



Blue Cross NC is making an intentional investment in building the capacity of organizations led by or serving historically underrepresented communities and people of color.

BlueCrossNC.com/StrengthenNC 

STRENGTHEN NC PROGRAM FAQs

1. What is the application process?

- All interested organizations complete a Letter of Intent (LOI) form that features a few brief questions. After we review all submitted LOI forms, we invite select organizations to participate in a virtual interview. After the interview process, internal review and evaluation, we announce the organizations selected for our cohort.
- LOI forms were due November 19, 2021. We will announce the selected organizations by early January 2022.

2. What are the eligibility requirements to apply?

- Any 501(c)(3) organization is eligible. Organizations that are incorporated in the State of North Carolina as a nonprofit organization can apply with a fiscal agent who is a 501(c)(3). Your organization must either be based in North Carolina or serve those who live in North Carolina. Your organization must be led by and for communities of color. "Led by" could mean any of the following:
 - Executive director identifies as a person of color
 - 50% or more of your staff identify as people of color
 - 50% or more of your Board of Directors identify as people of color

3. What can I expect as a participant of the program?

- We view Strengthen NC as a holistic approach to capacity building that includes funding, peer mentoring, network building, technical assistance, training and more. To ensure that we meet your organization's needs, we want you to work alongside us to co-design the overall program.
- For the power-sharing design to be effective, we rely on each organization's active participation throughout the two-year program.
- Please review the [Program Overview](#)  for a detailed timeline of each participating organization's commitments.
- We acknowledge that there will ultimately be scheduling conflicts at some point over the two years, but we ask for your best effort at participating across all program modules. Attendance will be required for both the cohort kickoff and cohort closing, and we ask for at least 75% attendance for the remaining cohort connections. Peer Mentoring, Pro Bono Projects, Facilitated Consulting and Additional Scholarship offerings are all value-added offerings, and you will have the ability to decide what fits best for your organization.

4. Will this program take place online or in-person?

- The program will be “virtual first.” As we continue to closely monitor all guidelines and recommendations around COVID-19, we will plan to offer virtual options throughout the program. If we do incorporate in-person elements later, we will offer virtual versions of these whenever possible.

5. During the two-year program, will we interact with other like-minded nonprofit organizations in the program?

- Peer learning is a pillar of this program. Our scheduled cohort connections (see Program Overview) will serve as the building blocks for networking between members of the cohort. Peer learning opportunities will be offered both within and beyond the scheduled programming.

6. What is unrestricted funding?

- Unrestricted funding is used to invest in areas that allow organizations to better fulfill their mission. We view these funds as an investment in each nonprofit’s effectiveness and future sustainability.

7. My organization is very busy but still would love to participate. Can anyone from the organization participate or does it need to be certain individuals?

- While we anticipate that executive director(s) of each organization will be heavily involved throughout, organizations’ board members, broader staff, volunteers and community members may participate in certain programming as well. We will look to organizations to choose the best individual(s) to engage, as the subject matter may change at different points during the program.

8. How can I get answers to additional questions about the program?

- We will be hosting a webinar on November 9 to go over the program in more detail and allow for Q&A. You can also email David Shaw (david.shaw@bcbsnc.com) for more information.

9. Who do I contact if I have questions about the application process?

- Please contact David Shaw (david.shaw@bcbsnc.com) for more information.

10. Can I share this with another organization I think would benefit from participating in Strengthen NC?

- Yes! Please share this opportunity with other organizations that meet the eligibility requirements of the program.