

2025 Reimagining Our Community (ROC) Giving Circle

The **Reimagining Our Community (ROC) Giving Circle** is a way for the community to support BIPOC-owned small businesses through collective philanthropy. Managed by the ROC Cohort, the Giving Circle awards funds to existing 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that have or wish to develop programming, services, or products to support the development and sustainability of BIPOC-owned small businesses in Lancaster County. The goal is that these funds will bridge gaps within existing resources to ensure that services are equitable in access, participation, and implementation.

The ROC Cohort envisions a Lancaster County that is a nurturing environment for BIPOC-owned small businesses to thrive. Our priorities are to strengthen trust among resource providers and BIPOC-owned small businesses, build equitable access to capital, and to strengthen community for BIPOC-owned small businesses.

Grants range from **\$500 – \$5,000**.

Project Examples

Funding can be used toward equity-focused marketing campaigns, scholarship opportunities for BIPOC entrepreneurs to participate in programming, technical training and skill building workshops, supplier diversity programs, cultural competency trainings, etc.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicant organization must:

- Serve Lancaster County residents without discrimination.
- Have current 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS.
- Be registered with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Charitable Organizations unless otherwise exempt per the Institutions of Purely Public Charity Act.
- Complete IRS Form 990 annually.
- Have an annual audit or a financial review by an independent CPA within the last 24 months (optional but recommended) **or** provide organizational budget and bank statements.
- Be in good standing with all existing awards and contracts with the Lancaster County Community Foundation.

- Share whether organization has a Non-Discrimination Policy meeting all federal requirements as it applies to your type of organization ([FAQs](#)).
- Be aware of the Community Foundation’s [Anti-Hate Policy](#).

Application Process

1. Submit an application through the online grant portal at [LancFound.org/grants](#) by the final deadline of 11:59 pm on May 16.
2. The ROC Cohort will review applications and announce grant awards on July 18.

Timeline

- **Wednesday, March 12** – Grant application portal opens.
- **Friday, May 16, 11:59 pm** – Final deadline to submit full application.
- **Friday, July 18** – Award notifications issued. Grant funding period begins.
- **July 18, 2025 – July 18, 2026** – Duration of grant funding period.
- **Tuesday, September 30, 2026** – Grant completion report due.

Application Questions

- **Strategic Priority:** What priority is your project seeking to address?
 - Building trust
 - Creating equitable access to capital
 - Strengthening community
- **Project Narrative:** Describe the gap in the current small business ecosystem that this project seeks to address. Clearly state how this project centers BIPOC-owned small businesses or entrepreneurs. If this is an existing project, how will these dollars be used to enhance services for BIPOC-owned businesses or entrepreneurs? (2,000 characters)
- **Vision:** How does this project create a nurturing environment for small business owners to thrive? How does this project solve a need related to the strategic priority you selected? (2,000 characters)
- **Funding:** Restate the amount you are seeking through this grant opportunity and describe any other funding sources and amounts you are exploring. If this proposal is not funded at the level requested, will you be able to implement aspects of the project as stated? (1,000 characters)
- **Implementation Plan and Budget:** Outline the expected timeline of your project, including anticipated milestones. Describe your budget in detail, itemizing each

item or service, a description, and the portion of grant funds being dedicated to that piece. (2,000 characters)

- **Project Success:** What will project success look like and how will project success be measured and documented? How will you conduct program evaluation and outreach? (2,000 characters)

Evaluation Criteria

The ROC Cohort will use the following questions to evaluate and score applications:

- **Project Alignment with BIPOC Focus:** Does the project center BIPOC-owned small businesses and/or entrepreneurs and demonstrate an understanding of the specific needs and challenges faced by BIPOC-owned small businesses and entrepreneurs? (1-4 points)
- **Project Alignment with Strategic Priority:** Does the proposal address specific needs related to the strategic priority selected? (1-4 points)
- **Impact:** Does the project contribute to the growth and development of BIPOC-owned small businesses and/or entrepreneurs? Does the project fill gaps that exist in resources for BIPOC-owned small businesses? (1-4 points)
- **Reach:** Does the applicant organization have a plan to engage BIPOC-owned small businesses and entrepreneurs? (1-4 points)
- **Innovation and Creativity:** Does the proposal showcase innovative approaches or creative solutions to address the unique needs of BIPOC-owned small businesses or entrepreneurs? (1-4 points)
- **Sustainability:** Is the project sustainable and does it provide a clear plan for the continuation of the project beyond the grant period? (1-4 points)
- **Measurable Outcomes and Evaluation Plan:** Does the applicant organization define clear and measurable outcomes for the project and provide methods of measuring and evaluating the project's impact? (1-4 points)

Contact Information

For more information or to get involved, contact the ROC Cohort by email:

info@roclancaster.org

