



## Tipping Point Grants

### I. Purpose

These are small grants to help amplify community efforts. These grants will either fuel what is already happening or allow you to develop your own local projects that create pathways to greater resiliency in your community – actions that will stack positive factors, such as stronger connection, communication, and development of our community leaders, while offloading negative factors like isolation, hopelessness, and violence. These initiatives help build out a resource grid in our community that enables all of us to be safer and healthier. The intention of the program is to not only provide a financial infusion, but also bolster existing community connections and communication platforms. Ultimately, we are looking to develop leaders while increasing both your connections and the ability to communicate your work to the community. Those efforts will also help lead to eliminating barriers such as isolation and hopelessness. This funding source is aimed at bolstering individual innovative ideas and existing nonprofits that are vital to the health of our community. All individual innovators must be in partnership with a nonprofit agency.

### II. Funding

Tipping Point Grants are supported through general county funds, which are budgeted as part of Buncombe County's annual budget. The amount for FY2021 is \$100,000, subject to budget adoption. Tipping Point Grants will be allocated at \$5,000 per project.

### III. Eligibility

Buncombe County Tipping Point Grants are open for nonprofits and individual innovators in partnership with a nonprofit looking for financial support to enhance community benefit projects. Tipping Point Grants are seeking proposals from nonprofit organizations working to help support County Commissioners Focus Areas.

- Submitting an application is not a guarantee of funding.
- Your organization must be a Buncombe County-based nonprofit with 501c3 or a similar charitable IRS tax-exempt designation. All individual innovators must be in partnership with a nonprofit agency.
- Projects must meet a public purpose and fall within County authority to fund, per NC General Statutes.
- We are committed to working with applicants to find creative solutions that will help applicants meet these requirements.
- Previous recipients are eligible to re-apply for a continuation or expansion of a project.
- Nonprofits that have received Tipping Point Grants in the past are eligible to reapply.

### IV. Projects

- Project must connect to “Ensuring Positive Place,” “Connecting People,” and/or “Improving Equitable Opportunity”. For more information on the THRIVE model, [read here](#).



- Funding must be used for a one-time expense, such as equipment, training, materials or staffing, which could help get a project on better footing (tipping it).
- Project funding is not for ongoing operational costs.

## V. Timeline

February 5, 2020	Grant Announcement
February 10, 2020	Grant application opens
February 18, 2020, 5:30-7:00	Grant writing workshop
February 19, 2020, 1-2:30	Grant writing workshop
February 24, 2020, 5:30-7:00	Grant writing workshop
March 13, 2020	Applications Due by 5:00 pm
March 19 - April 6, 2020	Grant review process
April 6 and 9, 2020	Finalist selection process
April 24, 2020	Funding recommendations due to County budget office
May 5, 2020	Committee grant recommendations shared with Board of Commissioners as part of pre-meeting
May 19, 2020	Committee grant recommendations published with County Manger’s budget message
June 2, 2020	Public hearing on budget as part of Board of Commissioners regular meeting
June 16, 2020	Grant awards finalized with County budget adoption during Board of Commissioners regular meeting
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Funding year

## VI. Application Process

Organizations are required to apply online through Buncombe County’s grant software, which can be accessed at [buncombecounty.org/apply](http://buncombecounty.org/apply) or linked through the Community Investment website at [buncombecounty.org/grants](http://buncombecounty.org/grants). Applications are due by 5:00pm. Paper applications are available at 199 College Street, Asheville, NC 28802.

A grant-writing workshop (optional for applicants) will be held on February 18, 5:30-7:00, February 19, 1:00-2:30 and February 24, 5:30-7:00 pm at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, N.C. in the ground floor conference room. Free parking will be available in the County garage at 164 College Street.

Staff is available to provide basic one-on-one support to applicants by request. Staff only facilitates the grant scoring process. Applicants are asked not to communicate with review committee members regarding their applications.

Language interpretation and translation is also available upon request.

## VII. Required Elements

The application consists primarily of questions requiring a narrative response. Applicants are also required to complete a standard budget.

## **VIII. Review Committee**

Tipping Point recommendations are prepared by the Tipping Point Grant Committee. The Committee consists of nine (9) members with an application process open to the public, and the County Manager approves yearly appointments.

## **IX. Review Process**

Applications are reviewed by the Tipping Point Grant Review Committee utilizing a standardized, points-based system. Reviews will be conducted independently by members of the committee, and discussion will occur during the scoring of applications. Grant review will occur on April 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Funding recommendations will be submitted to the County Budget Office by April 24, 2020.

## **X. Review Criteria**

The following criteria will be considered by the Committee:

- Goals connect to the THRIVE Model;
- Public purpose & community need;
- Connected to a specific neighborhood/geography;
- Led by an individual or community-based group;
- Shows self-organizing coherence;
- Prioritizes community goals above individual interests;
- Evidence of trusting relationships;
- Grounded in cultural identity and sense of place;
- Project scale appropriate to grant amount;
- Capacity-building focus;
- Funding has potential to “Tip” the effort.

## **XI. Awards**

Grant recommendations prepared by the Committee will be submitted for approval to the Buncombe County Manager. The list will be published as part of the County Manager’s recommended budget as presented to the Board of Commissioners at their regularly scheduled meeting on May 19, 2020. Grant awards will be finalized with budget adoption on June 16, 2020.

## **XII. Performance Contracts**

All grant awards will be administered via performance contracts. Contracts will include a scope of work that defines services, deliverables and reporting measures.

FY2021 contracts will be for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. All funds must be spent or returned to the County by June 30, 2021.

Contracts will also include standard indemnification and insurance expectations, which lists the minimum insurance coverage which Contractors agree to procure and maintain. Required insurances and levels vary depending on the nature of the project and can include types such as: Worker’s Compensation; Commercial General Liability; Employer’s Liability; Professional Liability; etc. The County

will collect and review certificates of insurance as part of contract compliance. Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County throughout the year.

In addition to the standard contract expectations for all organizations doing business with the County, nonprofits receiving grant funds must also:

- a. Open their books for the contracting department;
- b. Submit copies of annual IRS tax filings (Form 990s); and
- c. Submit annual financial statements based on a tiered structure, consistent with industry standard practice:
  - Audit: Organizations with annual revenues of \$300,000 or greater must submit financial statements audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.
  - Review: Those with revenues between \$100,000 and \$300,000 must submit financial statements reviewed in accordance with applicable Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services (SSARS).
  - Compilation: Those with revenues of less than \$100,000 must submit non-disclosure financial statements compiled in accordance with applicable SSARS.
  - Nonprofit agencies may request a waiver to use other third-party provided documents.
  - Nonprofit agencies that may have challenges with these expectations have the option to work with staff in finding alternative proof of financial standing.

Contract performance will be monitored and evaluated by the County throughout the year, including review of financial and programmatic reporting. Performance results will be published online in funded projects dashboard. Approval of renewal grant funding requests shall be contingent on meeting performance criteria.

**XIII. Lead Department/Division**

Staffing for this grant program is provided by Buncombe County's Strategic Partnerships Department.