



For Immediate Release

## **Birmingham, AL Wins \$20 Million Grant to Connect People in Persistently Distressed Neighborhoods with Good Jobs**

*Community Funding Accelerator helped craft application that connected K-12 education to economic development; internships, apprenticeships are part of winning proposal*

**[Birmingham, AL, August 6, 2024]** The City of Birmingham and a group of community partners are receiving \$20 million in federal grant funding after the [U.S. Economic Development Administration \(EDA\) announced the winners](#) yesterday of the Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program (Recompete). Community Funding Accelerator is proud to have supported Birmingham's application and helped establish connections between K-12 education and career-connected learning as part of the Recompete program.

More than 390 communities submitted 565 applications for the Recompete funding, making the program the [most competitive in the EDA's history](#). In December 2023, the federal agency named Birmingham as [one of just 22 finalists](#).

Birmingham's winning proposal, [Reinvest Northwest](#), draws on commitments from area employers to strengthen the workforce and provide good jobs to over 4,500 workers through the establishment of a workforce training center, the creation of a Black Business Entrepreneurship Center, and the provision of support services such as a Childcare Center and improved Transportation Access. Joining the City of Birmingham on the application were [Birmingham Promise](#), [Birmingham City Schools](#), [Central Six](#), and [Ed Farm](#), among others.

"Community Funding Accelerator is thrilled to have supported Birmingham's winning application, and we're particularly proud of the pathways we helped develop to prepare local students for good jobs," said Amy Zhou, Associate Director at Delivery Associates, the public-sector consulting firm that leads CFA. "With its focus on K-12 education and underserved neighborhoods, Birmingham's application represents what CFA is all about."

CFA's support for Birmingham included:

1. Establishing K-12 education as the foundation for its workforce readiness strategy;
2. Reviewing the application for both Phase 1 and Phase 2;
3. Providing multiple rounds of extensive feedback;
4. Preparing for the EDA's May 2024 site visit; and



5. Advising on the city's comprehensive responses to the EDA's questions.

The grant aims to enable 4,725 students in the North Birmingham, Pratt, Smithfield, and Northside neighborhoods to access new or expanded career-connected learning programs.

Over the five-year duration, the application proposes the following:

- 300+ students at Jackson-Olin High School will have access to work-based learning opportunities, including paid internships with local employers, provided in partnership with Birmingham Promise and Birmingham City School;
- 4,000 8th & 12th graders will participate in the "Worlds of Work" program, a career exploration program that focuses on high-demand sectors, delivered by Central Six;
- 300 students in BCS will participate in the Model Manufacturing Program, which prepares individuals for entry-level manufacturing careers and is also delivered by Central Six; and
- 125+ students will attend programming, trainings, etc. in the North Birmingham community space, delivered by EdFarm.

"CFA has assisted our team in strengthening partnerships, facilitating open dialogue between community partners, and helped to lay a foundation for collaborative methods designed to bring resources like the Recompete funding to our people and communities," said Sarah McMillan, Manager of Workforce and Talent Development for the City of Birmingham.

The Recompete program is administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce through the 2022 CHIPS and Science Act. Last year, the Economic Development Administration named the [City of Birmingham as one of 22 finalists](#).

"The federal government awards more than \$1 trillion in grants each year, and CFA is working to make sure as many of those dollars as possible focus on improving economic mobility," Zhou said. "By improving the design of the interventions, we can help communities win more grants and maximize the positive impact on students."

For more information, and to access CFA's Federal Grants Tracker, visit [communityfundingaccelerator.org](https://communityfundingaccelerator.org).

### **About the Community Funding Accelerator**

The Community Funding Accelerator (CFA) helps underserved communities access competitive federal grants. With a focus on K-12 education and workforce pathways, CFA identifies relevant grant opportunities, builds coalitions, and provides deep technical assistance



to submit winning applications. CFA also supports implementation to create innovative education and workforce solutions in communities across the U.S. The CFA pilot is led by Delivery Associates, a public sector consulting firm.

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