



**2016 Women's Funding Alliance
Thrive Initiative – Request for Letters of Inquiry (LOIs)**

About Women's Funding Alliance

Women's Funding Alliance envisions a world where all women and girls have the opportunity to live, lead and thrive. Our mission is to advance leadership and economic opportunity for women and girls in Washington State. We accomplish this by making the case, driving solutions and mobilizing people to make change. Women's Funding Alliance is rooted in a deep commitment to equity and addressing disparities among women and girls.

Purpose for this Letter of Inquiry (LOI)

Women's Funding Alliance believes that women and girls are the solution to many of the challenges currently facing families, communities, and our economy in Washington State. In our state and across the country, when we prepare women with the education, workforce and job training, and support systems to thrive, we move women up the ladder of success and increase their ability to earn higher wages. One of Women's Funding Alliance's goals is to increase long-term financial stability by ensuring that women have access to training, education opportunities, and workforce development programs. Such programs can increase a woman's practical knowledge, can build her confidence, and can enable her to successfully pursue a living wage job that will lead to a more financially stable future. In our work, we define a living wage as one that enables a woman to pursue her professional and career goals, supports the needs of her and her family, and enables her to build a secure future. When more women are on the path to financial stability, women will reinvent the economy through smart investments, direct purchasing power, and philanthropic giving that invests in the future of women and girls.

Women balance the demands of caregiving and breadwinning every single day. In the U.S., mothers are primary or sole breadwinners in nearly 40% of families. That means women's wages are key to their families' ability to make ends meet and get ahead. And women care not just for children, but often for elderly family members, or for a sick family member. For low-income women, this burden is intensified. Low-income women who balance caregiving roles with working full- or part-time and with continuing to obtain education or work credentials can delay or obscure the path to a financially stable future.

Women's Funding Alliance is launching the Thrive Initiative to learn how low-income women navigate these challenges, what programs and supports work best for them, and what systems need to work better to support their needs. The initiative includes grantmaking that is complementary to our research and policy efforts, and will support our work to uncover best practices that help prepare women for, and keep, living wage jobs. Ongoing research, combined with our policy efforts, will dig deeper into the current system and identify the right levers that lead to a strong foundation for women's attainment of

long-term financial stability. Recipients of grant funding may be asked to work with researchers on gathering qualitative data. We see ourselves as partners with grant recipients to learn more about what works. As we do so, we aim to adapt and cultivate our investments in successful solutions, which we hope will spark efforts to solidify lasting change.

Grants will fund organizations or programs that employ innovative or promising practices in existing programs or that test new ideas to expand the universe of what we know works for low-income women. We are seeking organizations from across the state who are doing work that places women on a path towards long-term financial stability.

We will give priority to organizations or programs that seek to:

- Foster partnerships and collaborations among organizations or systems that elevate the needs of low-income women
- Train women in an occupation or sector that is high-growth or high-demand and allows low-income women to attain the necessary skills to thrive
- Provide wraparound services, such as child care, transportation, or financial supports, which focus on the well-being of children, mothers, and their families
- Conduct research that helps to better understand the current landscape of workforce, training and education programs and identifies solutions or opportunities that would benefit low-income women
- Build confidence, identity, and leadership as it relates to career growth and professional opportunities for low-income women
- Engage with underserved low income women—women of color, women from immigrant and refugee communities, single mothers, and/or women from rural communities

Our Grant Awards

Total Grant Funding Available: \$170,000

Grant Funding Range: \$10,000 – \$30,000, collaborations or partnerships can apply for combined funding of no more than \$50,000

Timeline

Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) are due Friday, April 1, 2016. Women’s Funding Alliance will review LOIs, and will contact organizations for more information as needed. Selected organizations will be invited to submit full proposals. Site visits to selected organizations will take place in May. Final grant decisions will be made in June. Recipients will be notified at that time and the funds will be awarded. The duration of project funding is July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

March 7 – April 1, 2016	Call for LOIs is circulated
April 1, 2016	Organizations submit LOIs
April 11, 2016	Based on LOI submissions, selected organizations will be invited to submit full proposals
May 9, 2016	Full proposal application due
May 18 – June 3, 2016	Proposal review and site visits
June 16, 2016	Official notifications to organizations

Eligibility

For complete eligibility requirements, please refer to our [Grantmaking Guidelines](#).

Reporting Requirements

At the close of the grant period, Women’s Funding Alliance will invite a written report, using a format which we will provide at the start of the grant period. On a case by case basis, staff may request a site visit or phone call to check on progress or may request gathering of additional information to support ongoing research work.

Additional Information

If you have questions about submitting a proposal, please contact Kate Tibone, Program and Policy Manager, Economic Opportunity, 206-467-6733, kate@wfalliance.org

LOI Guidelines

The LOI should lay the groundwork for a full proposal. However, in contrast to a Request for Proposals (RFP) – which requires demonstrated capacity, detailed outcome measures, and a detailed implementation plan – the ideas presented here can be at an earlier stage of development. Proposed activities must align with the stated goals and objectives of the Thrive Initiative as outlined above.

The LOI may not exceed **two pages** in length in Calibri 11-point font, single spaced, with 1 inch margins. LOIs must be submitted in this format and within the page limit in order to be considered.

LOI Application**I. Organizational Information**

Organization Name:		
Address:		
City:	County:	Zip Code:
Phone Number:	Email Address:	

II. Contact Person Information

Contact Name:		
Address:		
City:	County:	Zip Code:
Phone Number:	Email Address:	

III. Narrative Questions

Please address the following areas when submitting your application:

- What is the overall goal of your program or project?
- What activities will you undertake to achieve that goal?
- What kind of change do you hope will occur if your program is successful?
- What is the population your program or project will serve? How do you define low-income populations through your work, or within your community?
- What are the major barriers to achieving your goal?
- How much funding do you need to achieve your goal?

IV. Supplemental Materials

Applicants may attach **one additional supplemental document** that you believe helps articulate your program or project's goals, objectives, and outcomes. For example, applicants may submit a strategic framework, a flowchart, or a logic model. This step is optional and is not required in order to be considered for funding.