

Investment Connection Request for Proposal - St. Louis

Response ID:102 Data

3. Enter Your Submission's Details

1. Project/Program Name:

BFL's Business Start-Up Training Program

2. Organization's Legal Name (as shown on IRS Letter of Determination):

Better Family Life, Inc.

3. Doing Business As (DBA - if name differs from legal name):

Better Family Life, Inc.

4. Organization Contact Info:

	Info
Street Address 1	5415 Page Blvd
Street Address 2	
City	Saint Louis
State	Missouri
Zip	63112
Organization Phone Number	3143673440
Organization Website:	Better Family Life, Inc.
Organization Email Address	www.betterfamilylife.org

5. Executive and Primary Contact Info:

	Info
Executive Director or Top Executive:	Malik Ahmed
Executive Phone Number:	3143673440
Executive Email Address:	mahmed@betterfamilylife.org
Primary Contact for this proposal:	Darryl Grimes
Primary Contact's Phone Number:	3143673440 ext. 525
Primary Contact's Title:	Chief Operating Officer
Primary Contact's Email Address:	dggrimes@betterfamilylife.org

6. Are you a 501(c)3?

Yes

7. Organization Mission Statement (Please limit response to 1,000 characters)

BFL builds strong families and vibrant communities by providing hope, comprehensive services, and meaningful opportunities.

8. Briefly summarize your organization's history. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Better Family Life was established in February 1983. The 5 pillars that support the developmental thrust of BFL are Community Outreach, Cultural Arts, Housing and Asset Development, Youth, Family and Clinical Services and Workforce Development. BFL's signature annual events include "BLACK DANCE: USA – A Celebration in Movement", Family Week, The Unity Ball, and the Kwanzaa Holiday Expo.

Since 1983, Better Family Life provides holistic solutions to issues that commonly threaten the sustainability of the family unit through life-enhancing employment training and placement; education; housing and asset development; community outreach; and youth, family and clinical services. In addition, we are a national network affiliate of NeighborWorks America ©, an organization that certifies housing agencies of excellence. Overall, BFL services and programs are open to all people, regardless of their ethnicity, aptitude or beliefs. Annually we serve more than 50,000 unduplicated customers.

9. Briefly describe the organization's current programs and activities - Include examples of recent accomplishments, i.e., number of people served annual, housing units built, loans made, etc. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

With over 36 years of combined experience in community engagement and community programming, we assist with every aspect of community involvement. Placed 2,252 individuals in full time employment and 2,065 into on-the-job training Assisted more than 1,000 youth ages 16-24 receive employment through Summer Jobs League Helped over 100 low income entrepreneurs receive small business services Served 247 clients who attended our first-time home buyers classes of which 47 clients purchased their first homes, resulting in an estimated 4.3 million in gains for the region. Provided Teen Pregnancy Prevention programming for 4,700 youth in the St. Louis area. Helped reduce violent crime by 25% in two challenged neighborhoods through outreach programs aimed at reducing gun violence. In addition, BFL completed 3 single family units that are supporting affordable housing in the area.

10. Organizational Annual Budget:

\$11,000,000

11. Organization Fiscal Year:

From date (mm/dd/year) : 01/01/2019

To date (mm/dd/year) : 12/31/2019

12. Proposal Summary (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Through BFL's Business Start-Up Training Program, clients learn that the cycle of poverty can end with them. BFL's Business Start-Up service exists to make sure individuals lacking the access and education to enter the workforce receive the training they need to become productive members of society. We are committed to giving clients the tools they need to start their own businesses and to help graduates maintain lucrative self-employment, which will enable them to strengthen their own communities through the creation of local jobs for low-income and very low individuals. We engage a number of capable and experienced independent consultants to augment staff to provide technical assistance that addresses needs of each owner. Included is information in areas of financing, marketing, business modeling, access to capital and employee mobilization and motivation. In summary we enable traditionally disadvantaged entrepreneurs to launch, maintain and accelerate their businesses.

13. Type of CRA eligibility for your proposed project (check all that apply):

Financial access, capability and empowerment
Small business development/technical assistance

14. Is your project/program (check one):

Existing project

15. Type of request (check one):

Grant

16. Amount Requested:

380000

17. Total Project Budget:

542500

18. Funding Period Requested:

From date (mm/dd/year) : 01/01/2020

To date (mm/dd/year) : 12/31/2020

19. Geographical Area(s) Served - Include specific counties MSAs, city(ies), neighborhood(s). (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Our target areas cover many low-to-moderately low income census tracts and fall within the St. Louis Promise Zone. Specifically, the Promise Zone encompasses portions City of St. Louis and St. Louis County including the communities of: Bellerive Acres, Bel-Nor, Bel-Ridge, Berkeley, Beverly Hills, Cool Valley, Country Club Hills, Dellwood, Ferguson, Flordell Hills, Glen Echo Park, Greendale, Hazelwood, Hillsdale, Jennings, Kinloch, Moline Acres, Normandy, Northwoods, Pagedale, Pine Lawn, Riverview, University City, Uplands Park, Velda City, Velda Village Hills, and Wellston. The Promise Zone has alarmingly high unemployment, crime, and mortality rates; significant numbers of vacant lots and abandoned buildings; and homelessness. This initiative is unique in that it provides direct subsidies to individuals and projects that support individuals that are within the low/moderately low income territories that we serve.

20. Please list other funding secured or potential sources of funding for this project. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Carrollton Bank -Access to capital that is non-existent for disadvantaged businesses. It also attracts more financial institutions to support programs like ours for community development as these resources provide young businesses to grow and create jobs. They are our key partner. They have funded a \$50,000 micro loan fund to support disadvantaged businesses we serve through clients-first approach. We were allowed to do our underwriting to best need of the participants

21. Describe how you verify low-moderate income (80% of Area Median Income (AMI) status of program participants or geographies, i.e., percent/number receiving reduced or free school lunch, census tract data or other method). Please be specific! Listing low-income zip codes does not provide sufficient information. You must describe how you verify the income of individual program participants or in the case of geography, census-tract level data. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

For purposes of verifying and qualifying participants by income, there will be one of two primary methods. Low-income census tract information will be considered for the area the property is located within and, secondly, the annual household income from all sources. Verification must be received by all adult household members, and will be verified via paystubs, SSI determination letters, any state supported benefits (i.e. TANF/SNAP, Sec. 8 voucher, etc) retained as verification. This includes income received by all household members age 18 and older. Income from the employment of household members under the age of 18 is not included in the calculation of total household income. This calculation is compared against HUD's guidelines for Area Median Income(AMI). Our primary households will typically fall within the 80% and below AMI.

22. What community development needs or barriers will this project/program address? (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

According to the Center for Urban Future, it is the "lack of technical assistance as the biggest barrier to people meeting their dreams". Participants receive one-on-one technical assistance which includes a range of professional advice, review and assistance with business and marketing plans, loan applications. Also, through technical assistance, we were able to increase access to business and economic information through CAAAB and other business related services.

The goal of this project is to promote conditions necessary for the provision and growth of micro-enterprise businesses in St. Louis. BFL's Business Start-Up Training Program focus on the poor and marginalized groups, using entrepreneurship as a

tool in building their capacity to take control of their lives.

23. Is this project part of a larger initiative, i.e., special government designation or a larger collaborative community effort?

If yes, please explain. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Yes, this initiative is part of a larger effort, though not funded. BFL has included this program in its larger portfolio of services, however we are seeking funds to continue offering entrepreneurial services to low income residents. We secured additional fund (\$50,000) from Carrollton Bank. But all other administrative costs are carried by Better Family Life. Better Family Life has also provided the renovated Business Center on the third floor of its headquarter located at 5415 Page Blvd. Better Family Life, through the the Center for the Acceleration of African-American Business (CAAAB) extends its programs to other minority and women owned groups throughout its services area.

24. Describe who will be served through this proposed project/program including the percentage of clients currently served or the predicted percentage served who are either LMI or the percentage of small businesses with revenues of \$1 million or less. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

BFL's primary clients fall within the 80% and below AMI according to HUD guidelines. It is estimated that nearly 90% of our current clients fall within this income range

Those residents who live in LMI census tracts will be the primary beneficiary. Program design is positioned to impact those areas primarily. Individual eligibility will vary based on client income and ability to assume debt. Currently, BFL's primary clients fall within the 80% and below AMI according to HUD guidelines. It is estimated that nearly 90% of our current clients fall within this income range.

25. What are the goals of this project?. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

The goals of this project are to mitigate financial risks among viable start-up and emerging companies and to assist in strengthening their financial , structural and maximizing their gains.The goal of this project is to promote conditions necessary for the provision and growth of micro-enterprise businesses in St. Louis. BFL's Business Start-Up Training Program focus on the poor and marginalized groups, using entrepreneurship as a tool in building their capacity to take control of their lives.

Expand programs that teach crucial business skills in entrepreneurship, banking, accounting, budgeting, loan payments and credit building, and marketing.

Better Family Life will promote economic development by providing financing for small businesses (including workforce development and small business technical assistance)

26. What is the timeline for implementing this project?. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Client outreach(marketing/advertising -January 2020

Client recruitment and Needs Assessment - February 7, 2020

Start of the session - February 14, 2020

Start of One-on-One Coaching and Friday Workshops - March 1,2020

Client and program evaluation - April/May - 2020

Completion of business plans and access to additional resources - June, 2020

Begin Session 2 Process July 2020

The same cycle begins. A total of two cycles will be completed throughout the project year.

27. Significant Partnerships:

Does this project/program involve any external partners that may add capacity, programmatic experience and/or funding?

(Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Carrollton Bank

They are our key partner. They have funded a \$50,000 micro loan fund to support disadvantaged businesses we serve through clients-first approach. We were allowed to do our underwriting to best need of the participants

Access to capital that is non-existent for disadvantaged businesses. It also attracts more financial institutions to support programs like ours for community development as these resources provide young businesses to grow and create jobs.

Justine Petersen - Credit Building and Micro Lending, Enhance Access to Capital/Micro Lending

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri - Business Related Legal Service, Provide Access to Pro Bono Legal Services

Computer Village - Computer Skill Classes and Hardware/Software, Provide to Computer Skills Classes and Assess to low cost computer hardware and software

Washington University Brown School of Social Work - Engaging participants Social Entrepreneurship Innovation Competition

28. Who will be responsible for developing, documenting and reporting relationships with connections made through the Investment Connection? (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

The project management team is responsible for the project management and leadership activities such as initiating, planning, executing, monitoring, controlling, and closing the various project phases. This group can also be referred to as the core, executive, or leadership team. The project team is comprised of the people with assigned roles and responsibilities for completing the project.

Eddie Davis - Project Director

Rasheed Ingram - Community Engagement Liaison and Recruitment

Carlton Jones - Instructor

TBH - Instructor

29. What are the anticipated measurable outcomes of this project?. (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

BFL will provide group workshops and training and presentations by subject matter experts for 60 clients gaining access to critical information and knowledge about starting and operating a successful business.

Provide One-on-One coaching by business coach. This includes referral to other support agencies and network with regular feedback and shared data for 45 participants with the expected outcome of producing a fully operational business plan and financials that will allow the entrepreneur to guide the business successfully. Gaining access to network or social capital that they never had to enhance their skills and opportunities as entrepreneurs

Referral and access to all available capital and regular monitoring and feedback to help participants build sustainable businesses for 20 successful entrepreneurs that have access to the entrepreneurial ecosystem that we built and that have been in existence.

30. How do/will you evaluate this project? Describe the measurement tool(s). (i.e., participation checklists, pre/post surveys, intake sheet, etc.) (Please limit response to 1,000 characters):

Financial education- attendance sheets, pre and post tests for financial education classes, evaluation questionnaire

Completion of classes and curriculum

Development of successful business plan and budget

BFL will use both quantitative and qualitative tools to evaluate the project. On a macro level, the Evaluation Center at Washington University, will provide a broad-base analysis of data and other impacts that are data driven. All forms will collect various demographic data about each participant. In addition, we will track percentages of individuals who attended and completed program.