

Walmart.org Center for Racial Equity 2021 Supporting Black Entrepreneurs RFP

Background

In Walmart's 50-plus years as a company, it rings true more each year that the world's challenges are Walmart's challenges. And as the world continues to change, we reaffirm our commitment to not just adapt and grow, but to lead. We are committed to using our business capabilities and scale, in collaboration with others, to move forward in creating greater racial equity.

As part of our commitment, we've created four Shared Value Networks (SVNs), comprised of diverse Walmart associates, to look at ways we can address the root causes of racial disparities in our nation's criminal justice, education/workforce, financial and healthcare systems. To complement the work of our business to help eradicate systemic racism, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation have committed \$100 million over five years to the Walmart.org Center for Racial Equity.

The Center will focus on eradicating systemic disparities experienced by Black and African American communities in the United States, by addressing the same four systems as our SVNs: healthcare, financial, education and criminal justice. The work of the Center will extend the overarching philanthropic work of Walmart.org, which seeks to embed equity into all our investment portfolios. The Center's initiatives fund research, advocacy, innovation of practices and tools, stakeholder convening and non-profit capacity building.

Project Overview

This RFP aims to extend the social impact of Walmart's finance SVN by supporting Black entrepreneurs with existing businesses that supply goods and services to the retail industry, with a goal to help increase their readiness and earnings in order to strengthen and grow their companies. As a result of COVID-19, 41% or 440,000 Black owned businesses were forced to close. This is compared to 17 % of white-owned businesses.

The Center will use this RFP to provide grants and assistance to Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESOs) to assist Black-owned firms (small and large) to increase sales. Our ultimate goal is to reduce the racial wealth gap by supporting the growth and success of entrepreneurs in the Black community. Investments from this RFP will support interventions and innovations in the entrepreneurial space including programs, initiatives, research, tools, and proven models, that contribute to the success of Black entrepreneurs. Our desire is to eradicate the inequities in the business sector that contribute to the reduced number and profitability of Black-owned businesses.

The Center expects to provide **up to \$3.25 million in funding total for projects chosen pursuant to this RFP**. Proposals should span 1-2 years and be in the range of \$250,000 - \$1 million. Proposals should focus on Black/African American adults (21+) with **existing** businesses based in the United States, that provide goods and/or services to the retail industry. Proposals should clearly outline and substantiate the problem(s) and the proposed solution(s).

These grants will also support Walmart's larger efforts to transform philanthropy by shifting power, privilege, and access to resources, to more equitably fund non-profits led by people of color, specifically Black and African American leaders, and to encourage greater diversity at predominantly white non-profits. For this reason, organizations and proposals should meet one of the following expectations for consideration:

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- Primary mission to serve the Black and African American community and/or Black-led (both staff and board are primarily Black)
- Historically white nonprofits where the primary beneficiary of the efforts are Black and African American communities, or the work is specifically focused on addressing issues deeply tied to Black or African American inequity

Thought starters for proposed projects to address:

Problem definition and extent of need:

- What are the specific needs that rise to the top in this area?
- Why does this challenge exist - what are its root causes?
- What are the target population and geographies most impacted by this challenge?

Proposed solution:

- How can your proposed philanthropic investment help Black entrepreneurs take steps to become more financially secure?
- What are the unlocks your program will provide to stimulate growth for Black owned businesses?
- What resources and programming are suggested to help Black owned businesses whether challenges?

Gaps and opportunities:

- What kinds of initiatives or shifts are needed to move the needle on these issues? What is the impact that can be expected from these undertakings?
- What challenges might your organization come up against in trying to implement your proposed solution(s)?

Synthesis and dissemination:

- What are the measures of success?
- How can your solution be scaled?
- How will you integrate this project into your work and/or work with others to sustain progress?

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria and prerequisites:

- The philanthropic initiative shows potential for significant impact by addressing root drivers of systemic racism that put Black entrepreneurs and businesses at a disadvantage, is a scalable solution, and catalyzes systems change
- The philanthropic initiative presents an opportunity to differentiate its contribution to the field, including opportunities to leverage Walmart's investment and influence others
- The philanthropic initiative adds a unique contribution that extends or complements Walmart's shared value focus in finance and other Center initiatives
- The philanthropic initiative creates opportunities for organization to partner with Walmart.org and others in ways that accelerate progress on racial equity
- Improves racial equity in income and assets, and addresses systemic barriers to the racial wealth gap through business ownership
- Incorporates strategic partnership opportunities/leverages the work of other private and public sector funders
- Builds the capacity of organizations led by people of color and/or serving people of color

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- An organization's expertise/strength to do the work will be assessed by organization's having a demonstrated history of success in supporting and advocating for Black entrepreneurs and the infrastructure to do so as proposed
- The proposed budget must show efficacy
- Proposals should include a strong plan for evaluating and measuring success
- Any organization and/or researcher must have demonstrable relationships and trust with the communities they aim to serve

Eligibility and Fund Use

Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to organizations that submit the most compelling proposal based on the focus area above and the minimum eligibility criteria below.

Eligibility:

- Applicant organization must be a state university, or a tax-exempt, public charity described in Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code"), other than a Type III supporting organization described in Section 509(a)(3)(B)(iii) of the Code. Public charities must be listed in the most current IRS 50 State Master File at the time the application is submitted and at the time of awarding if chosen for funding.
- We welcome collaboration. Organizations are strongly encouraged to work jointly or as part of coalitions, working together on a programmatic goal. If applying as a coalition, one organization must serve as the lead grantee when submitting an application. Any proposed sub-granting of funds should be clearly outlined in the proposal.
- The grant amount requested cannot exceed 20% of an organization's annual operating budget.
- Grant funds may not be used to cover more than 80% of personnel expenses for any single program-related position.
- Selected grantees may be required to provide an abbreviated semi-annual report and will require a detailed annual final report and financial summary to Walmart.org. These reports are intended to provide an update on the program's activities, a summary of the current status of the program relative to proposed outcomes, and an update on financial expenditures relative to work carried out. Templates will be provided at appropriate times through the CyberGrants system.

Fund Use:

- Funds awarded must be utilized for scope of work in proposal only.
- Proposals will not be considered if indirect/overhead costs exceed 15% of requested funds.

Funding Exclusions:

- Organizations that deny service, membership, or other involvement on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, disability status, or other legally protected classes will not be considered.
- Association/chamber memberships
- Athletic sponsorships (teams, events)
- Capital campaigns and endowments (defined as any plans to raise funds for a significant real estate purchase or expense, such as new construction, major renovations or to help fund normal budgetary items)
- Faith-based organizations when the proposed grant will only benefit the organization or its members

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- General operating expenses
- Political causes, candidates, organizations, or campaigns
- Scholarships (tuition, room and board or any other expense related to college, university, or vocational school attendance)
- Sponsorship of fundraising events (galas, walks, races, tournaments)

Questions and Answers

Walmart.org will host a webinar on Friday, June 25, 2021 at 12:30pm CT. Please use [this](#) zoom link to register for the informational session.

To ensure fairness and access to information for all applicants, we will not address programmatic questions outside of the webinar. Should you have technical questions pertaining to website issues, please first use the support button on the website. Should you not hear back within three business days, e-mail WMSupport@cybergrants.com.

Application Process

The application process will consist of submission of a Concept Note and proposal through the CyberGrants online application system. All prospective grantees must agree with the Memorandum of Understanding prior to submitting the Concept Note. Only those applicants selected as semi-finalists will be invited to submit a full proposal. Once finalists are selected, applicants may be asked to revise their application to strengthen methodologies, adjust budgets or answer questions about their proposed program before Walmart selects organizations for potential funding.

Concept Notes and proposals will be submitted via CyberGrants and will be reviewed based on the guidelines and criteria listed below. Walmart.org reserves the right to consider factors such as geographic diversity and a balanced slate of grantees. Walmart.org will have the sole authority to select the grantees. Submission of the Concept Note is required to gain access to the full proposal, and all fields must be completed for the application to be considered. Please note that language in the project narrative should be understandable to a lay reviewer and provide reviewers with sufficient information to effectively evaluate the merits of the proposal.

It is often helpful to share prior evaluation results from your organization's work, a short summary of research on best practices in the field and stories of the impact of your work, to help demonstrate your organization's ability to deliver impact. These items can be attached as additional resources. Do not mail additional materials to Walmart.org to supplement the application. Only materials included in the electronic application will be considered.

This is a competitive process. Previous receipt of funds by Walmart.org does not guarantee future or continued funding.

Character counts for various sections are given in the CyberGrants Concept Note and proposal. These counts include spaces and formatting. If you exceed the character counts in a field, you will not be able to proceed or submit your application.

Concept Note and Proposal Submission

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Concept Notes and proposal must be submitted via CyberGrants, Walmart.org’s online application system. CyberGrants can be accessed on the Walmart.org website below:

<http://www.cybergrants.com/walmart/conceptnote>

You must use the invitation code: “**FICREICMC**” each time you access the application. If you are a first-time user, you will need to create an online profile before accessing the form. Once the Concept Note and proposal is filled out in CyberGrants, please click “Submit.” **Concept Notes must be submitted by 11:59PM ET, July 25, 2021.** Concept Notes submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Concept Notes should be submitted as soon as possible, even prior to the deadline.

Important: On the login/home screen please use the **Standard Login** field to enter your information unless your organization already has FrontDoor clearance from CyberGrants.

Key Dates

June 15, 2021	System opens to accept Concept Notes
June 25, 2021	Q&A Webinar on RFP @ 12:30pm CT here on Zoom
July 25, 2021	Concept Note Application Deadline
August 9, 2021	Semi-finalists Selected & Notified
August 22, 2021	Semi-finalists Full Proposal Deadline
September 9, 2021	Selection of Finalist Organizations
September 13, 2021	Notification of Awards
September 2021 - November 2021	Disbursement of Awards

Statement of Non-Commitment

Issuance of this RFP does not commit Walmart.org to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of the proposals to respond to the RFP. Those responding to this RFP must follow its procedures and requirements. Failure to comply with or complete any part of this RFP may result in rejection of the proposal. Walmart.org reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to negotiate separately with competing applicants for funds described in this RFP. Walmart.org reserves the right to modify this RFP, submission deadlines and notification dates without prior notice.

About Philanthropy at Walmart

Walmart.org represents the philanthropic work of both Walmart and the Walmart Foundation and the Center on Racial Equity sits within Walmart.org. The work of the Center will extend the overarching work of Walmart.org, which seeks to embed equity into all our investment portfolios. We will seek to transform philanthropy by shifting power, privilege, and access to resources to fund nonprofits led by people of

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color, specifically Black and African American leaders, and to enhance the diversity at predominantly white nonprofits to make more equitable impact. We're listening to experts, our grantees, leading organizations, and others to gain a better understanding of the issues as we continue this important work and stand up the Center.

Walmart.org's model of philanthropy is uniquely tied to Walmart's shared value efforts. We seek to transform systems and believe that we have the greatest impact by combining our philanthropy with business leadership, stakeholder collaboration and advocacy. We believe our greatest impact is through the business, but that for many systems failures, there are cracks in the system that cannot be addressed through business alone. They require policy change, innovation, research, or other approaches that are not supported through a market-based approach. These are the areas where we focus Walmart.org's philanthropy. We believe by bringing all our assets together to solve focused systems issues, our impact is greatest.