



LEVEL BIPOC Grants Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Eligibility	1
Grant Program Details	4
Application Process	6
Contact	9

Eligibility

1. Who are these grants for?

LEVEL BIPOC grants are available to BIPOC-led and BIPOC youth-led and/or youth-engaging organizations that are registered charities or registered non-profit societies located in B.C. that benefit BIPOC communities in B.C. LEVEL BIPOC grants provide flexible, multi-year operational funding for BIPOC leaders to invest in the leadership capacity of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (POC) to recognize the work and experience of communities undergoing multiple, intersectional forms of systemic oppression.

We define BIPOC-led organizations as groups in which at least two-thirds (67%) of the organization's leadership team and/or board/non-conventional governance structures are held by individuals who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour.

We recognize an organization as being BIPOC Youth-led when at least two-thirds (67%) of its leadership positions (Board of Directors and/or leadership team if staff are employed and/or any other unconventional governance structure that influences operational and strategic decision-making) are held by individuals who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour AND are aged 19-30.

We recognize an organization as BIPOC youth-engaged when its governance structures actively empower BIPOC youth to significantly influence the organization's policies, practices, strategies, and decision-making processes (beyond mere advisory or consulting roles).

2. Do applicants need to be registered charities?

Eligible organizations must be either a registered charity OR registered non-profit society (including community service co-operatives) operating in B.C. since January 1, 2024, and has (or will have) society incorporation or charitable registration by November 30, 2024.

3. Can intermediary organizations still apply?

In 2023, the [CRA updated their guidance](#), allowing charities to grant directly to non-qualified donees. Vancouver Foundation can now grant directly to non-qualified donees operating in B.C. whose activities advance the foundation's charitable purposes. LEVEL BIPOC recognizes the inequitable access to charitable dollars many grassroots organizations and non-profits face. Removing the requirement for non-qualified donees to enter an intermediary relationship hopes to address some of the barriers registered non-profit societies face when applying for a LEVEL BIPOC grant.

4. What can the funds be used for? Do I need a project idea?

LEVEL BIPOC grants are not intended for project funding but for flexible, multi-year operational funding. It's up to the discretion of the grantee to use the funding in whatever way supports their needs, which can include (but are not limited to):

- Operating costs
- Capacity building
- Staffing costs
- Employee assistance programs
- Service delivery costs
- Technology investments

LEVEL BIPOC Grants do NOT fund:

- Non-BIPOC-led organizations
- Funded activities and/or initiatives that do not benefit the populations of BIPOC communities in B.C.
- Endowment funds or capital campaigns
- Activities and programs that take place primarily outside of B.C.
- Operating deficits or after-the-fact support
- Debt retirement
- Monetary reserves
- Mortgage pay-downs
- Large public infrastructure project

5. Can my organization apply if we've received a LEVEL BIPOC grant in the past?

Yes, you can still apply for the grant if you've received another grant from Vancouver Foundation.

6. Our organization is not BIPOC-led or white-led, but we serve mostly racialized people. Are we still eligible to apply?

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

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

The primary purpose of Vancouver Foundation is to carry out its charitable activities and purposes within B.C. This grant stream specifically supports BIPOC leadership within B.C. to continue to benefit BIPOC communities in B.C.

8. I'm from a First Nations community/band based in B.C. Are we eligible for funding?

The Thriving Indigenous Systems Fund (TISF) is a grant program that prioritizes funding First Nations communities and bands located in B.C. The next TISF grant cycle will open applications in 2025.

Grant Program Details

1. What is the pool of funding available for this grant?

The amount to be granted through LEVEL BIPOC grants is at least \$9.0 million. The funding will be distributed through at least 60 grants, separated into two grant streams:

- 40 grants will be distributed through the BIPOC Leadership stream, and,
- 20 grants will be distributed through the BIPOC Youth Leadership stream

2. Is this a one-year grant?

LEVEL BIPOC grants are for three years of funding. Each grant is \$150,000 to be distributed in equal payments of \$50,000 a year for three years.

3. When is the application deadline?

The online application is open from July 15 until August 15 at 12 pm PT.

4. Do I need to use the funds within a specific time frame?

Not necessarily. We trust that you intend to begin the work within 6 months of being awarded a grant and will use each year's payment within 12 months. But we know things can change. Please stay connected with us if something changes.

5. Will racial equity grants like LEVEL BIPOC grants be offered again?

Our grant programs can vary from year to year. Each year, we evaluate programs and seek feedback from applicants to design community-informed grant programs.

Vancouver Foundation remains committed to advancing racial equity and justice, so grant seekers can expect to see these principles embedded into future grant programs.

6. How are you prioritizing equitable access to funding?

LEVEL BIPOC grants aim to distribute funding equitably amongst:

- Black-led and Indigenous-led organizations that continue to be disproportionately impacted by institutional and systemic racism.
- BIPOC-led organizations operating primarily within smaller population centres, rural and/or remote communities.
- BIPOC-led organizations operating primarily within large urban population centres; specifically, one or more of the municipalities within Metro Vancouver, the Capital Regional District and/or the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

Application Process

1. Are the application questions and processes different for the two grant streams?

Applicants applying to either the BIPOC Leadership stream or the BIPOC Youth Leadership streams will complete the same online application. However, organizations that self-identify as BIPOC youth-led and/or youth-engaging will answer additional questions to be considered and adjudicated in the BIPOC Youth Leadership stream.

BIPOC-led organizations that do not self-identify as youth-led and/or youth-engaged will be considered under the BIPOC Leadership stream and selected using a randomized selection process.

2. We are a BIPOC-led organization; what is the BIPOC Leadership stream grant application process?

First, applicants must create an online user profile in our Grant Management System (GMS) to access, complete and submit their full written application. This helps determine your eligibility and alignment with the LEVEL BIPOC grant program priorities. This stream uses a randomized selection process to select grants, providing an equal opportunity for BIPOC-led organizations to receive funding.

Forty grants (40) will be selected across six (6) pools based on location and identity. Selected applicants under the BIPOC Leadership stream will be invited to a conversation to discuss how their leadership, governance, sustainability and community accountability practices align with our community-informed decision-making matrix. These conversations will be hosted by staff and Community Advisors.

3. We are a BIPOC youth-led and/or youth-engaged organization; what is the BIPOC youth-led and/or youth-engaged grant application process?

First, applicants must create an online user profile in our Grant Management System (GMS) to access, complete and submit their full written application. When applying,

applicants will be asked to self-identify as BIPOC youth-led and/or youth-engaging. If they do, they'll answer additional questions to confirm eligibility. Applications in the BIPOC Youth Leadership grant stream will go through an adjudicated process to be selected by staff and Community Advisors.

Staff and Community Advisors will adjudicate written applications to ensure organizations meet eligibility criteria, including strong youth leadership, governance, sustainability, community accountability, and recognition and responsiveness to intersectional challenges within BIPOC communities. Then, if necessary, staff may invite applicants to a conversation to validate the application before confirming whether a grant will be awarded.

4. Can I apply for BOTH grant streams?

Organizations can only submit one application. However, applications under the BIPOC Youth Leadership stream will also be considered in the BIPOC Leadership stream. If randomly selected in the latter, a decision will not be finalized until after the BIPOC Youth Leadership stream adjudication process is complete.

5. Why are you offering two different grant streams this year?

In 2020, we launched BIPOC grants in recognition that BIPOC-led organizations experience additional barriers to accessing and securing core funding. Based on insights from the past year, Vancouver Foundation is offering two grant streams this year to better meet the diverse needs of BIPOC-led organizations in B.C.

The BIPOC Youth Leadership grant stream empowers BIPOC youth leaders, supporting their pivotal roles in decision-making and community impact. Meanwhile, the BIPOC Leadership grant stream enhances the capacity and sustainability of BIPOC-led organizations across various operational scopes. This ensures equitable access to resources and recognizes the unique contributions and challenges within the BIPOC community, fostering youth leadership development and organizational resilience in advancing racial equity and racial justice.

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

Vancouver Foundation staff and Community Advisors will review applications and

recommend organizations for funding. They will be assessing/validating the grants based on which organizations meet the eligibility criteria using our community-informed decision-making matrix.

7. Who is making the funding decisions?

Our Community Advisors are a group of self-identified BIPOC/ BIPOC youth deeply connected to their communities and have supported LEVEL BIPOC grants since the beginning. They contribute valuable lived experiences, expertise, and wisdom to our funding decisions.

LEVEL BIPOC Community Advisors have worked with Vancouver Foundation's granting team to co-create the application questions and decision-making matrix, ensuring that the previous year's learnings are incorporated into this year's grant cycle.

8. When can we expect to hear final decisions?

Final funding decisions will be communicated by email by the end of December 2024.

Invitations for conversations will be emailed in October 2024 to applicants randomly selected under the BIPOC Leadership grant stream. Youth-led/engaged applicants may only require a conversation if clarification is needed before confirming grant awards.

For both the BIPOC Youth Leadership and BIPOC Leadership streams, declined applicants will also be notified by email in October 2024.

9. What are the reporting requirements?

For Registered Charities:

Registered charities receiving grants do not need formal reporting. Instead, grantees can connect with us to have conversations about their work. These discussions help us understand community priorities, outcomes and challenges. This input guides long-term grantmaking and strategies to support organizations and communities in B.C.

For Registered Non-Profits:

Vancouver Foundation must meet the Canada Revenue Agency's accountability requirements for all grants to non-qualified organizations (i.e. registered non-profit society). This includes ensuring funds are used exclusively for charitable activities as outlined in the Grant Information Sheet. Because the accountability requirements are new and evolving, we're still determining what format the documentation process will take; however, we will take responsibility for this process and aim to make it as relational and simplified as possible.

Contact

If you have any questions about LEVEL BIPOC grants, including how to navigate and troubleshoot the online grant management system, please email us at level@vancouverfoundation.ca.