

██████████  
Founder/Executive Director  
██████████

Date

Name

Title

Funder

Address

Dear Name,

I am honored to submit this letter of inquiry to funder on behalf of ██████████, a nonprofit organization providing career education and professional mentorship programs to young Black men (ages 16-24) in Durham, North Carolina. ██████████ organizes educational workshops, conferences, retreats, and accelerators that help young Black men cultivate job-transferable skills, build professional relationships, and pursue the career of their dreams. We are respectfully requesting a grant of amount from funder to support our general operations.

### Need Statement

In the U.S., young Black men face widespread hiring discrimination and disproportionately lack access to professional contacts, mentors, and referral networks. The economic effect of these inequities on the Black community in Durham has been severe. While Black people make up 33% of the county's population, only 3% of local businesses are Black-owned. Similarly, median annual income for Black households in Durham is nearly \$35,000 less than White households.

Young Black men in Durham are in urgent need of early-career guidance that increases long-term earnings growth, business ownership, and opportunities for community engagement. Our programs integrate career-related skills training and community building to support our participants ("Scholars") at a pivotal point in their personal and professional development. Through individualized guidance and mentorship, we aim to maximize our impact on Scholars and help them develop into socially-engaged leaders with the tools and capital required to implement meaningful changes in their communities.

### Organization Overview

██████████ provides a variety of free programs and services to young Black men in Durham, including career fairs, mentorship retreats, public discussion panels, counseling services, and job and internship placements. Our three core programs are:

- 1) ██████████ - A weekly discussion panel hosted at various minority-owned businesses throughout Durham.

- 2) [REDACTED] - An annual networking event bringing together 70-80 Scholars with local employers and community leaders.
- 3) [REDACTED] - A 12-week, cohort-based mentorship program for 20-30 Scholars, led by young professionals of color.

These programs and services help Scholars achieve professional clarity, build networking fluency, and enter the job market with valuable skills and confidence in their ability to succeed. Since 2020, we have implemented most of our programs virtually in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also ramped up our digital outreach efforts to connect with local young Black men who may be experiencing increased isolation.

I founded [REDACTED] in 2019 in response to the ongoing exclusion of Black men from local economies. As an entrepreneur born and raised in Durham, I decided to start planting seeds for change in my hometown. Since our first conference in 2019, we have helped over 150 Scholars accelerate their careers. In the future, we aim to increase access to career-related resources and eliminate barriers to employment for all of the roughly 12,000 young Black men in Durham.

### Use of Funds

We are respectfully requesting a grant of **amount** from **funder** to support our general operations. Grant funds will be used to bolster several capacity-building projects this Fall, including efforts to transform our digital infrastructure, increase physical access to our programs, capture more data for monitoring and evaluation, and improve staff and board training. A **amount** general operating grant from **funder** will help ensure that we are providing accessible, responsive, and impactful programs and services for our Scholars.

[REDACTED] is currently funded through a combination of grants (50%), corporate sponsorships (30%), major gifts (15%), and crowdfunding campaigns (5%). In 2022, [REDACTED] seeks to raise a total of \$135,000 in grant funding, with \$25,000 currently committed through [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. A **amount** grant from **funder** will help us get **percent** closer to our annual fundraising target, and allow us to continue scaling our impact and improving our organizational effectiveness.

### Conclusion

We believe that our goal to increase access to quality career education for young Black men in Durham aligns closely with **funder**'s focus on **relevant focus areas**. It would be an honor to work together with **funder** to help young Black men in Durham grow as business and community leaders. If possible, we are interested in submitting a full proposal for **funder**'s review. Your time and consideration are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,  
**Signature**

  
Founder/Executive Director  
