



FY 2019-20 (Year 3) Recommended Grants

Dependent upon final approval from Council (scheduled 05/20/20)

**Program descriptions may be adjusted slightly in order to remain responsive to community needs during and after the COVID-19 crisis.*

Available funds FY 19/20: \$548,679

Worksystems- Housing Support for Justice Involved Portlanders Pursuing Middle Income Careers (\$144,000)

Build on a successful initiative to serve people who are homeless and striving to secure employment income, this project will provide 30 people re-entering from incarceration with emergency housing relief funds, integrated housing, and employment services. 75% or more participants will be African American or Native American. Program supports clients in securing housing and employment in order to stop the cycle of homelessness, unemployment and recidivism.

PCC- Portland Community College Community Legal & Educational Access & Referral Clinic (“PCC CLEAR Clinic”) (\$144,000)

Establish a free Friday legal clinic in North Portland providing criminal record and eviction expungements, DACA renewals, housing and immigration court navigation, court forms assistance, and other legal advice/referrals that will significantly reduce barriers to employment and housing. Provide civic engagement opportunity to PCC paralegal students and a pathway to credit and non-credit academic programs and wrap-around supports for clients to programs such as Adult Basic Education (ABE/GED), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and the DREAMers Resource Center.

POIC + RAHS- Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Communities of Color and Low-income Young Adults (\$100,000)

Place 45-55 low income youth and young adults of color on track to obtain construction-specific job skills, hands-on experience, and industry certifications, preparing them to enter full apprenticeships and living-wage construction careers, and facilitating pathways to jobs.

Voz- Building Economic Power for Day Laborers (\$60,000)

Grow Voz’s successful Year 1 community-based workforce development program

through three strategic expansions: (1) workforce development opportunities specifically for women day laborers; (2) Develop and implement new curricula for Work Ethic, Teamwork, and Conflict Resolution, to improve employer satisfaction and retention; (3) Streamline the skills assessment process to quickly qualify workers for the skilled wage scale implemented in Year 1.

Latino Network- Mink'a Program (\$50,094)

Direct services to families impacted by gang violence. Youth impacted by, or at risk of being impacted by the Juvenile Justice system will receive wrap-around assertive and culturally competent case management services and mentoring supports. Provide access to prosocial, recreational, academic and work-force development support. Youth and parents connected with support groups and leadership development opportunities.

Beyond Black- Social Justice Program (\$50,000)

Program to advance social justice advocacy and criminal justice reform through community engagement, education, and community activation. Organize and facilitate Policy Cafes, educational opportunities, and government tours to empower people to use their voice to influence political processes and policies through active engagement. Participants will learn how to provide public testimony, connect with local representative, and opportunities to get involved on committees and other leadership groups.

Summary of Process:

The grant application was available on civic Life's website from December 11, 2019 to January 29, 2020 at 5:00pm.

This grant cycle the Bureau increased visibility of information online (*e.g.*, email outreach, FAQs, allowable expenses, purpose information, etc.) and increased the number of community information sessions offered (2019- two sessions, 2020- four sessions). In our program's conversations with stakeholder groups subsequent to the 2019 grant cycle, there seemed to be elevated interest and awareness of the grant- particularly in organizations that serve our priority communities. Over 50 people participated in the information sessions held at Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods on December 18, 2019, East Portland Community Office on December 20, 2019, at St. Johns Community Center on January 7, 2020, and at Cultiva Law on January 11, 2020.

We received 31 applications for a total of \$2,948,454.07 (minimum request \$25,000, maximum request \$183,080). One application was deemed ineligible for review.

The Review Panel consisted of 6 community members and 1 City staff. Five community members were selected and appointed by Commissioners, one panelist was a member of

the City's Cannabis Policy Oversight Team and the final panelist was City staff from the Portland Housing Bureau.

The panel received the Review Panel Manual and required forms by email and met by phone on January 28th for a one-hour orientation and training. Staff also met by phone or in-person with each of the panelists in preparation for scoring. The funding opportunity closed on January 29th and the panelists received the grant applications on February 5th. Panelists were given five weeks to review to accommodate the high number of applications (30) this cycle.

On March 16, 2020 (two weeks before the Review Panel's collaborative scoring meeting) Oregon Governor Kate Brown announced Executive Order 20-12 (EO 20-12) Stay Home, Save Lives: Ordering Oregonians to stay at home and for specified businesses and childcare facilities to close. The grant program staff realized the impact that would be felt by organizations and participants alike. Staff immediately began to reach out to internal and external stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the current and expected impact of EO 20-12 on the personal and professional lives of everyone involved with the Cannabis Social Equity Grant.

After receiving feedback from staff, current awardees, the Cannabis Policy Oversight Team (CPOT), and 2020 applicants, the Bureau decided to seek additional guidance from the Review Panel as to the best course of action for grantmaking during the COVID-19. Staff had one-on-one conversations with panelists in advance of their planned collaborative scoring meeting.

On April 2nd the Review Panel* met for 7 hours via online video conference, for a facilitated in-person meeting, to collaboratively score and discuss final recommendations. The first hour of the panel's seven-hour online meeting was dedicated to discussion about how the grant fund should respond to the current crisis. The panel discussed a variety of options for recommendation. They considered narrowing the priority areas in order to focus on funding a single area of work but concluded that all four priority funding areas are critical to restorative justice and the immediate needs of the communities who have been most harmed by cannabis criminalization. They also considered dividing the funds equally amongst all applicants and possibly allowing up to 100% be used for general operating costs. It was a lengthy and difficult conversation for the panel. Ultimately, the group decided upon the following plan:

- To distribute funds across all funding areas
- To fund small, emerging community programs in order to support their survival and ability to serve

- To also fund larger, more established programs that are more likely to be able to get funds and services out into the community quickly
- To accept that they have a limited amount of information and the funding landscape and economy was likely to shift rapidly
- To accept that the scope for these projects, and capacity of these organizations was likely to change
- To recommend the City offer the awardees the maximum amount of flexibility possible so that they can respond to immediate community needs

Program staff met with Bureau Director, Suk Rhee to discuss the panel's recommendations. Director Rhee and Commissioner Eudaly have recommended that the panel's final selection be funded in alignment with the panel's recommendation.

**One panelist withdrew from the panel on April 1st due to personal reasons related to COVID-19.*

Other considerations: Given the current state of emergency related to COVID-19, program staff proactively reached out to Year 2 awardees and Year 3 applicants in advance of the review panel meeting in order to gather information about impacts of social distancing restrictions on programs and services. A broad overview of responses and impact of COVID-19 on applicants was shared with the grant review panel for discussion. This Bureau and the grant review panel understand that the current service environment will continue to pose real and unique challenges for organizations and their clients in maintaining and establishing connection and service delivery. Staff will be reaching out to the recommended awardees to gain clarity around specific needs and service changes related to their application and their priority communities.