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Charlotte Center City Small Business Innovation Fund Awards \$1.16 Million in Second Round of Grants to 37 Businesses

Partnership Includes Charlotte Center City Partners, Founding Sponsor Honeywell, Foundation For The Carolinas, Bank of America, Duke Energy, and Knight Foundation

Fund Prepares for Round Three: \$1.5 Million in Citywide Grants, Leading to a Total Distribution of More Than \$4 Million; Application Window to Open Monday, October 26

CHARLOTTE, (October 23, 2020) – The Charlotte Center City Small Business Innovation Fund today announced it has awarded \$1,166,000 in Round Two grants to Center City small businesses to spur and support innovation as they continue to adapt to the new economic realities caused by the COVID-19 crisis. 92% percent of the 37 second-round grantees are minority-, women- or veteran-owned businesses. These businesses join the 34 who were awarded grants in August during Round One, all located throughout Uptown, South End, Historic West End, and elsewhere in Center City Charlotte.

Each of these applications proves that small businesses in Charlotte are innovating and creating during the pandemic. Each is moving forward and making plans to share their “lessons learned” to help make other small businesses more resilient.

The Round Two grants will enable these 37 businesses to invest in new innovations and adaptations, including:

- Creating e-commerce opportunities, digital enhancements and virtual environments to better vie for consumer attention and facilitate consumer spending
- Making mobility investments to better meet customers’ new routines and spending habits
- Investing in wearable technology to help with contactless delivery of services and goods
- Upgrading infrastructure to better utilize outside environments and increase consumer confidence

“We are so excited to award more grants to Center City’s entrepreneurs who add vibrancy and character to our Center City through their small businesses,” said Michael Smith, President and CEO of Charlotte Center City Partners. “The fund is now supporting more than 70 businesses investing in their future during this pandemic, which is a true testament to Center City’s future and resiliency. Once you connect those entrepreneurs and their innovative projects plus the additional programming and other projects coming on-line, Charlotte and Center City are poised to continue to innovate and outperform during this recovery.”

The Charlotte Center City Small Business Innovation Fund launched in June as a collaboration between Charlotte Center City Partners, Foundation For The Carolinas and founding sponsor Honeywell, which invested \$2 million in the fund.

“Grants from the Small Business Innovation Fund continue to help small businesses, particularly those owned by minorities, women and veterans, adapt to ever-changing conditions and serve their customers,” said Greg Lewis, Honeywell chief financial officer and chair of the Small Business Innovation Fund grant review committee. “The 71 small businesses that received grants from the Innovation Fund will make Charlotte more resilient and vibrant.”

Bank of America and Duke Energy also joined as sponsors of the grant program this summer, bringing the initial fund to approximately \$2.3 million. The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation also pledged \$250,000 to the Center City Small Business Innovation Fund to help more businesses in Charlotte’s Historic West End overcome the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

The second round of applications opened in early September. By the close of the two-week application period, there were 247 completed applications.

Round Two by the Numbers:

- 247 Applicants
- 37 Grantees
- 92% of all grantees were either minority, women, or veteran-owned businesses

The application period for Round Three opens on October 26, 2020. The funding sources for this round will be federal funding through the CARES Act and City of Charlotte. Therefore, all small businesses physically located throughout the entire City of Charlotte are eligible to apply. Details about the Small Business Innovation Fund: Round 3 – All of CLT will be available at: CharlotteCenterCity.org/InnovationFund

There will also be a Round 4 in early 2021, but details for that round will be announced in January 2021.

If you would like to speak with specific businesses, please reach out to Moira Quinn for a list of businesses that are available for media inquiries.

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ABOUT HONEYWELL

Honeywell (www.honeywell.com) is a Fortune 100 technology company that delivers industry-specific solutions that include aerospace products and services; control technologies for buildings and industry; and performance materials globally. Our technologies help aircraft, buildings, manufacturing plants, supply chains, and workers become more connected to make our world smarter, safer, and more sustainable. For more news and information on Honeywell, please visit www.honeywell.com/newsroom.



ABOUT CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY PARTNERS

Charlotte Center City Partners envisions and activates strategies and actions that will assure Charlotte Center City is a welcoming an equitable, economically vibrant, culturally rich, and beloved place for all. For more information, visit www.charlottecentercity.org.

ABOUT FOUNDATION FOR THE CAROLINAS

Founded in 1958, Foundation For The Carolinas is the sixth-largest nonprofit community foundation in the country, serving donors and a broad range of charitable purposes in North and South Carolina. With assets of \$2.8 billion, FFTC's mission is to inspire philanthropy and empower individuals to create a better community. Visit www.fft.org.

Awardees Round Two

Business Name

1. A Sign of the Times of the Carolinas
2. Bentala Salon
3. Blooming Smiles Pediatric Dentistry
4. Brevard Court
5. Cheesecake Carousel
6. CLT Boutique
7. Craft Tasting Room & Growler Shop and Lincoln Street Kitchen & Cocktails
8. Emerson Real Estate Advisors
9. Fashion & Compassion
10. Girl Tribe
11. Goodyear Arts
12. Graham St. Pub & Patio
13. Halal Food Cart
14. Halcyon
15. Hot Box Food Group
16. International Truck of Tacos
17. IT-HenHouse
18. Joedance Film Festival
19. Levine Museum of the New South
20. Madame Shea
21. Midtown Ballroom
22. Moxie Mercantile
23. Open Door Studios
24. Paul Andre Boutique
25. Pepperbox Doughnuts
26. Pet Wants
27. Popbar
28. Queen City Mutiny - Charlotte Futsal
29. Rebrand Media
30. Riplash at BuffSalon
31. Southern Blossom Florist
32. Three Little Birds Stationery & Gifts
33. Venue at 1801
34. Visulite Theatre
35. Waterbean Coffee
36. Wonderworld Creative
37. Zia Pia