

2025 Cycle 1 – Grants

Economic Opportunity for All – 10 Grants; \$370,000

Bronze Valley Corp.: \$50,000 to increase capacity for and expand the Bronze Valley VentureLab (BVVL), a program operated in partnership with gener8tor, a nationally-ranked startup accelerator company. The BVVL targets three stages of the entrepreneurial journey through three established accelerator programs and C-Suite On Demand. gALPHA is a venture/ideation studio for HBCU students and affiliates; gBETA is an early-stage company accelerator; and the Bronze Valley Investment Accelerator is an equity-based accelerator program in which Bronze Valley invests \$100,000 in each participating startup. C-Suite On Demand is an advisory service that provides companies access to complimentary C-Suite level consulting services for various needs including bookkeeping, marketing, legal, software engineering, and sales.

College Choice Foundation: \$40,000 to support expansion of the Bateman Scholars Program into five additional high schools. The Bateman Scholars Program supports low-income students in applying to, enrolling in, and graduating from college. Programs and services for high school juniors and seniors include ACT prep, financial aid counseling, support with college applications, college visits, and more. Incoming college freshmen receive summer support to ease the college transition and ensure college success. Scholars receive support for up to 6 years in college including book stipends, tutoring, financial aid guidance, and emergency funds.

Community on the Rise: \$35,000 to support Wellness & Housing Opportunity Linked to Employment (WHOLE), a comprehensive housing, employment, development, and support program for women survivors of homelessness. The employment arm of WHOLE is a recycling workshop in which team members learn and build skills while diverting #5 polypropylene plastic waste from the landfill and our local ecosystems. Grant funds will be used to purchase new recycling machinery to increase productivity and capacity.

Elevate Birmingham: \$50,000 to increase capacity by hiring a Development Manager, a key role that will strengthen organizational sustainability and diversify revenue streams. The Development Manager will manage a comprehensive funding strategy, cultivate individual donors, develop corporate partnerships, and organize fundraising events. Elevate Birmingham builds long-term, life-changing relationships with low-income and under-resourced youth, helping them thrive and contribute to their community. Elevate uses a unique, relationship-based approach where full-time Teacher-Mentors serve as teachers, mentors, and life coaches, building relationships with students in and out of the classroom.

Junior Achievement of Alabama: \$50,000 to help build the Junior Achievement McWane Economic Education Center, which will feature immersive experiential learning labs providing 6th and 8th grade students hands-on experiences in macro- and micro-economic simulations. Through classroom curriculum and a day-long experience in simulated cities, students will combine economic education and experiences to help them prepare for their futures and understand how hard work can result in self-sufficiency and success.

Miles College: \$50,000 to further develop the Miles College Workforce and College Completion Project that aims to increase student retention, support adult learners, and strengthen workforce readiness. Grant funding will provide retention grants for students at risk of leaving due to financial hardship; expand student support services such as career counseling, academic advising, and mental health resources; and offer workforce-aligned certifications to enhance employability. Additionally, funds will support community outreach and employer partnerships to create pathways for job placement.

No Fear Finances Empowerment Center: \$5,000 to support Catch-Up Accounting and Tax Services programs, specifically designed to support minority and women-owned businesses in Jefferson County. This initiative addresses critical challenges that entrepreneurs face in accessing affordable, professional financial care, enabling them to achieve compliance, stability, and growth. The program's approach is holistic, hands-on, and tailored to the unique needs of each business owner. Services include bookkeeping setup, data organization, financial reporting, strategic planning, and tax preparation and filing.

Southern Museum of Flight Foundation: \$50,000 to expand the Aviation Workforce Initiative (AWI), a dynamic and growing partnership with Snead State Community College and the Alabama Community College System designed to provide high school students and adult learners with direct, hands-on experience in aviation maintenance and technology. Through a unique combination of dual enrollment programs, FAA-certified testing services, and curriculum-aligned instruction, AWI prepares students for high-demand, high-wage careers in aviation, one of Alabama's most rapidly expanding sectors and a pillar of the state's economic development strategy.

United Ability: \$10,000 to support Gone For Good, a social enterprise of United Ability that creates meaningful employment for adults with disabilities while offering secure document destruction and e-recycling services that keep 2 million pounds of paper each year out of landfills. Grant funding will support the purchase of software that integrates a CRM, online payment portal, and optimized routing, streamlining operations and improving customer experience.

VIDAL Access: \$30,000 to launch a college persistence program to complement VIDAL's college access program, providing comprehensive, wraparound support to guide students through college. Grant funding would support hiring College Persistence Counselors, ensuring students receive 1-on-1 check ins, academic advising, campus resource navigation, financial aid education and assistance, career readiness guidance and support, and educational success programming.

Equity and Inclusion – 6 Grants; \$151,000

AIDS Alabama: \$50,000 to support the Alabama Latino Access Center in creating an emergency response system for immigrant communities, including food vouchers, eye exams and eyeglasses, power bill assistance, and other essential resources. Funding will also support workshops and trainings to empower clients.

Chocolate Milk Mommies: \$15,000 to provide businesses with lactation room equipment, technical guidance, and financial assistance to create safe, sanitary, and accessible spaces for nursing employees. Chocolate Milk Mommies seeks to increase breastfeeding support and reproductive justice for marginalized women and teens in underserved populations within their workspaces, schools, communities, and homes.

Jefferson County Greenways Foundation: \$50,000 to transform East Side Park into a universally designed nature space with trails, bathrooms, and access to Alabama’s unique natural habitats, offering an experience not found elsewhere. With a significant investment from the American Rescue Plan Act and the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County Greenways will transform the 6.5-acres into a park that goes beyond ADA accessibility, demonstrating the intersection of true accessibility and nature.

Shepherds Fold, Inc: \$8,000 to update bathroom and shower facilities, allowing for Shepherds Fold to serve up to 100 men in their residential program. Shepherds Fold empowers and equips men at risk of incarceration or recidivism with education, transportation, and job training.

The WildFlower Alliance: \$11,000 to support and uplift families of children with disabilities by creating an inclusive community, expanding access to resources, and offering emotional and practical support to caregivers. Programming focuses on education, connection, advocacy, and accessibility.

Unless U: \$17,000 to support Hub in the Hills, a space for local non-profit organizations to grow and thrive with like-minded co-laborers who have a desire to collaborate, grow together, and ultimately better serve our community. The Hub will expand the “Belonging-Centered Model”, which creates space for marginalized people in the community while also uplifting the community as a whole. Funding will support capital improvements, including technology for classrooms and community engagement areas for students where they can focus on building their life and social skills.

Overcoming Persistent Poverty – 13 Grants; \$358,000

City of Montevallo: \$6,000 to replace aging public access technology used every day by Montevallo residents. Funding will provide 3 computers that will be available to all visitors. These computers are essential to the approximately 15% of Montevallo residents that do not have access to reliable high-speed internet in their homes.

College Admissions Made Possible: \$15,000 to support the Birmingham Summer Institute, a summer reading a math intervention program. Funds will be allocated for curriculum development, corresponding educational materials, weekly educational field trips and transportation, and supplemental enrichment activities. The central theme of BSI will be “BSI Takes Flight” and will be incorporated into all aspects of the programming emphasizing real-world connections, particularly within the context of Aviation in Alabama.

Downtown Jimmie Hale Mission: \$31,000 to upgrade technology at Royal Pines, a residential recovery program that serves individuals in a rural setting where access to educational and workforce development resources are often limited. This technology upgrade will ensure clients have access to modern tools for digital literacy, GED preparation, and job readiness training.

Firehouse Shelter: \$50,000 to support the Moving Toward Change program that empowers homeless men recovering from substance use disorders and struggling with mental health issues through job readiness training, employment placement, and peer recovery support. The program integrates wraparound services and strategic partnerships to help participants achieve stability, sobriety, and sustainable employment. By addressing the unique challenges of individuals in recovery, the program enhances job readiness, increases employment rates, and improves long-term recovery outcomes.

First Light: \$50,000 to support critical improvements for the 25-year-old facility that provides emergency shelter to homeless women and families with children. Critical updates include updating and adding bathroom and shower areas and creating additional living spaces, which will offer a more secure and private environment for families and individuals.

Holcomb Ministries: \$8,000 to support a NICU meal program, which ensures that families caring for medically fragile infants have access to nutritious, hot meals during long hospital stays. Many NICU parents face financial hardship due to medical bills and lost wages, making meal access a critical need.

Jones Valley Teaching Farm: \$50,000 to expand Good School Food, experiential food-based learning experiences with proven results of positive academic engagement, healthier eating choices, and increase environmental stewardship. Over the next 10 years, Good School Food will grow to reach all Birmingham City School students. Funding will support the first phase of expansion by creating hydroponic farm labs at eight schools in the Jackson-Olin High School feeder pattern. These labs will increase students' access and knowledge of local foods and will provide locally grown foods for Birmingham City School cafeterias.

Lettermen of the USA: \$3,000 to support Shelters for Heroes, an initiative that offers temporary shelter solutions for veterans facing housing insecurity, ensuring they have a stable and dignified place to stay while working toward long-term stability. In addition to shelter, the program will supply essential necessities such as food, hygiene products, and clothing. LotUSA will actively assist in connecting veterans to long-term housing solutions.

Magic City Harvest: \$30,000 to hire a reserve driver, a position essential for providing flexibility and ensuring uninterrupted service, especially during emergencies and natural disasters. Every year, Magic City Harvest (MCH) rescues hundreds of thousands of pounds of food that would otherwise be discarded and distributes it to local shelters, food pantries, and community programs. The two truck drivers employed by MCH are the backbone of the organization, and their work ensures that food is collected and delivered in a timely manner, meeting the growing demand in Birmingham.

Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham, Inc.: \$38,000 to compile an heirs' property report for Birmingham. Nationally and locally, heirs' ownership rights and legalities have become major challenges and the reason for loss of generational wealth. A lack of formal estate planning and legal barriers can prevent wealth transfers to future generations, causing many areas teetering on the brink of instability to tip over into distressed. The report will assess heirs properties by geography and identify program and policy strategies to prevent heir property loss. Grant funds will be used to secure consulting services from a subject matter expert and to hire two summer interns.

Pathways: \$50,000 to address the critical shortage of safe, affordable, and accessible housing in Birmingham by the addition of Permanent Supportive Housing units that will help more individuals and families transition out of homelessness and achieve long-term stability with the dedicated support of a social worker. Pathways programming provides access to education, employment, and healthcare, ultimately breaking cycles of homelessness and creating long-term community stability.

The WellHouse: \$7,000 to enhance security across the St. Clair County campus by installing surveillance cameras at all five residential buildings. The WellHouse serves female survivors of human trafficking and offers short-term, long-term, and transitional living homes, while providing holistic care for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual healing and health.

Women Under Construction Network: \$20,000 to support HomeSafe and REPAIR Angels, elder care programs that provide social support as well as small home repairs, allowing seniors to age in place. Angel Contractors, trade professionals and apprentices, perform these critical home repairs. Angel Companions are volunteers that connect with seniors twice monthly to increase social connection.

Regional Cooperation – 1 Grant; \$21,000

TechBirmingham Foundation: \$21,000 to support the strategic expansion of Sloss Tech, Central Alabama's premier technology conference organized by TechBirmingham, through enhanced regional collaboration that strengthens connections across Birmingham's technology ecosystem. By partnering with BASE (Birmingham Area Software Enthusiasts), a 2,600+ member tech community, TechBirmingham will establish a dedicated developer-focused track at the McWane Center. Grant funds will be used to support this partnership, increase transportation access, and support a regional call for speakers for the conference.

Thriving Communities – 26 Grants; \$608,000

Bib & Tucker Sew-Op: \$5,000 to purchase new sewing machines to support Bib & Tucker's growth and move into an expanded storefront. By outfitting the space with uniform sewing machines and tools, Bib & Tucker can teach beginner, intermediate, and advanced sewing techniques. The machines will be accessible to a variety of skill levels, ages, and physical abilities.

Birmingham Museum of Art: \$35,000 to update and improve the Digital Initiatives of the Museum's Learning and Engagement Department. Funding will be used for new screens in the Smartlab area, for updates to the Smartguide platform that allows visitors to engage more deeply with exhibits, and to develop new interactive visitor experiences.

Birmingham United Neighborhoods: \$24,000 to support Birmingham Cares, a demonstration project that takes the strategies and lessons of Magic City Blight Busters to all Birmingham neighborhoods through a comprehensive education and training program. For almost 5 years, Magic City Blight Busters has cleared and maintained vacant lots, spruced up abandoned houses, and removed tons of trash in the eight communities that make up Birmingham United Neighborhoods.

Blount County Education Foundation: \$35,000 to serve three Blount County communities - Appalachian, Locust Fork, and Susan Moore - by upgrading, repairing, and improving accessibility of three school playgrounds that are also open to the broader community beyond the school day.

Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Council: \$20,000 to support Cool Green Trees, a program that develops healthy ecosystems for people living in Urban Heat Islands. Funds will support the purchase of a truck and trailer to transport trees, tools, and supplies to planting sites, furthering their mission of increasing tree canopy coverage, improving air quality, and fostering community engagement.

Childcare Resources: \$11,000 to expand resources and educational opportunities for early learning educators. Funding will increase the number of study and testing materials for the Child Development Associate credential; support a new speaker series; provide new mobile library resources; and provide a new wrap for the Early Learning Resource Library van.

Christian Service Mission: \$50,000 to transform Christian Service Mission's seventy-year-old building into a vibrant, multi-use hub where volunteers, partners, and community members can connect, access resources, and participate in meaningful programs. This hub will serve as a venue for partner organizations to host workshops, social services, and training programs while providing space for community meetings and family-friendly activities.

Christopher Kids: \$5,000 to create personalized, accessible spaces for children with chronic or critical health conditions, disabilities, and other life-altering challenges. Funding will help renovate and modify home environments to meet the unique physical, emotional, and developmental needs of each child, ensuring that every child can thrive in a safe, supportive, and functional space. Families will be provided with specialized medical equipment, adaptive furnishings, sensory tools, and other modifications that empower children to live with greater independence while enhancing their overall quality of life.

East Lake UMC - East Lake Recovery Drop In Center: \$28,000 to support the East Lake Recovery Drop-In Center in serving individuals recovering from homelessness, substance use disorders, and mental health crises. Funding will be used to increase program accessibility, enhance facilities, expand workforce development programming, hire additional staff, and provide essential resources to participants.

Episcopal Place: \$5,000 to support a pollinator garden that enhances local biodiversity and promotes social interaction for the residents of Episcopal Place. The gardens will be accessible to all residents with the addition of sidewalks for wheelchairs and walkers. Episcopal Place is a low-income complex for senior citizens and disabled adults that focuses on the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs of all residents.

Freedom Preparatory Academy Charter Schools - Alabama: \$30,000 to support the renovation of the historic Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School building in Titusville to expand access to high-quality, tuition-free public education. Freedom Preparatory Academy will serve up to 300 students in grades K-5 in 2025, growing up to 960 at full capacity.

Freedom Source dba Addiction Prevention Coalition: \$20,000 to support Prevention First, a series of substance use prevention programs for K-12 students that use evidence-based methods to change youth knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors and to promote positive youth development. Prevention First instructors implement evidence-based prevention education in local elementary, middle, and high schools, in partnership with Birmingham City Schools, Fairfield City Schools, and Jefferson County Schools. Lessons are delivered weekly in classrooms and at no cost to the school.

Girl Scouts of North Central Alabama: \$12,000 to support a community outreach initiative that will provide direct, high-impact programming for 50 underserved girls in Birmingham Housing Authority communities. By removing financial and transportation barriers, this initiative ensures participants receive the benefits of Girl Scouts - fostering leadership, life skills, and a sense of belonging. The Girl Scouts will deliver a six-session, after-school program focusing on leadership, STEM, financial literacy, community service, and social-emotional learning.

Girls on the Run Birmingham: \$25,000 to increase organizational capacity to meet the growing demand for programming. Girls on the Run is an after-school empowerment program for girls in 3rd through 8th grades that uses games and activities as a platform for teaching girls critical life skills. The end of the eight-week program culminates with girls positively impacting their communities through a service project and completing a celebratory, non-competitive 5K.

Housing Authority of the City of Bessemer: \$50,000 to develop a 13,487 sq. ft., three story structure that will become the BHA Dream Center. The center will bring essential services and educational tools to an area that is accessible to all residents. The BHA Dream Center will become the focal point for community building and allow residents to come to one place for educational, health, and social services.

King's Home, Inc.: \$26,000 to renovate and update the nursery/daycare program to accommodate up to 20 children under the age of 4. The renovations will include enhanced safety measures, age-appropriate play areas, and facilities that better support their development. King's Home provides essential support services that foster healing, hope, and independence for women and children who have experienced abuse. A key component is the childcare program, which helps women focus on securing employment, attending therapy, and navigating legal processes while their children are in a safe, nurturing environment.

Levite Jewish Community Center: \$11,000 to expand access to Swim School, a water-safety and swim lesson program for underserved populations. Schools and afterschool programs partner with The J to enroll students and transportation is coordinated with partner schools. Swim School lessons are taught by trained instructors to groups of 6-8 students and take place over sixteen 45-minute sessions.

Mason Music Foundation: \$8,000 to increase access to music education, free from financial barriers. Mason Music provides high-quality music instruction to children in under-resourced Birmingham communities, fostering not only musical growth but also emotional and cognitive development, self-confidence, motor skills, discipline, perseverance, and resilience.

Offender Alumni Association: \$40,000 to support Phase II of OAA's Violence Intervention & Prevention Partners (VIPP) program. VIPP - Phase II provides support and follow up care to a broader scope of gun violence victims. This initiative supports victims, ages 16-60, providing follow-up care and resources to maximize their recovery and improve their quality of life. The program is aimed at reducing the chance of re-injury through violence, reducing retaliatory acts of violence, and supporting the healing and recovery process.

Railroad Park Foundation: \$50,000 to support Phase II of Sustaining Railroad Park's Walkways by replacing wooden planks on the park's three boardwalks with concrete planks that are expertly cast, integrally colored, and imprinted to emulate wood. This project will significantly reduce annual costs of inspecting, repairing, and replacing wood planks while keeping Railroad Park's design aesthetic strong and ensuring accessibility.

Seeds of Impact: \$5,000 to provide free, accessible parenting resources, mentorship, and community-building programs. Seeds of Impact (SOI) equips parents with healthy stress management tools through trauma-informed classes on positive discipline, emotional regulation, and child development. By partnering with addiction recovery centers, SOI also provides parenting support to reduce relapses and create stability for families.

STAIR of Birmingham: \$33,000 to support program expansion, sustainable growth, new partnerships, and increased advocacy allowing for more students to receive the critical literacy support they need. Funding will support new tutoring sites, a new central office, and expanded advocacy initiatives to secure funding and protect access to local libraries.

STEPS Ministries: \$10,000 to expand the STEPS Life Skills Education for Underserved Teenagers project that provides training to at-risk youth. Grant funding will be used to complete a curriculum focusing on emotional, mental, spiritual,

social, and personal well-being. By equipping students with practical life skills, tools, and knowledge, STEPS steers students away from negative outcomes and positions them to take practical, positive steps to realize their full potential.

Vulcan Park and Museum: \$30,000 to support the urgent maintenance and repair of the Vulcan Tower elevator system, ensuring accessibility for all visitors and restoring a vital revenue stream for the organization.

Woman of Worth, Inc.: \$5,000 to expand Woman of Worth's mentoring program into a full school year initiative, meeting twice weekly to provide consistent guidance, support, and skill-building opportunities. Funding will support student-led community service projects, leadership training, specialized instruction, and career exploration, and will provide meals for participants.

YMCA Birmingham: \$35,000 to expand access to Livestrong at the YMCA and Defeat PD, a Parkinson's Foundation certified PWR!Moves program. These are two evidence-based wellness programs offered at no cost to participants that provide essential exercise interventions and support for individuals in cancer survivorship and those living with Parkinson's disease.