
LEVEL BIPOC Grants Frequently Asked Questions

There have been new questions that have been added since the October 21 version of this FAQ. We have indicated the new additions for easy reference.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Who are these grants for?

These grants are for BIPOC-led organizations based in and serving BC, that are a [registered charity or other qualified donee](#) listed by Canada Revenue Agency.

For the purpose of this grant program, we define BIPOC-led organizations as groups where at least two-thirds of senior staff and/or board leadership positions are held by those who self-identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Colour. Consideration is also made for organizations that have an explicit focus or mandate to serve BIPOC communities in BC. We recognize identity is rich and complex and in addition to self-identifying, mutual accountability within one's community is equally important.

We will also prioritize:

- Indigenous and Black-led organizations
- Organizations led by young BIPOC leaders or have meaningfully engaged and centered experiences and wisdom of Indigenous, Black, and/or racialized immigrant and refugee young people in their decision-making processes
- BIPOC-led organizations in remote communities
- BIPOC-led organizations that have either not received in the last five years or have never received funding from Vancouver Foundation.

2. **[New Question]** What can the funds be used for?

These are flexible operating grants – meaning your BIPOC-led organization can choose to use these funds to support the priorities of the organization. We are not asking for budgets, nor for final reports based on principles of trust and to actually service the need for BIPOC-led organizations to have access to funding to actualize their goals and objectives.

3. Although these grants are meant as general operating grants, are there activities that will not be funded?

The LEVEL BIPOC Grants, like many other Vancouver Foundation grants, is unable to fund:

- Activities and programs that take place primarily outside of B.C
- Debt retirement, reserves, or mortgage pay-downs
- [Direct Religious Purposes](#)

4. What is a qualified donee?

Under the Income Tax Act, a [qualified donee](#) is an organization that can issue official donation receipts for gifts they receive from individuals and corporations such as a registered charity. Registered charities can also make gifts to them. Vancouver Foundation can only grant to qualified donees.

5. Do we have to be working with racialized youth or youth in some way, or can we still apply if our focus is not youth-related?

One of the LEVEL BIPOC Grants' funding priorities is intended to support organizations led by young BIPOC leaders and/or organizations with a demonstrated track record of meaningfully engaging and centering the experiences and wisdom of Indigenous, Black, and/or racialized immigrant and refugee young people. We still encourage you to apply if your organization does not meet this specific priority but meets the other stated priorities.

6. I'm from a First Nations community/band based in BC. Are we eligible for funding?

Vancouver Foundation is only able to grant to qualified donees. That said, a registered municipal or public body performing a function of government, including a number of First Nations Bands, are qualified donees. You can look up your nation/community/band under [this link](#) to see if you're eligible.

7. My charity is national, but we do some work in BC. Are we eligible?

You are eligible to apply; however, the LEVEL BIPOC Grants are prioritizing BIPOC-led organizations based in and serving communities in BC.

8. Our organization is not BIPOC-led, or is white-led, but we serve mostly racialized peoples. Are we still eligible?

The LEVEL BIPOC Grants is one lever to advance racial equity by investing in BIPOC leaders and BIPOC leadership in the sector. We invite non-BIPOC leaders to consider what it means to share resources and power and address historical inequities within our sector and find ways to support and celebrate BIPOC leadership.

9. I've previously received a Vancouver Foundation grant. Does this mean I cannot apply for this grant?

Yes, you can still apply for the grant if you've received another grant by Vancouver Foundation, but priority will be given to organizations that have either not received funding in the last five years or have never received funding from Vancouver Foundation.

10. I don't have a project idea for this grant. Can I still apply?

Yes. These grants are meant to support general operations, which means grantees can choose how they use the money based on their aspirations, needs, and priorities. It is not dependent or focused on a project.

11. [New Question] Do I need to start and end the use of these funds between a set deadline?

We assume that most organizations will use these funds in the year the grant was awarded to support the operating costs and needs the organization has identified. Although we are not requiring final reports, we are inviting grantees to participate in learning days with us and other grant recipients, to understand how and if, receiving flexible operating funds as a BIPOC-led organization was helpful. Additionally, in order to apply for subsequent funding from Vancouver Foundation, applicants will need to have completed or close this grant file first.

FOR NON-QUALIFIED DONEES

12. What if our organization is not a qualified donee?

If you are not a qualified donee, you can partner with an organization that is a qualified donee, such as a registered charity, to carry out the activities associated with the funding request. The qualified donee organization will still need to submit the application and you would be listed as the intermediary organization in the application process. We strongly encourage and recommend applicant organizations and intermediaries working together, to create written agreements for shared understanding of the work. Refer to Canada Revenue Agency's guidelines for more details about [intermediary organizations](#).

13. My organization is not a qualified donee. Can Vancouver Foundation help me find a registered charity or other qualified donee who I can partner with for my application?

Vancouver Foundation staff can facilitate introductions amongst groups and organizations doing similar work to advance change; however, formalizing any partnerships or working agreements would be between the respective organizations themselves. Vancouver Foundation commits to advocating for changes to CRA policy that exclude many BIPOC organizations from receiving charitable dollars because they aren't qualified donees. We have and will continue to lobby the federal government for changes that would allow [foundations to grant to non-qualified donees](#).

14. **[New Question]** I'm a non-qualified donee of a BIPOC-led initiative/group/non-profit. I'd like to apply as the Intermediary with an Applicant Organization that is a qualified donee, but I'm based in B.C. and they are based elsewhere in Canada. Am I still eligible?

Yes, as long as both the intermediary and the qualified donee/applicant organization have a mandate to deliver programming and work that takes place in British Columbia.

15. **[New Question]** Do I have to answer the funding priorities from my perspective as the Intermediary Organization or the Applicant Organization?

You should be able to answer as both, please see below for further clarification.

For the funding alignment/priority question: "Are you a Black or Indigenous-led organization?"

Your response as the intermediary should indicate if you are a Black- or Indigenous-led organization. If you would like to share if the qualified donee/applicant organization is Black- or Indigenous-led you're welcome to, but it is not required. What would be helpful is to understand the working relationship between the intermediary and qualified donee organization and how the intermediary is carrying out the activities of the qualified donee organization, as per CRA's definition of intermediaries.

For the funding alignment/priority question: "Is your organization currently engaging and prioritizing Indigenous, Black and/or racialized immigrant and refugee youth?"

You as the Intermediary should be able to answer if you have history working with Indigenous, Black and/or racialized immigrant and refugee youth. If you would like to share if the qualified donee/applicant organization works with these above populations you're welcome to, but it is certainly not required. Similar to the above priority, it would be helpful to understand the working relationship between the intermediary and qualified

donee organization and how the intermediary is carrying out the activities of the qualified donee organization, as per CRA's definition of intermediaries.

For the funding alignment/priority question: “Are you an organization located in and serving a small or remote community?”

Your response as the intermediary organization should be able to locate that you are based within BC. It is okay if the qualified donee/applicant organization you are working with is not based in BC, but also has a mandate that includes working or delivering programs and services in BC. How will you as the intermediary, be carrying out the work on behalf of the qualified donee/applicant organization that is not located in BC?

For the funding alignment/priority question: “Has your organization ever received funding from Vancouver Foundation?”

Your response as the intermediary organization should indicate if you have received funding from Vancouver Foundation ever, or in the last five years – even if you applied with or through another qualified donee/applicant organization in the past. You will also need to provide information from the qualified donee/applicant organization if they have ever or in the last five years, whether it was for a different intermediary or even themselves, received funding from Vancouver Foundation—whether from LEVEL or another funding stream such as Systems Change or the Community Response Fund.

16. **[New Question]** If I'm an intermediary who gets selected for the oral application process, will the qualified donee/applicant organization also have to be present in the conversation?

Applicant organizations as intermediaries should both be in the phone/Zoom call. The qualified donee/applicant organization has fiscal responsibility over the funds, if they receive it. Again, being the host or applicant organization that is a qualified donee is not about flowing money through to a non-qualified donee so we will also need to understand how both groups envision working together and where the intermediary's goals and work as a BIPOC-led group align with the work of the qualified donee.

17. **[New Question]** Is it okay if my organization, as an intermediary is BIPOC-led, but the Application Organization is not, or is white-led?

Yes. The qualified donee/applicant organization can be white-led or not led by self-identified BIPOC communities. And we would need to understand how the work/partnership is aligned between both groups if the application is advanced to the oral application round.

GRANT PROGRAM DETAILS

18. **Is this a one-year grant?**

Yes. This is the first year we are prototyping the LEVEL BIPOC Grants and these grants are meant to support up to one year of general operating costs. Moving forward, we are working to explore multi-year grants to better serve BIPOC-led organizations and communities.

19. **Will this grant only be offered this one time? If I get the grant now, does this mean I can't apply for it again in the future?**

We intend to offer BIPOC LEVEL Grants again next year for new applicants, as well as ways to offer continued support for this year's cycle of applicants. At this point, we don't have any details confirmed about the next cycle but you can [sign up to receive email updates](#) when we're ready to share more information.

20. What is the maximum/minimum amount I can request?

There is no minimum amount, but you are able to request up to a maximum of \$50,000 for your organization.

21. What is the pool of funding available for this grant? How many organizations are you going to fund with this grant?

We have committed \$500,000 to BIPOC-led organizations for this grant cycle.

APPLICATION PROCESS

22. What is the application process?

First, applicants must create an online user profile in our [grant management system](#) and fill out a brief yes or no questionnaire about whether your organization is BIPOC-led. This helps to determine your alignment with the priorities of the granting program.

Applicant organizations that are most aligned will be invited to the next step which is a one hour recorded conversation (i.e. oral application) with staff and possibly 1-2 of LEVEL's community advisors about your organization, its leadership, and how this grant would support your BIPOC leadership's aspirations in advancing racial justice work. This conversation (recording and transcription) will replace a written application form.

23. Will I receive questions for the conversations ahead of time?

Yes, you will receive the questions before your scheduled conversation to help you prepare. These questions are only intended to serve as conversation starters. Please keep in mind that the goal of this stage is to engage in a conversation to develop a deeper understanding of your organization's aspirations, needs, and priorities.

24. What kind of questions will be asked in the conversation portion of the application process?

The questions will serve as conversation starters and like any conversation, we may move in and out of different topics based on what's discussed. These are the types of questions we'll explore:

- Please share how your organization and its leadership:
 - is committed to working on intersecting equity issues: gender, disabilities, migrant, religious minority, and LGTBQIA2S communities.
 - demonstrates and is committed to racial justice in relation other systems change work, such as migrant justice, criminal justice and environmental justice.
 - collaborates or works in partnerships with BIPOC grassroots groups to lift up voices and experiences of those not connected to formal services or organizations.
- As BIPOC leaders:

- What are your hopes and dreams for advancing racial justice work? What have you not been able to do previously due to lack of funding?
- What changes are you hoping to enable if you did not have to worry about operational and administrative costs for your organization such as rent?
- Tell us about:
 - What you are seeking to learn, or maybe unlearn, right now and how your organization approaches learning.
 - What would be helpful in your learning journey?

25. What is the assessment criteria for these grants? How are you deciding who you will fund?

Our [LEVEL advisory committee](#) will review the conversation recording and transcription and will recommend organizations for funding. They will be assessing the grants based on which organizations meet all the proposed priorities. A decision-making rubric will be made available to applicants prior to the scheduled conversation (oral application).

26. Who is making the funding decisions?

Our LEVEL advisory committee is made up of individuals deeply rooted in their communities who draw on their lived experiences as mostly BIPOC folks, their expertise, and wisdom to make funding decisions. You can learn more about who they are [here](#).

27. When can we expect to hear decisions by?

You can expect to hear a decision by February 2021.

28. What kind of reporting requirements do these grants have?

We will not require any final reporting for these grants. Instead, we will ask that you commit to collective learning and evaluation work alongside LEVEL which could include participating in a learning day with LEVEL staff, advisors and other grantees. We may also contact you from time to time to feature your organization in our communications or marketing.

SUPPORT

29. I have a question about the grants that was not answered here. Who do I connect with?

Please contact Abeer, our grants coordinator at abeer.yusuf@vancouverfoundation.ca for general questions about this grant program and its priorities or for information about the application process.

30. I have some technical questions about the application process. How can I get help?

Please contact Joey, our grants administrator for assistance with our grant management system at joey.cheung@vancouverfoundation.ca

LEVEL-RELATED QUESTIONS

31. Why is LEVEL offering this now?

Over the last two years that we've been offering LEVEL Youth Granting. What we've heard from grantees, applicants, and our advisors is that what BIPOC-led organizations ultimately need to advance their work in racial justice is flexible, operating grants. But we

also know that BIPOC-led organizations face additional barriers to accessing and securing funding. At the end of 2019, we began to explore how we can offer flexible funding through new and creative ways of grantmaking that are more equitable and better centre relationships.

32. Will you still be offering LEVEL Test and Develop grants later in the year?

For the remainder of 2020, we will only be offering LEVEL BIPOC Grants. LEVEL is committed to and will continue to offer the LEVEL Youth Grants. More information will be shared about LEVEL Youth Granting priorities in 2021.

33. [New Question] My organization has received a LEVEL Test and/or Develop grant, which is currently underway or has recently been completed. Am I still eligible for this grant opportunity?

Yes, you are still eligible for this grant opportunity, but please note that per our four funding priorities, applications that are most aligned with the priorities, including that of not having been funded by Vancouver Foundation in the last five years, or ever, will be prioritized to move forward to the next stage for the conversation/oral application.

34. Will LEVEL continue to engage and work alongside Indigenous and racialized migrant youth?

Yes, we remain committed to continuing to engage and work alongside Indigenous and racialized migrant youth through other grants and programs, including the [LEVEL Youth Policy Program](#)