



Building Equitable Economies Fund

*Advancing Health Equity in the Pacific Northwest
Through the American Rescue Plan Act Initiative*

Request For Proposals

What is this initiative?

Through the Building Equitable Economies Fund (EE), Empire Health Foundation (EHF) is engaging a diverse set of community-based organizations and small businesses from across our region to develop the capacity to access American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. Specifically, we are interested in making catalytic investments to support community-identified strategies that show promise in attracting ARPA resources.

This initiative will fund efforts to:

- Convene and facilitate community conversations to determine catalytic investments
- Develop grants, plans, and studies to attract resources to the hardest-hit BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and rural underserved communities
- Support the acquisition of real estate and other capital assets in Eastern Washington for and by these same hardest hit communities
- Support policy and advocacy activity to advance health equity and build an equitable economy that affords vitality and prosperity across communities

Why now?

The COVID Pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, and the social justice protests across the country and throughout our region have all acted like external forces shifting the landscape upon which we stand. As we come out of the Pandemic, organizations and communities alike are beginning to radically re-imagine the future we want to be a part of. EHF believes every community should have the opportunity to engage in this re-imagining, create paths that make this future visible, and enlist others to support the effort to make it a reality.

This fund is intended to influence recovery resources to stabilize the hardest-hit workers and businesses by the COVID-19 Pandemic in Eastern Washington. We will make targeted, **catalytic investments** to advance health equity and build an equitable economy in which historically disadvantaged people have good jobs, dignified and rising standards of living, fair access to health, and equal opportunity for voice, power, and ownership.

How do you see this happening?

Equitable Economies is fast, complicated work and we still have a lot to learn. We continue to update and evolve the following milestones, deliverables, and metrics to get us started. These are subject to change.

| Milestone | Months in 2022 | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Community Advisory Committee Convenings (Jan-Apr) | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | |
| Community Learning Sessions (Monthly) | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |
| Accept and review applications on an ongoing basis *March-April | | | █ | █ | | | |
| Fund applications *April | | | | █ | █ | | |
| Develop technical assistance program while also providing and directing TA upon request when possible | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | |
| EE Grantee Convening (TBD) | | | | | | | |
| Redevelop 10 Priorities Guide to reflect EHF and Eastern Washington | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |
| Collect project stories to add to the 10 Priorities Guide | | | | | █ | █ | █ |

| Outcomes | Criteria |
|---|--|
| Community-determined sense of health and vitality | Fast-Cycle learning/equitable frameworks |
| Return on Investment (new resources/investment) | Investment/new resources to the region |
| Income building | New resources to priority populations |
| Wealth building | Number served |
| | Number of acres purchased |
| | Number of facilities purchased |
| | Number of homes purchased |

What are the hopes?

These hopes are an attempt to communicate our interests and values in approaching this initiative and serve as a guide for us to implement this project and work together with our communities.

| What this is: | What this isn't: |
|--|--|
| An opportunity to attract resources to historically disadvantaged communities. | An effort to build the capacity of large, mainstream organizations and businesses that already have access to resources. |
| An opportunity for the communities to identify their own needs, taking ownership of their development process. | A process in which EHF, consultants, or other external actors will determine the framework to guide future action. |
| A process that places leaders and organizations representing under-resourced communities at the center of design and implementation. | A centering of the same institutions, organizations, and communities predominantly at the center of contemporary work. |
| An opportunity for community-based organizations and small businesses to build capacity to access ARPA funds and other consistent funding sources. | Centering the needs and building the capacities of mainstream organizations while CBOs continue to be underresourced without the capacity to secure support to address long-term community priorities. |
| An opportunity for groups and organizations to identify new areas of work that address unique challenges associated with a post-pandemic world. | A cookie-cutter approach to addressing challenges in a uniform way. |

Who should apply?

For-profit, non-profit, public organizations, and groups prepared to work on behalf of communities that have not been afforded the same opportunities to incorporate ARPA resources into developing their visions. If you have questions regarding eligibility for this project, please contact Shivon Brite or Rocio Wofford (contact information provided on page 6).

For us, community means a group with a shared sense of identity and belonging, possibly history and culture. A community might be defined by geography, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other shared lived experiences. Our priority will be communities that have been under-supported by systems in our region and have been subject to persistent health inequities. We will ask you to describe how this is true for your community.

What resources are available?

In 2021, the EE initiative completed two rounds of funding, awarding \$323,125 in grants to fund 21 projects. This year, EE's third round of funding will take place in March-April of 2022. The Request for Proposals will be open to all organizations in Eastern Washington. **Applicants can request any amount from \$2,000 to \$20,000 per project.** Based upon previous work, we anticipate that awarded amounts per project will be in the range of \$9,000-16,000.

We know that making space for this type of work requires money. We know that there are many other competing interests for your energy and leadership at this time. We want to provide the right amount of money to support each project, and we want to fund as many diverse and distinct communities as possible. Most grants will be made from the Empire Health Foundation. The Empire Health Community Advocacy Fund may provide some grants.

Request Project Range: \$2,000-\$20,000

Types: Grants & Contracts
Eligible: For-profit, non-profits, public organizations, fiscally sponsored group, & individuals

Application Opens: March 18, 2022

Application Closes: April 13, 2022

Review Period: **April 18-22**

Notices of Funding: **Late April**

Funds Release: **Late April-Early May**

Application Format: Survey Application

Questions: See below

What types of work will be funded?

We will prioritize projects that serve communities that have been under-supported by systems in our region and have been subject to persistent health inequities.

Priorities that make sense with what we know right now

- Community identified strategies that show promise in attracting ARPA resources, and other significant sources of funding
- Collaboration within and between historically disadvantaged communities
- Wealth building approaches among BIPOC/LGBTQ+ through the acquisition of real estate

Questions we will be asking when reviewing applications include:

- Does this applicant have experience serving a grassroots effort that brings historically disadvantaged community members together to build a future they want for themselves?
- Do this project's goals create space for the community to support their vision with ARPA resources?
- Is this project's leadership reflective of the community to be served?
- Does this project promote catalytic investments?

Questions we will ask when selecting providers for the fund as a whole include:

- Does this fund elevate the visions of many distinct communities across the region?

We will use these questions as the criteria for selecting projects. We intend to ensure that EE resources reach as many of the communities hardest hit by the pandemic as possible. We realize this means choosing between applicants who serve the same community. We designed this to be an accessible yet competitive process, and not all requests will be awarded.

What is the review process?

The review period will take place between April 18-22 in which all applications will be reviewed according to the criteria listed above. The *Application Form* is comprised of a brief set of questions to be completed online.

We will prioritize applications from organizations and small businesses whose missions are to serve communities whose leadership and origin are reflective of the community. Local for-profit, non-profit organizations, and community coalitions/groups fiscally sponsored by non-profits operating in and representing story development within the Inland Northwest Region are eligible to apply. This process is subject to change.

Submit your application

To apply, please complete the *Application Form* through the link below. Once you submit your application, this cannot be edited. Therefore, please take your time and contact us if you experience any technical issues.

Apply here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/economies>

The application questions are previewed here:

1. Please enter your contact information
2. What is your EHF Equitable Economies funding request (\$2,000-20,000)? In general terms, how will these funds be utilized?
3. What types of capacity building work will be completed - facilitation, writing, planning, policy? (select all that apply)
4. Do you have a preferred technical assistance provider? If yes, list contact information.
5. Describe your Executive Leadership, if applicable
6. Describe your Board Leadership, if applicable
7. What community do you represent? Describe the relationship between your organization and this community. Include a description of how your organizational leadership is reflective of this community.
8. What ARPA resources is your group interested in? Are you interested in attracting other funds beyond ARPA?
9. What is your project's goal? How will this project attract more resources to your organization? What support would be needed from EHF and/or other entities?
10. If you plan to collaborate with other groups or organizations for this project, please list them.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: My organization has a community-identified priority, but we do not know what ARPA resources are available or how to access them? Is this opportunity a good fit for where our community is right now?

Answer: Yes, this fund is a good fit for organizations that understand community priority but are early learning about ARPA resources. EHF is working to improve access to ARPA policy guides and funding opportunities. This will come in the form of technical assistance with facilitators, grant writers, and policy analysts.

Question: May our non-profit organization or small business submit multiple applications for different projects?

Answer: Yes, there is no limit to the number of applications your non-profit or small business can submit. It is possible that some applicants will be funded for multiple projects. However, we intend to serve as many diverse and distinct communities as possible. We anticipate that this will be a competitive process, and not all requests will be funded.

Question: What types of projects are most likely to be funded.

Answer: Applications will be reviewed based upon the priorities outlined on page four of this Call for Applications. Examples of previously awarded projects include grant writing and development capacity, technical assistance, community convening, strategic planning, capital campaigns, capacity for land acquisition, and positioning for federal ARPA funds.

Question: We are a large mainstream organization doing work on behalf of the BIPOC communities. Are we eligible to apply?

Answer: Technically, yes. There is no official limit to the size of eligible organizations. However, this fund is designed to attract resources to historically disadvantaged communities by building the capacity of grassroots efforts where leadership is reflective of the community served.

Question: As a technical assistance provider or consultant, may I apply for support for my business?

Answer: Technically, yes. Small businesses are eligible entities. However, the proposed project must align with the fund priorities as identified in this Call for Applications. This means that the work has to support a community-identified priority, be in partnership with the community, and work to attract ARPA resources to priority populations.

Contact these folks with questions:

Shivon Brite, EHF Executive Vice President
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Rocio Wofford, EHF Program Associate
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Definitions of Frequently Used Terms

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 – This is a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus rescue package designed to facilitate the United States’ recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The nearly \$2 trillion price tag makes this economic rescue legislation one of the most expensive in U.S. history. It is one part of President Biden’s Build Back Better plan, which also includes the American Jobs Plan and the American Families Plan.

Capacity Building - The process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, strategies, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world.

Community – For this project, we would invite applications from a group or organization which identifies with a defined community. For us, community means a group with a shared sense of identity and belonging, and possibly of history and culture. A community can be defined by geography, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender conformity, or other shared lived experience. Our priority will be on communities that have been under-supported by systems in our region and have been subject to persistent health inequities.

Fiscal Sponsor – A non-profit organization that provides fiduciary oversight, financial management, and other administrative services to another entity to provide public benefit to a community. This sponsorship must be codified through a formalized agreement outlining the terms of the relationship and the services which will be provided.

Health equity – A state of being of a community or collection of communities that represent a self-determined sense of health and vitality for all of its members. A mindset within these communities that we are better together, that we can build greater health by working together, and that health and power are expansive when held in relationship and collaboration. A system of equilibrium and balance between and amongst these communities that assures no one community falls through the cracks or is persistently less likely to have their needs met by the very systems that should be nurturing and supporting our continued health.

Health inequities – The presence of disparate health outcomes between a community and the predominant community in the region. To measure health inequity in our region, we typically use the average in the same region as a comparison or benchmark. Depending on what demographic you focus on - race, gender, religion, income, sexuality, urban/rural - you might choose a different comparison or benchmark based on the predominant community.

Historically Disadvantaged Community - Groups that have been socially, economically, or educationally underprivileged by past discriminatory laws or practices.

Inland Northwest – For this project, we define the Inland Northwest as the seven counties of Adams, Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman, and the lands of the Colville Confederated, Kalispel, and Spokane Tribal Nations.