

# Freedom Community Center



eXDnyOqV

## Application details

I confirm that I meet the eligibility criteria for this grant	✓
Legal name of applying agency	The Freedom Institute
Mailing address line 1	930 Main St
City	Grand Junction
State	CO
Zip	81501
Agency phone number	+19702009439
Agency website	<a href="https://www.newlyfree.com">https://www.newlyfree.com</a>
Agency EIN	85-2644215
CEO or Executive Director name	Micah Espinoza
Application contact and title	Erik Borrell Program Director
Type of agency	Nonprofit Organization
Tax exemption status	501(c)(3)

### What is the mission of the applying agency?

The Freedom Institute (TFI) exists to break the generational cycle of poverty and incarceration in marginalized communities by rebuilding lives, restoring families, and revitalizing communities.

### Describe the applying agency and provide a brief history

TFI has been providing direct services to men and women re-entering the community for the past four years. This reentry work is built on the foundation of the advocacy efforts that have been taking place in Colorado for a decade. In 2017, a direct service program to help people released from prison (WAGEES) was built under the leadership of Micah Espinoza, C.E.O of TFI. The program bloomed and has become an example for the state of Colorado, not only for its programmatic innovations but especially for its highly complementary and effective partnership with the local parole office. TFI thrives under steady leadership and the robust support of experienced care managers and site directors. In a short period, we've been able to secure housing inventory for participants, expand programs, and build a growing network of partners. TFI's story is the fruit of the Community Reinvestment work started by the Colorado Criminal

Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC). In 2014, the legislature passed HB14-1355, which provided state funding to support community-based reentry services. The Latino Coalition for Community Leadership (LCCL) has implemented and managed this necessary work.

TFI was incorporated as a Colorado nonprofit in September of 2020. They also hired the Foundation Group of Nashville, Tennessee, to complete the federal 1023 application. The Foundation Group has a 100% approval rate for 501c3 applications. All the work in completing the 1023 application has been completed, and we were awarded our non-profit status.

### List the major programs related to opioid prevention, education, treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and/or criminal justice offered by your agency. Provide a brief description of each program and indicate the program/s for which you are requesting funding.

The flagship program of The Freedom Institute is Western Slope Wagees (WSW). Work and Gain Education & Employment Skills (WAGEES) is a successful community-based program that facilitates reentry for people under the Colorado Department of Corrections supervision (i.e. parole, transition in Community Corrections) or within in one year from their discharge date. The Freedom Institute works in partnership with the Colorado Department of Corrections to help coordinate services and provide opportunities and support for successful reentry. WSW has placed almost 70% of participants into jobs and stable housing. We accomplish that by in-depth case management, data collection, and our assessment tool INSIT.

TFI created Social Enterprise, a program that compliments the WAGEES program, for the specific purpose of training WAGEES participants in competitive marketable employment skills. It is used to guide and assist the participants of WAGESS in gaining employment. During our intake process, we evaluate job history, work readiness, and skills in order to determine the individual's work readiness or need for on-the-job training. This evaluation also helps us identify individuals that may be highly skilled and have leadership qualities.

TFI has been successful with these programs. We've been able to grow it in terms of the number of people served. It earned the confidence of local partners and developed a variety of professional relationships that support the work we do. TFI is rightfully proud of the progress we have made. However, we are leaving out large groups of people that could benefit from our programs. And we feel we could do better by adding some programs that remove barriers and provide additional wrap-around and continual recovery support for the people who engage in our services.

Approximately 80 percent of the staff at TFI are people with lived experience in justice system involvement, substance use disorder, or both. Peer support services are an evidence-based model of care that has exploded across the country and around the world over the last decade. TFI has a vision of implementing a formal peer support program in a non-clinical environment accessible to anyone in recovery or seeking recovery.

TFI is applying for two new programs. One will be in the treatment service area. We will apply for it separately from this one. This one is in the recovery service area.

Is this agency currently in a probationary status? No

Please select your agency's governance structure Volunteer Board of Directors

Current Agency Sources of Income

	Total dollar amount	% of agency budget
1 Individual Contributions	US\$1,601.00	2
2 Foundations	US\$15,000.00	16
3 Billing/Billing Reimbursement	0	0
4 Program Service Revenue	US\$100,000.00	11
5 Fees/Earned Income	0	0
6 Govt Grant - Federal	0	0
7 Govt Grant - State	US\$665,000.00	71
8 Govt Grant - County/Local	0	0
9 Govt Contracts	0	0
10 In-Kind Contributions	0	0
11 Other	0	0

Agency Balance Sheet

	Beginning of year	End of year
1 Cash (non-interest-bearing)	US\$53,179.00	US\$162,994.00
2 Savings and temporary cash investments	0	US\$102,008.00
3 Pledges and grants receivable	0	0
4 Other assets	0	0
5 Total assets	US\$52,341.00	US\$268,105.00
6 Accounts payable and accrued expenses	0	0
7 Grants payable	0	0
8 Other liabilities	0	0
9 Total liabilities	US\$45.00	US\$1,740.00
10 Total liabilities and net assets/fund balances	US\$52,341.00	US\$268,105.00

Agency Revenue/Expense Snapshot

	Total dollar amount
1 Total Revenue	US\$895,798.00
2 Total Expense	US\$629,389.00

Program name Freedom Community Centera

Please select the service area for which your program is seeking funding Recovery

Amount requested US\$300,000.00

Physical address of program location (street, city, state, zip) 930 Main St., Grand Junction, CO 81501

Date of program inception or expected start date 2022-08-31

Please provide a narrative of the program for which you are seeking funding

"The opposite of addiction is connection" a mantra frequently heard in recovery circles. When an individual is in active addiction, they tend to isolate themselves due to fear and shame of being discovered using. Societal norms have created a stigma surrounding addiction. "We grew up in a world that castigated people with drug problems as dope fiends, crack heads, drunks, winos, and worse" (William L. White, 2010). Co-occurring mental health issues are brought on or exacerbated by substance use. For many individuals in early recovery or citizens returning from the justice system, isolation is a hard habit to break. Normal routine activities like family gatherings, going to the doctor's office, or even taking a trip to a local grocery shop can cause severe anxiety. People who suffer from a disease like opioid use disorder or substance use disorder have an automatic response to dealing with uncomfortable feelings like anxiety. "Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences" (<https://www.asam.org>). Recovery efforts for these individuals should be person-centered, self-directed, and strength based. Our community can support these individuals welcomed by supporting recovery-friendly options, a place where they felt safe from judgment and welcomed in which individuals will be part of social activities.

The Freedom Institute has been actively supporting Individuals on a small scale with identified current program participants. When individuals walk through the TFI door, they are greeted with a warm welcome where they are shown around the center and introduced to all the staff or other participants. Often lunch is served at no cost of their own, in which we take the opportunity to begin building relationships through shared stories in which they learn that we are just like them. As individuals become aware and comfortable, they naturally desire to get involved. Through our social enterprise or workforce, most are working within the first week. This will bring a sense of relief, accomplishment, and belonging. To continue supporting, we have also had social events at the center. Some activities included watching movies and playing games. Our Cinco de Mayo event consisted of food, music, and social interactions. In which we invited members from the community who actively engaged in conversations and made our participants feel welcomed. Another social event consisted of Country Jam weekend, where we took a couple of guys to demonstrate that living a healthy lifestyle can be fun. The next day we attended a sober tailgate party at the Grand Junction Rockies baseball game and sat behind home plate to watch the game. Through this experience, the participants reflected on the contrast between their lives two years ago while in prison and currently being able to observe and interact in these settings. The participants were thrilled; they used every opportunity to share their experience with others "That they had the best weekend of their lives."

There's a belief in the recovery community that is gaining popularity and proving to be true. The theory is that recovery is contagious.

The Freedom Institute seeks funding to open and staff The Freedom Community Center (FCC). The FCC will be a safe place where individuals seeking recovery or in recovery will be able to connect with people just like them. FCC will allow individuals to drop in and find support anytime they need it. It will be where healing begins and hope for the future is evident in the lives of people who work and visit there. The Freedom Institute will hire a part-time Program Director who meets the criteria for Colorado Peer and Family Specialist (CPFS) credential. We will also employ one full-time and one part-time Peer Recovery Coach with CPFS credentials or working to obtain them. The Peer Recovery Coach will be available to meet with individuals regularly. These recovery coaches will be in salaried positions, making it possible for people that are uninsured or cannot afford it to receive assistance. Weekly Person-centered and self-directed goals will be set using the seven dimensions of wellness self-assessment tool from CCAR Recovery Coach Academy. There will be weekly All Recovery meetings at the FCC. All Recovery meetings are peer-led and open to anyone. We will add additional sessions as the need requires. This is also a place we can identify potential peer coaches. TFI will increase the frequency and variety of events held at the Freedom Community Center. And will also make the space available for others to hold events there. We will partner with Duke Rumsley, director of Sober And Fun Entertainment, to host recovery-friendly events, such as sober sections at sporting events and concerts.

The Freedom Community Center will have a computer lab where people can access computers and internet service. A peer will be available to

The program director will be an authorized facilitator of at least one curriculum that has been approved by NAADAC and COPA to meet the ed

Describe the duration and frequency in which clients are offered services

Individuals receiving recovery coaching will meet with a coach weekly for 3-6 months. Individuals needing support more frequently or for a longer period will be able to get it.

TFI will host family-friendly recovery events at least once every month at the Freedom Center. And will participate quarterly in sponsoring family-friendly recovery events outside of the Center.

A professional recovery coach training cycle will begin every 4 months. And 10 Mesa County citizens will receive a scholarship for each training cycle.

Please describe the expected outcome of this program

For year one, we expect to elevate community awareness and recovery choices. Establish and strengthen community partnerships. In year one, we will employ One (PT) Program Director and two Recovery Coaches. We will sponsor four recovery outreach events and host ten family-friendly in-house events. We hope to at least impact 50 individuals through Peer Recovery Coaching in year 1. These 50 individuals will have raised their recovery capital, restored family relationships, and become contributing members of society. A professional recovery coach training cycle will begin every four months. We anticipate adding thirty Peer Recovery Coaches to the workforce TFI will scholarship ten community members in each cycle. Scholarship winners will be chosen through a selective process that considers the individual's skills, qualities, and lived experience. Year two will be focused on billing for Medicaid and finding sustainable income for program efficiency and durability.

Document the proven success of your program. Cite sources to support your success.

N/A

Describe the program's strategy of being socially connected. Ex: Task forces, coalitions, strategic partnerships, etc.  
List the organizations and agencies that you currently collaborate with or would like to collaborate with to reach the expected outcome.

We will strive to connect individuals with lived experience by supporting and demonstrating healthy community partnerships and prosocial activities. Amos Counseling, GJ Hope Dealers, Grand Valley KINEX, The Foundry, Peer Coach Academy, Community Compassion Outreach, Homeward Bound, Mesa County Jail Ministry, Mesa County Sheriff Office, The Joseph Center, Karis Inc, Womens Recovery, Circle Program, West Springs Hospital, Mind Springs, The Movement.

State specifically how your program meets the identified service area you have chosen for your funding request

The identified service area is recovery all of our services are offered in a non-clinical environment. The FCC will be a safe place where individuals seeking recovery or in recovery will be able to connect with people just like them. FCC will be open for individuals to drop in and find support anytime they need it. It will be a place where healing begins and hope for the future is evident in the lives of people that work and visit here.

Total annual cost of program (including administration, staff salaries, and services) US\$149,600.00

Current Program Sources of Income

	Total dollar amount	% of program budget
1 Individual Contributions	0	0
2 Foundations	0	0
3 Business	0	0
4 Program Service Revenue	0	0
5 Fees/Earned Income	0	0
6 Govt Grant - Federal	0	0
7 Govt Grant - State	0	0
8 Govt Grant - County/Local	0	0
9 Govt Contracts	0	0
10 In-Kind Contributions	0	0
11 Other	0	0

Current Program Revenue/Expense Snapshot

	Total dollar amount
1 Total Revenue	0
2 Total Expense	0
3 Surplus/Deficit	0

Discuss any major changes in program revenue or expense anticipated for the period covered by this grant

This is a new program that will expand services to our current participants and to the possible FCC participants.

If awarded, please describe how you will use funding in year one

For year one, we expect to elevate community awareness and recovery choices. Establish and strengthen community partnerships. In year one, we will employ One (PT) Program Director and two Recovery Coaches. We will sponsor four recovery outreach events and host ten family-friendly in-house events. We hope to at least impact 50 individuals through Peer Recovery Coaching in year 1. These 50 individuals will have raised their recovery capital, restored family relationships, and become contributing members of society. A professional recovery coach training cycle will begin every four months. We anticipate adding thirty Peer Recovery Coaches to the workforce TFI will scholarship ten community members in each cycle. Scholarship winners will be chosen through a selective process that considers the individual's skills, qualities, and lived experience.

If awarded, please describe how you will use funding in year two

Year two will be focused on billing for Medicaid and finding sustainable income for program efficiency and durability. If we generate funding through Medicaid billing and social enterprise, we could possibly hire another FT Recovery Coach. Build capacity in a volunteer base in which they will be able to support other individuals in their recovery.

Please describe the plan in place to ensure this program remains sustainable

We will partner with a clinician/ treatment provider so that we can attain our Recovery Community Organization Credential in doing so we can bill for Medicaid services. TFI will be invested in seeking other funding sources.

What is the program's target population?

Individuals in recovery or seeking recovery.

Does the program have service limitations? No

What are the parameters for client eligibility?

Individuals who have an Alcohol or other drug use Disorder (AOD).

Does this program charge clients for services? No

Do other programs in Mesa County provide similar services? Yes

Why is there a need for more than one program providing similar services?

"Mesa County health care institutions and emergency departments exhaust limited resources and struggle to meet the needs of patients suffering from multiple crises (mental health, substance use, homelessness) at the same time" (MC, snapshot assessment 2021). "More than 1 in 10 Mesa County residents went without needed Mental Health Care in 2019".

Current Program Staffing

	Number of full-time staff	Number of part-time/seasonal staff	Number of volunteers
1	1	2	0

What is the geographic service area for this program? rural community

How does this program address the diverse needs of populations that are specific to your region (LGBTQ+, BIPOC, immigrants, rural communities, low income, etc.)

This program will be client centered, strength based, and peer led. Each individual will be assessed with the Individual Needs and Strengths Identification Tool (INSIT), Motivational Interviewing, SMART goals that are identified by the individual participants. We hope that in doing outreach to our community we will be able to support individuals in diverse populations in which we will be able to improve outcomes and increase recovery capital.

Program Demographics

	Two year prior FY actual	Most recently completed FY actual	Current FY projected	Next FY projected
1	0			
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				

12	Area: Outside Mesa County
13	Area: Not Reported
14	TOTAL FROM ROWS 7-13 (should match total from row 1)
15	Ethnicity: White
16	Ethnicity: Hispanic
17	Ethnicity: Asian-American
18	Ethnicity: African-American
19	Ethnicity: Native American
20	Ethnicity: Other
21	Ethnicity: Not Reported
22	TOTAL FROM ROWS 15-21 (should match total from row 1)
23	Age: 0-4
24	Age: 5-14
25	Age: 15-18
26	Age: 19-34
27	Age: 35-54
28	Age: 55-70
29	Age: 71+
30	Age: Not Reported
31	TOTAL FROM ROWS 23-30 (should match total from row 1)

Discuss the resources, tools, and staffing available that will be utilized to reach program outcomes during the funding cycle

The Freedom Institute property, vehicles, computer lab, administrative staff, INSIT tool, and Care Manager database tool.

Provide a narrative of the actions the program will take to reach the desired outcomes during the funding cycle, utilizing the resources listed above

The Freedom Community Center will have a computer lab where people can access computers and internet service. A peer will be available to assist in job search, resume writing, getting signed up for Medicaid, and many other resources. The program director will be an authorized facilitator of the recovery coach curriculum and knowledgeable in the processes of state and national peer credentials. The Freedom Center will host three professional training cycles per year for Mesa County residents interested in joining the peer recovery workforce. This will be more than just classroom training. Participants will be assisted with all the requirements set forth by COPA up to and including the filing of their application and preparing for the exam. These sessions will be open to anyone in the community and TFI will scholarship ten community members in each cycle. We will sponsor four recovery outreach events and host ten family-friendly in-house events.

Describe the audience served, number of clients that will receive assistance during the funding cycle, and what services will be offered to each

The client served are individuals in recovery or seeking recovery. All Recovery Support Services will be available to participants. Any Mesa County resident seeking Recovery Support Services will be eligible. Weekly all Recovery Meeting, Peer Recovery Coaching, Family friendly Recovery Events, Social Community Events. "To convey a person to where they are to where they want to be" is what defines Peer Recovery Coaching"

Provide a final desired outcome statement

We hope that by providing these services we will remove barriers and increase recovery capital throughout Mesa County. Our focus will be increasing visibility and support for people in recovery so that Mesa County will become a recovery ready community.

Describe your program's overall approach to evaluation. Refer to methods, instruments, and procedures (surveys, interviews, tests, logs, etc.) for collecting data, and your process for analyzing the data.

Survey Method tool, Care Manager Data tool,

What are the instruments or tools you will use to measure change?

ISIT tool and Care Manager data tool, SMART goals sheet, Participant survey, Seven dimensions of wellness,

How will evaluation results be used?

TFI is committed to growth and change we will use participant survey for outcome growth.

Quantity of clients served and outcome data

		Most recently completed FY actual	Current FY projected	Next FY projected	Following FY Projected ( Year 2)
1	Total # of clients served	0	150	200	300
2	# of clients utilizing youth mentoring opportunities	0			0
3	# of clients utilizing youth diversion program	0			0
4	# of clients receiving prevention education	0			0
5	# of CAS trainings offered	0			0
6	# of clients receiving SUD treatment and wrap around services	0			0
7	# of clients receiving peer delivered care coordination	0			0
8	# of peer recovery specialist trainings provided	0	30	30	30

Please upload the following documents:

1. Current agency operating budget
2. Current program budget
3. Copy of your most recent audited financial statements, compilation, or review
4. Most recent 990 or other tax filing
5. Colorado Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing or Certificate of Registration (if applicable)
6. Licensures and designations with the Office of Behavioral Health and/or the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment if applicable to your agency/program

Current agency operating budget

PDF
[FCC income statement9 202... \(43 KiB download\)](#)

Copy of your most recent audited financial statements, compilation, or review

PDF
[TFI\\_balancesheet.pdf \(62 KiB download\)](#)

Most recent 990 or other tax filing

PDF
[TFI Form 990.pdf \(882 KiB download\)](#)

PDF	<a href="#">The Freedom Institute Inc...</a> (370 KiB download)
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