
LEVEL BIPOC Grants

Frequently Asked Questions

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

2. 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.

3. 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 at this time.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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 service the need for BIPOC-led organizations to have access to funding to actualize their goals and objectives.

7. 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](#)

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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 do not require 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.

FOR NON-QUALIFIED DONEES

11. What if my 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 work together to create written agreements for shared understanding of the work. Refer to Canada Revenue Agency's guidelines for more details about [intermediary organizations](#).

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- 12. If 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, partnerships or working agreements would need to be formalized between the respective organizations themselves currently reviewing our criteria and eligibility rules for non-qualified donees in light of recently [updated CRA guidelines](#). **Our highest priority is ensuring our grant-making is equitable, trust-based, and accessible to the communities we serve.**

In partnership with the province, we are currently using the updated guidelines from the CRA for the [Recovery & Resiliency Fund](#) to specifically reach organizations across British Columbia. We are using a new approach to grant-making, seeking a more accessible model, specifically for equity-denied organizations who are disproportionately impacted by the historical definition of a [qualified donee](#). We are actively learning from this new grant-making model, making necessary changes in real-time to ensure the process is done fairly and equitably. We have and will continue to lobby the federal government for changes that would allow [foundations to grant to non-qualified donees](#).

- 13. I'm a non-qualified donee of a BIPOC-led initiative/group/non-profit. I'd like to apply as the Intermediary Organization (non-qualified donee) with an Applicant Organization (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.

- 14. If I'm an Intermediary Organization (non-qualified donee) who gets selected for the oral application process, does the Applicant Organization (qualified donee) need to be present in the conversation?**

Applicant Organizations (qualified donee) have the option to be in the phone/Zoom call and contribute to the written application. The Applicant Organization has fiscal responsibility over the funds, if they receive it. Being the host or Applicant Organization (qualified donee) is not about flowing money through to an Intermediary Organization (non-qualified donee) so we will need confirmation that both groups have a working relationship and that the Intermediary Organization's goals and work as a BIPOC-led group aligns with the work of the Applicant Organization.

- 15. 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.

16. 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 Applicant Organization (qualified donee) is Black- or Indigenous-led you're welcome to, but it is not required.

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 Organization (non-qualified donee) 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 Applicant Organization (qualified donee) works with these above populations you're welcome to, but it is certainly not required.

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 (non-qualified donee) should confirm that you are based within BC. It is okay if the Applicant Organization (qualified donee) you are working with is not based in BC, but also has a mandate that includes working or delivering programs and services in BC.

GRANT PROGRAM DETAILS

17. Is this a one-year grant?

Yes. This is the second 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.

18. Will this grant only be offered again? 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.

19. 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.

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

We have committed \$1,500,000 to BIPOC-led organizations for this grant cycle.

APPLICATION PROCESS

21. What is the application process?

First, applicants must create an online user profile in our [Grant Management System \(GMS\)](#) and answer a few questions about your organization in Stage 1. This helps to determine your alignment with the eligibility and priorities of the granting program.

Applicant organizations that are most aligned will be invited to Stage 2 and are able to decide between an oral or written application. You will be asked about your organization, its leadership, and how this grant would support your BIPOC leadership's work in advancing racial equity and justice. Oral applications will be recorded and transcribed, and the files will serve as your final application.

22. Will I receive questions for the oral application ahead of time?

Yes, you will receive the questions and any additional information about the application before your scheduled time to help you prepare. Please keep in mind that the goal of this stage is to develop a deeper understanding of your organization's work and approach.

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

Our LEVEL Community Advisors will review written and oral applications, including transcriptions, and recommend organizations for funding. They will be assessing the grants based on which organizations meet all the proposed priorities.

24. Who is making the funding decisions?

Our LEVEL Community Advisors is a group of self-identified BIPOC and allies, who are deeply rooted in their communities, drawing on their lived experiences, their expertise, and wisdom to make funding decisions. These individuals have supported the LEVEL BIPOC work since inception, bringing values that align with the mission of LEVEL and social justice work.

25. When can we expect to hear decisions by?

You can expect to hear a decision by June 2023.

26. 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 periodically to feature your organization in our communications or marketing.

LEVEL-RELATED QUESTIONS

27. Why is LEVEL continuing to offer this grant?

We have been offering LEVEL Youth Granting from 2018 - 2020. What we've heard from grantees, applicants, and our advisors is that what BIPOC-led organizations ultimately need to advance their work in racial equity and 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, that centre in relationships.

28. 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](#)

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

For the remainder of 2023, we will only be offering LEVEL BIPOC Grants.

30. My organization has received a LEVEL Develop and/or Test 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. Please ensure that you have closed your LEVEL Develop and/or Test grant prior to applying.

SUPPORT

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

Please send an email to level@vancouverfoundation.ca for general questions about this grant program and its priorities or for information about the application process, including assistance with our [online grant management system](#).