Create and Thrive Application March 2025

Create and Thrive Launching March 5, 2025 - March 24th

Info sessions on March 9th -12th and 17th
About Create and Thrive

Create and Thrive provides funding, mentorship, and business support for entrepreneurs, creatives, and business owners. We are committed to fostering sustainable growth by equipping participants with the resources they need to succeed. Through financial assistance and expert guidance, we help individuals build strong, lasting businesses. Our programs are designed to create opportunities, empower innovation, and drive economic impact in our communities. Our mission is to **help turn vision into sustainable success** by equipping participants with essential tools and resources to grow their businesses.

This Round's Offerings We have **four funding opportunities** available:

Creative Empowerment Program (CEP) – Grants, mentorship, and professional services for creatives.

Micro Grant Program – Funding for business growth and operational needs.

Youth Entrepreneur Program (YEP) – Business training and financial support for youth (ages 12-17).

Workforce Development Program (WFD) – Support for businesses expanding their workforce.

Creative Empowerment Program (CEP) offering 6000 in grants and 6000 in business development (up to 12,000)

The Creative Empowerment Program equips business owners, entrepreneurs, and creatives with funding, workshops, and one-on-one guidance to expand their businesses. Participants will develop a strong pitch, establish a brand kit, refine inventory, expand content creation, integrate technology, and build strategic marketing, financial, and growth plans. The program kicks off online on April 13th with a series of interactive workshops.

Micro Grant Program (funding up to 15,000)

The Micro Grant Program provides flexible, small-scale funding to early-stage and underserved businesses, helping cover essential expenses, expand reach, and strengthen operations with minimal barriers. Awardees will participate in six online workshops, an orientation, and a final award ceremony, while also submitting impact statements and funding tracking throughout the program.

Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP) ($1000 Stipend for program completion)

In partnership with The Friends of It's Never 2 Early 2 Create & Innovate, the Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP) supports

young entrepreneurs (ages 12-17) in building their business knowledge. Sunday meetups will cover business ideation, product development, branding, and goal setting, with opportunities to sell products live at the Seattle Black Film Festival and Seattle Black Nerd Festival. If you're a young person with a business or idea, apply today!

Workforce Development Funding (WFD)
(Funding up to 10,000)

The Workforce Development Funding initiative enhances employee well-being, growth, and success by supporting skills training, wellness programs, childcare assistance, flexible work options, and team-building activities. This funding is designed to cultivate a healthier, more engaged, and skilled workforce while strengthening workplace culture, productivity, and retention.

Join a Create and Thrive program today and take your business, career, or creative journey to the next level!

Eligibility Verification Requirements:
All applicants must meet the following requirements before receiving funding :

- Valid **UBI & EIN** matching the business name and owner.
- Proof of **business-related purchases & expenses** (receipts or invoices within the last month if seeking reimbursement).
- Recent **tax filing or financial documentation** (latest tax return, 990 for nonprofits, or business license year with a financial breakdown if no tax records exist).
- Sole proprietors, micro-businesses, small

businesses, or nonprofits with **fewer than 10 employees**.
- **Industry-specific licensing** if applicable (e.g., food handling permits, professional certifications).

Applicant Agreement & Compliance:

- Funds must be used for business-related expenses.
- Misuse may require repayment or disqualify future grant applications.
- A short impact report on fund usage is required by June 1st.
- Applicants must confirm the accuracy of all documentation under penalty of perjury

Mandatory Awardee Orientation & Ceremony

- **Awardee Orientation CEP, MG, WFD:** April 13, 2025, From 3PM - 7 PM at LANGSTON.
- **YEP** Orientation will meet at Never 2 Early April 6th, 13th . In person at Langston 2-5pm
- **Final Award Ceremony for All :** June 1, 2025, from 3 PM - 7 PM at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center

Ready to Apply?

Info sessions March , Sunday 9th ,Wednesday 12th, and Sunday ,16th Monday, 17th at 3pm of MARCH Applications close on March 24th

Before applying, gather **all required documentation** to avoid delays, including verification documents and financial records.

- **All funds must be spent and reported by June 1st.**
- **Apply for only one grant.** If not selected,

the Voting Board may reassign your application to another program if appropriate.

- **Only one application per business will be accepted.** The first submission counts.
- **A clear, detailed budget is required.**
- **Receipts for approved business-related purchases must be submitted.**

* Indicates required question

1. Email *

2. Business Name (as it appears on business license) *

3. Owner Full Legal Name

4. Business Email *

5. Phone Number *

_____

6. State Business License Number (UBI)

_____

7. Business Website

_____

8. Business Address

_____

9. Business Entity Type

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ LLC
- ◯ S-Corp
- ◯ Sole Proprietor
- ◯ Other: _____

10. Date Business Established

_____

Example: January 7, 2019

11. Employer Identification Number (EIN)

_____

12. Is your business registered in Washington State?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

13. Number of Employees *

_____

14. Did you file business taxes for 2024? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

15. If No, explain why (new business, pending taxes, etc.)

16. Tell us about your Business

17. What products or service do you provide?

18. What are your 3 biggest challenges as a business owner?

19. Upload example of work. (if you have it)

Files submitted:

20. Which Application are you interested in being considered for? * Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- Creative Empowerment Program
  Skip to question 21
- Micro Grant Award
  Skip to question 27
- Young Entrepreneur Program
  Skip to question 30
- Workforce Development
  Skip to question 37

Creative Empowerment Program

Answer if you are applying for CEP mentorship program

21. Tell us about your project and plan for these funds?

22. What makes you ready for structured mentorship at this stage of your creative business, and how will you actively use this opportunity to move from where you are now to where you need to be?

23. What support do you need to refine your strategy and scale your creative work into a sustainable business?

24. What specific, measurable transformation do you want to achieve through this mentorship, and how will you hold yourself accountable to making it happen?

25. What type of Technical assistance do you need?

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Financial Management
- [ ] Business Pitch
- [ ] Branding and Identity Development
- [ ] Customer Engagement
- [ ] Business Foundations and Legal Set up
- [ ] Grant Writing and Funding Strategies
- [ ] Scaling and Long term Growth Strategies
- [ ] E commerce and Online Sales
- [ ] Product Development and Prototyping
- [ ] Customer Service and Retention Strategies
- [ ] Public Relations and Media Training
- [ ] Navigating AI and Tech for Small Business

26. Upload a 1 page Budget Template outlining fund allocation.

Files submitted:

Skip to question 40

MicroGrants

Awardees receive up to 15,000 dollars to hone their project or vision for their business. Choose this grant if you have all the pieces but could use a financial boost in your business. We will have 6 core Mandatory Workshops for you to attend to ensure you receive the necessary technical assistance for your business success. We also want to see you at Orientation and the Final Award Ceremony.

27. What specific business need will this micro grant address, and how will receiving these funds directly impact your business growth in the next six months?

28. Examples of work that you're proud of?

    Files submitted:

29. Upload a 1 page Budget Template outlining fund allocation.

    Files submitted:

Skip to question 40

Young Entrepreneur Program

LANGSTON is excited to partner with The Friends of *It's Never 2 Early 2 Create & Innovate* in supporting young entrepreneurs as they expand their business knowledge through a workshop series. Meet ups will take place on Sundays. These workshops are **Business Ideation & Problem-Solving , Product Development, Branding & Personal Identity in Business, Business Planning & Goal Setting and More... With opportunities to sell your products live at Seattle Black Film Festival and Seattle Black Nerd Festival.** If your a young person ages 12-17 and have a business or business idea that you wanna develop please join this program application pool by answering the questions below.

30. Why do you want to join the Young Entrepreneurs Program, and what do you hope to gain from the experience?

31. Do you have a business idea or a product/service you would like to develop?

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ yes
- ◯ no

32. If so, please describe it?

_____

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33. What skills or talents do you have that could help you as an entrepreneur (e.g., creativity, leadership, problem-solving, marketing, etc.)?

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34. Describe a time when you had to overcome a challenge or work hard to achieve a goal. How did you handle it?

35. The program requires commitment, including attending workshops and completing tasks. How will you ensure you stay engaged and meet the program expectations?

36. What would you spend your 1000 stipend on be specific?

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Skip to question 40

Workforce Development

Workforce Development Funding supports initiatives that enhance employee well-being, growth, and success. Applicants can use these funds for skills training, wellness programs, childcare support, flexible work options, team-building, and more. The goal is to create a healthier, more engaged, and skilled workforce while strengthening workplace culture, productivity, and retention. This funding is an opportunity to invest in the people who drive your organization's success. Funds are up to 10,000 dollars for employee enhancement.

37. Do you currently provide any of the following for your employees? check all that apply

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Professional Development & Training
- [ ] Wellness & Mental Health Support
- [ ] Employee Recognition & Incentives
- [ ] Work-Life Balance & Flexibility Enhancements
- [ ] Technology & Workspace Improvements
- [ ] Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives
- [ ] Team Building & Culture Development
- [ ] Financial Wellness & Assistance Programs
- [ ] Childcare & Family Support
- [ ] Sustainability & Green Initiatives
- [ ] Flexible Scheduling & Remote Work Perks
- [ ] Creative & Passion Project Support

38. How will you enhance your employees worklife with this funds?

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_____

_____

_____

39. Upload a 1 page Budget Template outlining fund allocation.

Files submitted:

Skip to question 40

Final Questions

40. What type of Technical assistance do you already have? *

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Financial Management
- [ ] Business Pitch
- [ ] Branding and Identity Development
- [ ] Customer Engagement
- [ ] Business Foundations and Legal Set up
- [ ] Grant Writing and Funding Strategies
- [ ] Scaling and Long term Growth Strategies
- [ ] E commerce and Online Sales
- [ ] Product Development and Prototyping
- [ ] Customer Service and Retention Strategies
- [ ] Public Relations and Media Training
- [ ] Navigating AI and Tech for Small Business

41. What three milestones or projects do you wish to reach in 2025?

42. How does your work uplift or give back to the community?

43. How do you identify? Check all that apply! *

Check all that apply.

- [ ] Black/ African/ African Diaspora
- [ ] White / European
- [ ] LGBTQIA+2
- [ ] Native American
- [ ] BIPOC
- [ ] Asian American
- [ ] Multi- Ethnic
- [ ] Pacific Islander
- [ ] Mexican/ Hispanic/ Latinx
- [ ] Prefer not to answer
- [ ] Other: _____

44. How does your identity contribute to your business ventures?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

45. Ask and answer a question that we missed? This is our favorite question don't phone it in! *

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