapids Development (Eastern Burton Village District)



Identify the need for the proposed project

Grand Rapids made national news in 2015, as Forbes ranked Grand Rapids Michigan the 2nd worst City Economically for Blacks in the USA. GR/ Kent County still has not truly rectified that heartbreaking fact/ crisis

Brief Description

Black Wallstreet Grand Rapids is a economic and tourism start up entity with mission to acquire and develop real estate to build Black Business Districts in the most underserved and least invested ward in GR. (Southeast side Third ward). BWSGR is named after Black Wallstreet in Greenwood Tulsa of the early 1900s. (The Wealthiest Black Community in American History) BWSGR consist of 8 Districts (Burton Eastern District, Oakdale District, Madison Square District, Madison & Hall, Neland & Franklin, Eastern & Franklin, Boston Square, Grandville Ave partially)

Long-Term Benefit

BWSGR goal is to help make GR a diverse, inclusive, cultured world class city for locals and tourist to enjoy. BWSGR goal is to skyrocket GR's Black economy, create jobs, Entrepreneurship, and make safer communities. BWSGR will increase the overall brand value of Grand Rapids beyond our thriving Downtown and a few other great areas.

Intended Beneficiary

Black & brown minority BIPOC communities will be the majority beneficiaries of BWSGR. BWSGR targets investment & development in Southeast Third ward GR (the most poverty stricken, most underserved and least invested ward in GR Michigan currently & historically.

Estimated Cost

(Estimated cost)6.2million per year annually(on average BWSGR will campaign for 60K to 100K per private-public Donor in our Capital Campaign

Project Management Experience

Our Fiduciary's President is a staff of City Hall City of Grand Rapids, and has experience with large projects. Our BWSGR team consists of Entrepreneurs and developers and has experience leading/ managing large projects

Federal Funds Experience

Our organization has not yet/ never worked with Federal Funding.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$6,200,000

Maximum Cost: \$6,200,000

ARPA Request: \$6,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Preston Sain

Organization:

Black Wallstreet Grand Rapids

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

BWSGR Founders has great relationships with both city & Kent County Commissioners and looks to earn inclusion in both City & County General Budget as a public source of funding in BWSGR public private collective effort mission.

Partnership

Aqume Foundation serves as our 501c3 Fiduciary partner



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$6,200,000

Maximum Cost: \$6,200,000

ARPA Request: \$6,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Preston Sain

Organization:

Black Wallstreet Grand Rapids

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

BWSGR Founders has great relationships with both city & Kent County Commissioners and looks to earn inclusion in both City & County General Budget as a public source of funding in BWSGR public private collective effort mission.

Partnership

Aqume Foundation serves as our 501c3 Fiduciary partner

Studies on Impact

In 2015 world renowned Forbes ranked Grand Rapids Michigan the 2nd worst City Economically for Blacks in the USA. (search pinned top featured post on Black Wallstreet Grand Rapids Facebook for article link) In 2020 www.lowincome.org ranked Grand Rapids top 5 worst city Economically for Blacks in the USA (source available on BWSGR social media platforms & Google)

Supporting Documentation

1. [Capital Campaign Flyer](#)
2. [WGVU Article](#)
3. [WGVU Facebook](#)
4. [Letter of Support](#)
5. [Pitch Deck](#)
6. [GRBWS Aerial](#)
7. [GRBWS Burton and Eastern](#)
8. [GRBWS Eastern](#)
9. [Sponsor Pledge Package](#)
10. [Neighborhood Summit Feedback](#)
11. [Crain's Detroit Business Article](#)

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

Funds are only eligible to small businesses that were impacted or disproportionately impacted. Additional information will be needed if the proposal moves forward in the process.

Sustainability

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

Feasibility

In general, proposal is lacking information to make an informed assessment.

PROJECT #148

The Aroma Labs



Identify the need for the proposed project

The Aroma Labs is a unique, creative, gender neutral experience that allows the guests an opportunity to develop their own signature scent. For both personal and business. Groups and gatherings...The Aroma Labs has something everybody to enjoy. Mission: Creating a personal interactive experience that builds community and fosters development of other local entrepreneurs/business owners. Our products (soaps, scrubs, lotions, beard balms/oils) are handcrafted by female entrepreneurs and a portion of our profits go to Michigan Women Forward, which is a funding and grant program for female entrepreneurs within the state of Michigan. The Aroma Labs is a unique experience that was brought to downtown Grand Rapids (flagship store in Kalamazoo) about 8 months ago and we have had a difficult hiring season.

Brief Description

The Aroma Labs is a new business and would appreciate assistance in the form of funding to identify/develop team members for inside and outside sales. These funds would benefit our organization by attracting, training, and continued development for The Aroma Labs.

Long-Term Benefit

The Aroma Labs offers a unique experience like no other in the state of Michigan. Experience based activities provide value to our downtown retail/event/art based community efforts. Providing additional jobs for our micro and macro economy. In addition, The Aroma Labs has served guests from all over our region (Some guests drive from Detroit, Lansing, Chicago) to experience something as unique and creative as The Aroma Labs. These visitor stay, eat, and shop within the community

Intended Beneficiary

The Aroma Labs

Estimated Cost

5,000-20,000

Project Management Experience

None

Federal Funds Experience

None

Studies on Impact

No

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$5,000

Maximum Cost: \$20,000

Submitter Info

Name: Tanya Thompson

Organization: The Aroma Labs

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a



Guidehouse Ranking Notes



Eligibility



Sustainability



Feasibility

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$5,000

Maximum Cost: \$20,000

Submitter Info

Name: Tanya Thompson

Organization: The Aroma Labs

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

The Treasury Guidelines indicate that for projects to be eligible for economic and workforce development there must be a benefit to those who have been negatively and/or disproportionately impacted economically. This includes underemployed and unemployed persons. Additionally, the funds cannot be used to start new businesses.

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

PROJECT #248

Start Garden 100



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$1,000,000

Maximum Cost: \$1,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Laurie Supinski

Organization: Start Garden

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

Start Garden works collaboratively with many other Entrepreneurial Support Organizations who prepare entrepreneurs for the Start Garden 100 program. Among them are Spring GR, GROW, SBDC, SCORE, Spartan Innovations etc.

Identify the need for the proposed project

Start Garden currently supports entrepreneurs by providing early stage capital and connections to resources through our Start Garden 100 and 5x5 Night programs. We are intentional about making sure our platforms are accessible to under represented founders in order to help them launch and grow businesses in order to create wealth. In addition to the startup capital we have identified an increased need to provide growth capital for businesses in the expansion phase.

Brief Description

The Start Garden 100 currently selects 100 entrepreneurs to receive \$1000 each to work on their business and prepare for a Demo Day event where they compete to be one of 10 businesses to receive an additional \$20,000. Similar to Detroit Demo Day the next phase of SG 100 would include a growth stage category to allow existing startups to receive growth capital. We currently put \$300,000 a year directly into the hands of entrepreneurs through this program but additional funds would allow us to establish the growth category where the need is great and the dollar amount of the grants would be larger.

Long-Term Benefit

Early stage capital to seed startups creates a robust ecosystem of entrepreneurship. But being able to provide additional capital to businesses that have traction and need funds to continue to grow is critical. Many of these entrepreneurs, despite their success still have trouble securing traditional financing and don't have the network of family/friends money who can invest in their business. Being able to have some next level funding will enhance the Start Garden 100 platform.

Intended Beneficiary

Under represented founders who have shown business growth but do not yet have the ability to secure traditional financing or investment capital.

Estimated Cost

\$1,000,000.00 - would allow us to fund 5 businesses a year for 3 years. The economic impact will be measured by follow on funding that these companies are able to obtain after our investment and also in jobs created as these companies grown and add employees.

Project Management Experience

Our Start Garden 100 platform is already reaching national audience. The funds however are primarily to support entrepreneurs in Kent County and the surrounding area.

Federal Funds Experience

We have not received federal funds in the past.



Studies on Impact

We do have access to research on ecosystem building and we also have data to back up the demographics of the companies we serve, the startup capital that we've deployed and how that correlates to follow on investment the company receives and also job creation.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$1,000,000

Maximum Cost: \$1,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Laurie Supinski

Organization: Start Garden

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

Start Garden works collaboratively with many other Entrepreneurial Support Organizations who prepare entrepreneurs for the Start Garden 100 program. Among them are Spring GR, GROW, SBDC, SCORE, Spartan Innovations etc.

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

 **Sustainability**

 **Feasibility**

The Treasury Guidelines indicate that for projects to be eligible for economic and workforce development there must be a benefit to those who have been negatively and/or disproportionately impacted economically. This includes underemployed and unemployed persons. Additionally, the funds cannot be used to start new businesses.

3 year program



PROJECT #43

Off grid net zero house on a city lot

Identify the need for the proposed project

Climate Crisis

Brief Description

Fund construction of a solar-powered net zero home (PHIUS Zero certification) on a lot at 720 Eastern Ave NE. Home will have provisions for seasonal thermal energy storage. Home will also selfgenerate power for two EVs. It will be built as a spec house for sake of learning and demonstration. It will be sold and any profits generated rolled into construction of the next one. Estimated investment needed is \$300K, pending final design.

Long-Term Benefit

Demonstrate capability for housing infrastructure to drive carbon emissions from housing and transportation to zero, in manner that is economical on an LCA basis.

Intended Beneficiary

hmmm...the community at large, but also this new startup business: <https://minetzero.com>

Estimated Cost

250,000 to 350,000 for labor, materials, subcontractors

Project Management Experience

none

Federal Funds Experience

none

Studies on Impact

Yes: Phius Zero homes: Passive House Institute US: <https://www.phius.org/> Yes: storage technology: <https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/ae/ae-89.html> Yes: my own modeling using SolarEdge Designer software and Excel.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$350,000

Submitter Info

Name: Dale Hulst

Organization:

Michigan Net Zero Homes LLC

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

I will obtain a small business loan if ARPA funds are not available/appropriate.

Partnership

Greenhome Institute

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

Not a government service - not eligible under revenue replacement. Individuals or communities served is not clear or does not align with Treasury guidelines' definition of 'impacted' or 'disproportionately impacted'. Economic development is not eligible.

Sustainability

One time expense

Feasibility



PROJECT #322

Rent Reporting for Credit Building

Identify the need for the proposed project

Making it easier for tenants to get credit for on-time payments would not fix all disparities, but it could make the housing finance system more inclusive. "Renters are seven times more likely than homeowners to lack a credit score. Without a credit score, it can be challenging to get approved for a home loan and to access first-time homeownership".(Cochran, Stegman, 2022). These gaps are disproportionately affecting Black and Latinx communities who, compared with white households, are about twice as likely to rent and to lack a decent credit score. Results from small-scale research on the effects of rent reporting on credit scores are largely positive. "They found significant reductions in the number of unscorable consumers, substantial numbers of previously unscorable consumers who have prime or near-prime credit scores, and large score improvements for many previously scorable consumers". (Cochran, Stegman, 2022).

Brief Description

Project GREEN has been working on rent reporting for credit building for four years, two of which were pandemic years. We have been working with public housing agencies to successfully get their tenants positive rent payments reported to credit bureaus. Through this project, Project GREEN will work with private landlords to expand this work by getting even more on-time rent payments reported as a credit building opportunity, moving their residents toward positive credit scores that move toward lower insurance premiums, lower interest rates, and the dream of homeownership.

Long-Term Benefit

Project GREEN is one participating in the 2022 CHIP, particularly the economic security work group. This is the first time the CHNA identified economic security as one of the four areas of focus. Our work group sees the value of increasing credit scores for low to moderate income residents and Kent County as one of our leading CHIP work group experiments. This will increase economic security for tenants and therefore increase community health outcomes.

Intended Beneficiary

Private tenants in Kent County.

Estimated Cost

\$750,000 - \$1M

Project Management Experience

Project GREEN already working with various housing agencies in the county to do rent reporting.

Federal Funds Experience

Our staff has not worked with federal funds. However, our board members have worked with federal funds in their respective organizations.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$750,000

Maximum Cost: \$1M

Submitter Info

Name: Dallas Lenear

Organization:
Project GREEN

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

We do not yet have any matching funds. However, I am confident that the ARPA funds will provide leverage for us to apply for other funds.

Partnership

Kent County CHIP Economic Security Work Group participating orgs



Studies on Impact

Yes there is plenty of research:

<https://www.rentreportingcenter.org/cba-rent-reporting-impact-analyses/>

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/using-rental-payments-mortgage-decisions-could-create-more-inclusive-housing-finance>

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$750,000

Maximum Cost: \$1M

Submitter Info

Name: Dallas Lenear

Organization:
Project GREEN

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Guidehouse Ranking Notes



Eligibility

General economic development is not eligible under ARPA guidelines. The Treasury Guidelines indicate that for projects to be eligible for economic and workforce development there must be a benefit to those who have been negatively and/or disproportionately impacted economically. This includes underemployed and unemployed persons. Does not clearly fit with statutory purpose of ARPA.



Sustainability

There is no clear funding plan beyond 2026



Feasibility

Source of Funding

We do not yet have any matching funds. However, I am confident that the ARPA funds will provide leverage for us to apply for other funds.

Partnership

Kent County CHIP Economic Security Work Group participating orgs



PROJECT #288

Sewing fashion class school

Identify the need for the proposed project

I currently teach sewing classes locally and for the Van Andle museum school. I have a high demand and kids and adults are wanting to attend.

Brief Description

I plan to use the funds to start my fashion slash sewing school. I also would want to help with the community youth in helping keeping them busy with designing and art fashion jus creativity in general.

Long-Term Benefit

I'm thinking the long term would ne a mentorship with the youth not only as kids but as they turn teens.

Intended Beneficiary

I think the youth will benefit the most from my skills of sewing, art and design upholstery and my drawing knowledge. I have 10 custom made hoodies in local museum throughout Grand Rapids.

Estimated Cost

40,000 to 75,000

Project Management Experience

I have alot of experience in getting exhibits ready for museums.. Vit I feel I have experience in all that I do as far as art is concerned.

Federal Funds Experience

none at all

Studies on Impact

I have done some research as far as what's needed in the community. I have talked with parents and kids about things they would like it it all goes back to home economics and that's what I envision for the school.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$40,000

Maximum Cost: \$75,000

Submitter Info

Name: Reginald James

Organization: Sewing Seeds

Project Overview

Funding Group: Quality of Life

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact:     

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Cannot fund a new business. Individuals and communities not narrowly tailored.

 **Sustainability**

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

 **Feasibility**



PROJECT #291

Funeral Home Targeting Spanish Speaking Families

Identify the need for the proposed project

As a licensed master's level social with two decades experience, and as individual in a Latinix family, living my entire life in Kent Co, I have encountered a large population of Spanish speaking individuals and an array of corresponding services. However, in exploring services associated with funerals, cremation, death, grief and loss, bi-lingual options are limited to those who are providing translation services rather than direct support in Spanish.

Brief Description

A funeral home that has a Spanish name, with Spanish speaking staff, adhering to the specific cultural preferences and practices within the Latinix population. Staff providing assistance in one's native language would bring solice to those experiencing grief. Services and products would be tailored to the customs, traditions and norms as it pertains to death within the Spanish speaking community. Culturally appropriate supports would remove the language and cultural barriers at time of increased stress.

Long-Term Benefit

Greif, related loss and trauma can have life long negative implications, such as mental heath crisis, substance use, lost wages, ect. when sufficient coping measures aren't available. A culturally safe space to cope, grieve and gain support would serve as a protective measure in time of loss. Having a local service to address this need directly would improve the quality of life during one of life's most difficult, and yet inescapable realities-death.

Intended Beneficiary

Individuals whose primary language is Spanish as well as those whose native language is Spanish as we often default to our native roots in times of heighten status.

Estimated Cost

\$250,000-\$450,000

Project Management Experience

Applying as an individual. Individually I have experience managing countywide programs for a community mental health authority. This project would require the hiring of staff including a project manager

Federal Funds Experience

Applying as an individual. Individually I have experience managing countywide programs for a community mental health authority. This project would require the hiring of staff including a project manager.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$450,000

Submitter Info

Name: Molly Perez

Organization: n/a

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a



Studies on Impact

Death is a cultural event. This is an undisputable sociological fact. In heightened situations, such as death, is it imperative that as part of the healthy healing process, communication be clear, accurate and unhindered. Culturally sensitive supports lead to overall increased well-being.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$450,000

Submitter Info

Name: Molly Perez

Organization: n/a

Project Overview

Funding Group: Community Health

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Cannot fund new businesses.

 **Sustainability**

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

 **Feasibility**

PROJECT #257

Connecting with Family, Friends & Community



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$75,000

Maximum Cost: \$100,000

Submitter Info

Name: Becky Tezeno

Organization: Da Fam Worldwide

Project Overview

Funding Group: Quality of Life

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Identify the need for the proposed project

We realized that family & communities don't invest in time to get closer, such as family gathering/reunions or neighborhood block parties. People are too busy to make time and effort to invest in their family and communities. Neighbors don't know or communicate with their neighbors. We would like to connect family, friends and community.

Brief Description

Families/communities will have the opportunity to have the ultimate family reunion, class reunion or block party. Each year people will submit why they think they should receive the help/funding for this venture. We would provide assistance for planning the event along with financial assistance for things such as food, entertainment, venue, etc.

Long-Term Benefit

Connecting family and community. Neighbors looking out for each other. Possible reduction in crime and people better understanding each other. Increase in family, community values.

Intended Beneficiary

Families and communities

Estimated Cost

\$75,000 - \$100,000

Project Management Experience

We have planned family gatherings & church events for over the last 20 years.

Federal Funds Experience

No experience

Studies on Impact

No

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

The Treasury Guidelines indicate that for projects to be eligible for economic and workforce development there must be a benefit to those who have been negatively and/or disproportionately impacted economically. This includes underemployed and unemployed persons. Additionally, the funds cannot be used to start new businesses.

Sustainability

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

PROJECT #31

Cate's Cafe



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$150,000

Maximum Cost: \$300,000

Submitter Info

Name: Catherine Carns

Organization: Cherry Health Street

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Identify the need for the proposed project

There are a lot of recent shootings in the community and there are elderly people who are still in need of work. What better way to impact the community than by employing people of all ages, denominations, races and economic backgrounds showing them a standard way of living through consistency, a decent wage and positive reinforcement for good work.

Brief Description

A modern cafe, located downtown Grand Rapids near the grand valley university campus. I would employ some full-time, part-time and seasonal help. I would first employ a few stable reliable people, and once my business grows promote the current dependable staff, and hire more part-time and seasonal help. We would serve coffee, lattes, mochas, cappuccino, breakfast wraps, sandwiches and pastries. Fresh fruit, yogurts and oatmeal. My staff would receive training to become qualified baristas, they would receive training to create the different drinks and foods that we serve. There would be levels of employment ranging from management, to assist management, full-time barista, part-time, and seasonal baristas. There would be a direction of employment driven by great customer service, and depending on how well the business did, we would look at raises annually based on the work performance, and also consider the cost of living.

Long-Term Benefit

It is a way to provide employment to people of all skill levels, it's a way to invest in the community by employing people who are looking for entry level employment without the need for experience. It is a way to empower the spirit of entrepreneurship, which is a skill set which may encourage other young people to embrace their goals, and passions, it is a way to continue investing in downtown Grand Rapids, which allows downtown to continue attracting tourists.

Intended Beneficiary

People who are looking for a way to get back into the workforce who have been out of employment for a while and some students.

Estimated Cost

150000 to 300000

Project Management Experience

I have a large amount of experiencing managing large numbers of people within an organization. I am currently apart of a local health center, where we serve a lot of the underserved population. We set up kiosks at local charity and festivals events handing out information about free serves which we provide

Federal Funds Experience

A lot, I currently work with Medicaid, and Medicare, working faithfully to allocate for services we provide in an effort to receive expect PPS reimbursement and so that our organization remains in good standing so that we continue to receive the grant funding we are expecting



Studies on Impact

n/a

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$150,000

Maximum Cost: \$300,000

Submitter Info

Name: Catherine Carns

Organization: Cherry Health Street

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

n/a

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

The Treasury Guidelines indicate that for projects to be eligible for economic and workforce development there must be a benefit to those who have been negatively and/or disproportionately impacted economically. This includes underemployed and unemployed persons. Additionally, the funds cannot be used to start new businesses.

Sustainability

Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

Feasibility

No timeline given for program

PROJECT #308

Minority owned Utility construction business funding



Identify the need for the proposed project

Based on the economic landscape and outlook of the county

Brief Description

Provide working capital funding for a minority owned Utility construction business that is planning to work on infrastructure projects in the country.

Long-Term Benefit

The project will drive more minority entrepreneurs into the industry and create economic growth to the people they support

Intended Beneficiary

Minority, underrepresented and marginalized groups

Estimated Cost

700000

Project Management Experience

The organizations have members and owners with more than 10 years of combined experience.

Federal Funds Experience

10 years

Studies on Impact

We have prepared a business plan to back up our finding.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$700,000

Maximum Cost: \$700,000

Submitter Info

Name: Ange Kramo

Organization:
Black Lake Utility Contractors

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme: Business Grants

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: No

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

n/a

Partnership

Black organizations, score etc.

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Support to small businesses is only eligible in response to a negative economic/health impact and none are identified here

 **Sustainability**

In general, proposal is lacking information to make an informed assessment.

 **Feasibility**

In general, proposal is lacking information to make an informed assessment.