Ready to Grow Orange County | All About the Peer Learning and Coaching Cohort

**Ready to Grow** is a year-long initiative – running from November 2021 through October 2022 – to grow capacity in Orange County’s nonprofit sector. This initiative is made possible by the Wells Fargo Open for Business Fund, and is powered by Charitable Ventures and OneOC.

One of the main components to Ready to Grow is a free and unique peer learning and coaching cohort for 25 BIPOC-led and/or serving organizations with revenues less than $1M. The curriculum will be co-created by the participating leaders to leverage their lived knowledge and experience and build new skills. Cohort members will have access to peer support and learning sessions, skill-building workshops, organizational assessments, one-on-one coaching, and access to critical tools and resources.

Keep on reading for cohort FAQs:

**Q:** How can I apply for the cohort?
**A:** We’ve got a quick and easy online application for you to complete here: [https://readytogrowoc.org/peer-learning-and-coaching-cohort/](https://readytogrowoc.org/peer-learning-and-coaching-cohort/).

**Q:** When is the deadline to apply for the cohort?
**A:** Please complete the application no later than 5pm PT Friday, November 19.

**Q:** What’s the cohort time commitment?
**A:** We’ll launch the cohort in January 2022 and run it through August 2022. You’ll be expected to participate in monthly meetings/dialogues that could range from 90 minutes to three hours. In addition to the monthly sessions, you’ll also be assigned an executive coach. We anticipate that you’ll be working with your coach an additional two to three hours a month.

**Q:** Where will cohort meeting sessions take place?
**A:** We are hopeful that the cohort sessions can happen in-person. We’re currently exploring venue options in Santa Ana, in large enough spaces to accommodate social distancing.

**Q:** What do I get for my investment of time in this cohort?
**A:** You will benefit from:
- A nine-month program full of interactive learning, peer discussions, and real-time coaching;
- The opportunity to connect with and learn alongside a cohort of other BIPOC-led and/or serving nonprofit leaders;
- An organizational assessment to help you identify your nonprofit’s top capacity needs;
- An assessment of your organization’s financial resilience;
- A coaching partner who will help you draft a practical and usable sustainability plan for your organization;
- An opportunity to share your mission and plans with regional grantmakers and potential partners;
- A chance to think about yourself as an individual leader, an organizational leader, and a system leader, who is equipped and empowered to create real and lasting change.
Q: I’m not sure, as Executive Director, I can participate in all the monthly sessions. What happens if I can’t?
A: Not to worry. In addition to Executive Directors, we also welcome two other leaders from your organization – could be your board chair and another leadership team member, for example. While we’d like you to attend whenever possible, as long as one member of your team is at each meeting, your organization and the cohort can still benefit.

Q: How will the coach help me?
A: Your coach will provide anchor points for learning, reflection, and future action-planning. Coaches will help you understand the results of your organizational assessment and will also support you in the development of an organizational sustainability plan.

Q: Who is hosting this cohort?
A: Charitable Ventures and OneOC, two local nonprofit accelerators, are the cohort hosts.

Q: Who will be facilitating this cohort?
A: OC Human Relations (OCHR), a nonprofit founded in 1991 for the purpose of developing and implementing proactive human relations programs in partnership with schools, corporations, cities, foundations, organizations, and individuals, will be the cohort facilitator. OCHR's professional staff are expert facilitators, especially adept in the areas of mediation, restorative practices, community building, training, and consensus-building. OCHR will focus on the unique sustainability issues of small nonprofits, and on facilitating honest conversation among leaders, coaches, and funders.

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I operate under fiscal sponsorship with an umbrella 501(c)(3) organization?
A: Yes! We welcome applications from BIPOC-led and/or serving fiscally sponsored projects.

Q: My nonprofit is based outside Orange County. Can I still apply for this cohort?
A: Unfortunately, no. At this time, the Ready to Grow cohort is limited to organizations that are primarily operating in Orange County. But we do encourage you to take full advantage of the monthly Ready to Grow Workshops and resource portal.

Q: What happens after I submit my application?
A: You’ll immediately receive a confirmation of your submission. Your application will then be reviewed for eligibility. In early December 2021, a selection committee comprised of local nonprofit and foundation leaders will review all proposals. Your organization will be notified of the selection committee’s decision by mid-December.

Q: I have more questions. Who can I ask?
A: You can contact the Ready to Grow team at info@readytogrowoc.org. Someone will respond within 24 hours.