



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

History..... 3

Call for Proposals 5

Proposal Insights7

Award Recipient Selection Process..... 11

Guiding Principles.....13

Celebrating the 2021 Recipients 15

Takeaways 18

Next Steps 22

Thank You..... 23

Human Trafficking: Reporting & Resources 24



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

HISTORY

The name GrantTank was coined to represent a granting opportunity for a think tank of individuals in the same field. The ultimate goal to curate a small cohort of organizations with shared values and services who could benefit from resources provided by The Jensen Project and from engagement with their peers.

The Jensen Project fuels strategic partnerships that empower survivors of sexual violence, reduce exploitation, and lead to business growth. We seek to create cultural and systemic change by leveraging our collective strengths in business, development, and field expertise.

The anti-trafficking movement has seen tremendous growth and momentum over the last decade, allowing proven and best practices to emerge across the United States. Survivors and allied professionals are combining expertise to advance policies and protocols, law enforcement agencies are adjusting their responses from punitive to victim-centered approaches, prosecutors and court systems are innovating to support victims throughout the justice system, and access to victim services has grown along with private, state, and federal funding streams. We have much to celebrate as we analyze how far we've come together and the milestones we've reached. It is also incumbent on us to acknowledge the areas where we continue to struggle. While collaborating with community leaders and stakeholders nationwide for the last two years, two common themes consistently emerged: a lack of safe housing options and sustainable job opportunities. Both are vital components that allow survivors of sex trafficking to thrive when they reintegrate into society, yet they remain to be the greatest challenges within the continuum of victim services and support.

Housing options have evolved to include a spectrum of placements such as emergency or crisis shelters, short and long-term residential homes, therapeutic foster care, and transitional or independent living arrangements. Each of these options is costly and hard to find in most communities. Some have waiting lists, and some are simply not equipped with sufficient staff to support the holistic needs of their clients. Moreover, the options available are not enough to meet the demand, leaving service providers and survivors with few reliable options to assist with stabilization and support when they need it most. We also recognize that restoration homes and transitional housing are not enough to erase or eliminate recidivism and vulnerability. Economic empowerment opportunities and career development programs are imperative to provide a pathway that empowers survivors of sexual exploitation with the necessary tools to pursue lives with dignity and independence.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

Born from a commitment to creating sustainable impact and built on a foundation of lived experience and community engagement, the inaugural GrantTank 2021 launched with a nationwide request for proposals focused on urgent and identified gaps: economic empowerment programs or housing programs (serving adult female sex-trafficking survivors in the U.S.). Every organization, large or small, who has demonstrated success in their field and has been in operation for at least two years was eligible to apply, resulting in an outstanding number of proposals and a challenging selection process. Following the identification and funding of 2021 recipients, The Jensen Project proudly announced that the second GrantTank is upcoming with new partnership opportunities on the horizon.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

To ensure a wide distribution and diverse collection of proposals, the GrantTank award opportunity was promoted across the United States through national press releases and circulated through various peer-to-peer networks. Applicants were given 70 days (August 24–October 31, 2020) to prepare a thoughtful and thorough proposal highlighting their organization's support for adult female survivors of sex trafficking and their need for strategic funding to expand or elevate it.

The Jensen Project follows the federal definition of sex trafficking defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, maintaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age (22 USC § 7102).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Proposals were screened and accepted if they met the six core eligibility requirements:

- A core mission that contributes to the fight against human trafficking
- Currently serves adult female survivors of sex trafficking in the United States
- Has been established for at least two years
- Has a proven record of success
- A commitment to transparency with goals, financials, needs, successes, and failures
- Is seeking a two-way partnership with The Jensen Project to strategically and positively impact the landscape of sexual violence



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants were provided specific guidelines for their proposal submissions that included basic program/project parameters, required paperwork, references, and video submissions. Each applicant submitted the following components:

- A project plan that spanned a minimum of one year and a maximum of three with defined performance measures and timeline for deliverables
- An estimated budget with a financial request of at least \$100,000 and not more than \$1,000,000
- Two letters of recommendation from partner organizations providing a framework for their impact in the anti-trafficking field, credibility regarding the quality of their work and agreement on the expressed need for funding
- A personalized pitch video introducing the organization's mission and how the funding would support their mission and goals
- A second personalized video describing the program to be funded and the theory of change behind it
- Examples of their historical impact in the anti-trafficking field
- Detailed financial statements and proof of 501(c)(3) status



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

PROPOSAL INSIGHTS

The Jensen Project received 55 completed applications for 2021 grant awards: 22 in support of economic empowerment programs and 33 in support of housing initiatives. During the application review and program evaluation process, sub-categories of housing and economic empowerment emerged along with five clear types of support. Those sub-categories and support types are defined here for context.

HOUSING CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

Emergency

Emergency housing commonly offers short-term shelter designed to support crisis situations, typically with a maximum duration of 30 days. This housing option may be used as a temporary option to escape exploitation or a short placement when looking for a long-term residential option. The evaluation showed that there are many service providers offering emergency beds to this target population, but not many that are exclusive to this population. The evaluation also showed that, while some offer support for the exploited adult, many do not provide support and space for children while others require a period of sobriety prior to entering. Unfortunately, these barriers, which commonly exist due to funding and staff capacity, can prevent many adult survivors from accessing safe housing when they are ready and/or able to do so.

Drop-In Center

Drop-in centers are facilities that typically serve as a daytime retreat for survivors. They may be standalone or attached to a building that serves another purpose. They offer a safe space for victims and survivors to rest, eat a nutritious meal, shower, do laundry, receive services and support, and/or simply relax. As discovered with emergency shelters, research showed substantial overlap with various populations served in these facilities including but not limited to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or trafficking, and homeless individuals.

Long-Term Restorative

Programs providing long-term residential care (generally ranging six months to three years) to survivors typically include a spectrum of coordinated services and case management that involves access to any or all of the following: therapy; education or vocational training; job readiness; mentorship; creative outlets; medical care; legal assistance; faith-based groups; parenting and/or life skills development; alcohol and drug rehabilitation or support groups; tattoo removal; etc. These programs are trauma-informed and strengths-based, designed to provide a safe space and supportive services to build a foundation for healing



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

with the ultimate goal of transitioning each resident to independent living within the community of their choice. While each survivor's case plan is unique, these programs are built to reestablish the survivor's confidence, self-empowerment, and self-efficacy, reintegrating them into their communities with the greatest potential for success.

Transitional

Transitional housing comes in many shapes and forms and can vary based on the individual's need or the program's duration. Most programs encountered during the evaluation period assist survivors for multiple years. These programs included rental assistance for independent apartments and homes as well as free housing for a pre-determined amount of time while also providing the non-residential support to help the survivor be successful with independent living. Some had 24/7 staff available on call or on site while others focused on total independence. Each program was complemented with trauma-informed care practices, along with wrap-around services, to ensure all the holistic needs of the survivor were taken into consideration. The variety of care options offered in this category was exciting to see, recognizing that a variety of pathways towards independence are needed.

Above all, The Jensen Project team was encouraged by the growing range of housing options available to adult survivors. It is also noted that there is a pattern of movement by survivors between available facilities which can take place over the course of days, weeks, or months during the period of exploitation and exit. This is to be expected as each person works through the Stages of Change and strives to find their footing to move forward step by step. Every survivor's journey is different and therefore their needs will be different. Ideally, housing options in every community would reflect this diversity of needs and work collaboratively to support their clients together. While there are simply not enough placement and housing support options overall nationwide, the growth in trauma-informed care and established best practices demands to be celebrated. Following an in-depth evaluation of the housing options, The Jensen Project chose to focus inaugural support on proposals related to emergency, long-term, and transitional housing.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

Barrier Removal

Barrier removal programs help eliminate the hurdles survivors face when trying to find employment after exiting exploitation. They may include legal assistance for the removal or expungement of criminal records, civil protection orders, family law issues and/or victim-witness advocacy. The evaluation also identified any program that assists survivors with earning a General Educational Development (GED)



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

certification as a barrier removal program due to the outcome intended (allowing individuals to gain access to entry level jobs).

Career Readiness/Vocational Training

For the purposes of this evaluation, career readiness and vocational training programs were combined into one category encompassing anything from resume writing and interview coaching to soft skills development (focused on pursuing, securing, and retaining a job). Although survivors leave exploitation with a host of transferrable skillsets, they typically have no understanding of it or how to leverage them for their future success. They often lack the education, training or job experience required by most entry level positions, leaving them few options to earn a living wage. Those who can secure jobs often struggle to maintain them due to family obligations, transportation, or trauma management. Without concerted and strategic support in this area, it is highly challenging for any adult survivor to secure and retain gainful employment.

Higher Education/Technical Scholarships

The Jensen Project identified scholarships as a unique category focused on the provision of financial support for traditional education, continuing education, trade certificates, and/or industry specific education (e.g., cosmetology), with the recognition that these types of education provide an opportunity for sustainable employment and higher wages.

Social Enterprises

Social enterprises are defined as initiatives integrating business and social impact. These initiatives may be standalone or may represent a for-profit branch of an established nonprofit. While these enterprises may provide jobs at lower hourly wages for such things as making hand-poured candles, purses, and jewelry, they help survivors develop hard and soft skills side by side in a trauma-informed environment. Survivors are supported within a community of their peers as they learn the various layers of business, customer service, job performance, and work ethic. Part-time or full-time positions are available, schedules may be flexible, and travel stipends are sometimes provided. These opportunities allow survivors to stabilize, set goals, receive professional development support, and establish a work history to include on a resume.

Sustainable Careers

Sustainable careers along with the critical education and skills training to successfully launch into such careers established the final category in the evaluation. Although it was one of the slimmest categories with the fewest proposals, it has the most room for improvement and growth across the United



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

States. Survivors deserve the opportunity to advance in their chosen careers alongside every other eager professional without having to rely on government subsidies. Careers that provide a sustainable living wage also provide a clear path for survivors and their families to move forward and away from the vulnerabilities that lead to exploitation. As the field continues to mature, these are the programs we desperately need to see more often.

Walking alongside survivors as they navigate the restoration and rehabilitation of their lives is critical work. They will face challenges and setbacks along the journey out of exploitation, but their story does not end when they reach a “safe” place. We, the community, must ensure survivors have the strongest foundation for success with the strongest potential to succeed by launching them into meaningful and fulfilling careers whenever possible. Following an in-depth evaluation of economic empowerment options, The Jensen Project chose to focus most of the inaugural support on proposals related to social enterprises and sustainable career development.

FIVE TYPES OF SUPPORT

The Jensen Project identified five potential types of financial support to award and subsequently noted all five types of support represented within the 55 applications received, highlighting the spectrum of current support needs within the anti-trafficking field at large. The five financial categories are as follows:

- Seed/Pilot: launching a new program or project
- Capital Campaign: building or renovations of program space
- General Operations: the organization’s daily administration and staffing
- Programmatic: the program and its required resources
- Capacity Building: improving the organization’s ability to fulfill its mission and objectives, and strengthen its infrastructure



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

AWARD RECIPIENT SELECTION PROCESS

The Jensen Project received 55 completed applications for 2021 grant awards, 22 in support of economic empowerment programs and 33 in support of housing initiatives. Agencies and organizations from across the United States contributed innovative ideas and creative approaches to common challenges in the anti-trafficking field. The total requested amount exceeded \$20,000,000, while individual proposals ranged from \$105,000 to \$1,000,000. With a pre-determined budget of \$2,000,000 in awards, it was apparent at the onset that the decision-making process would be challenging.

Clear expectations were provided and guiding principles were established in advance to ensure the process was transparent, fair, and unbiased. The original evaluation plan included four separate rounds of review with an initial screening, individual and group rankings, introductory interviews, site visits, and follow-up conversations. (Due to Covid-19 precautions, the decision was made to forego site visits in 2020 and transition all conversations to Zoom. It is anticipated that site visits will be a critical part of future GrantTank evaluations.)

The Jensen Project team began the five-month evaluation process by narrowing down the qualified applications to those that most directly served the intended population through a simple screening of the core eligibility requirements and organizational objectives. Those who passed the initial screening moved into the second round. Each application was then reviewed and ranked individually by each team member followed by a detailed panel discussion between evaluators to compare notes and perspectives. Following this intense round, all proposals with a unanimous response from evaluators advanced to the third round. Zoom conference calls were scheduled with each organization, followed by a team debrief. Round four focused on collecting and reviewing any missing information or supplemental documentation and, most importantly, clarifying key details with applicants prior to final discussions and the ultimate decision. Proposals were eliminated in each round leading up to the final selection. The last task for each evaluator was to independently rank their final choices before entering the final panel discussion to compare notes, discuss and digest any remaining concerns, and advocate for their top applications.

A multitude of factors played a role in the ongoing evaluation and final selection. Critical attention was given in search of the top initiatives that had the greatest potential to elevate the anti-trafficking field by honing their success in order to share it on broader scale. As previously mentioned, The Jensen Project received requests for all five types of support (seed, capital, operations, programmatic, and capacity building) within the 55 applications received. A strategic decision was made to focus on proposals within the



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

Programmatic and Capacity Building categories which aligned best with the current skill sets and expertise of The Jensen Project and related stakeholders, allowing room to grow the collective impact of all parties involved. After multiple rounds of review and a steady application of the established guiding principles, the seven leading recipients chosen for the inaugural GrantTank awards were selected unanimously by the evaluation panel for their proven success and potential for impact.

The Jensen Project team enjoyed getting to know each organization that applied for GrantTank 2021 and received an intense amount of education through subsequent conversations with applicants. Overall, the team was left with a deep sense of gratitude to learn more about the incredible work being accomplished across the country and the exponentially added value each program provides to the domestic anti-trafficking movement.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Five guiding principles were established at the onset to provide parameters for the evaluators.

Objective Evaluation

An emphasis was placed on objectivity for all evaluators and stakeholders. The Jensen Project has substantially developed relationships with allies and survivors across the country and made every effort to ensure that the GrantTank award opportunity would remain a fair, unbiased process for every competing applicant. Therefore, all individuals who expressed interest in the grant announcement were encouraged to engage in the full application process, regardless of previously established relationships with team members. No pre-application meetings or phone calls were held. Each evaluator worked independently on program assessments prior to engaging in panel discussions. Extensive debriefs were held to arrive at consensus during each round of the evaluation.

Program Sustainability

It was apparent at early stages of the evaluation process that every organization was structured differently as far as funding and development. Housing and economic empowerment programs with established earned income streams stood out above the rest due to the potential for greater sustainability. Many organizations created these funding streams through the sale of tangible goods they were creating on site, or through training and technical support offered by staff. The Jensen Project also found that most sustainable operations detailed in applications have a diversified stream of income, with no more than 50% coming from any one source, including federal, state and local government entities. Applicants who had received large cash infusions within the 12 months prior to their application, but who lacked the demonstrated measures of success at the time of application, were eliminated from this award cycle.

Organizational Leadership

Behind every solid organization is a team of strong leaders. An organization's ability to establish clear goals, design and implement a strategic plan, then monitor, evaluate, and learn from their outcomes is critical in whether their mission will be successful, yet the overwhelming majority of nonprofits in the anti-trafficking field struggle to remain proactively engaged in long-term and strategic planning. The Jensen Project assessed the composition of the organization's leadership team as well as the presence of a balanced and engaged board of directors, both equally important components for growth and sustainability. Evaluations revealed gaps and challenges in sustainability planning with many applicants which led to their



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

elimination from GrantTank, but which also inspired additional avenues of strategic collaboration with The Jensen Project.

Promoting Sustainable Wages

In evaluating economic empowerment programs, The Jensen Project recognized that each program approached economic empowerment somewhat differently. In some, the objective was to prevent recidivism by helping clients garner financial support from government subsidies. This funding is commonly accepted as a bridge to sustainable employment. Others were designed to develop the individual professional capacity of each client so they could pursue identified career goals. The Jensen Project gravitated towards programs offering a sustainable living wage without reliance on government assistance programs and chose to focus inaugural funding support on organizations that offered full-time or significant part-time employment to survivors.

Financial Constraints

The Jensen Project launched a call for proposals with the intention to donate \$2,000,000 to economic empowerment and housing programs with no specified cap on the total number of proposals that would be funded. As applications flooded in, it quickly became apparent that this cap in funding would unintentionally constrain the outcomes chosen by The Jensen Project in advance. Although it was not possible to fund every worthy application due to financial constraints, The Jensen Project ultimately voted to increase the award distribution to \$3,100,000 in order to accommodate the seven unanimously selected proposals that met established criteria and would benefit the most from a strategic partnership at this time.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

CELEBRATING THE 2021 RECIPIENTS

We are ecstatic to support seven audacious and inspiring organizations currently serving survivors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. It is an honor and a privilege to collaborate with the following recipients of the GrantTank 2021 awards:

ANNIECANNONS - WALNUT, CA

AnnieCannons not only imagines a world where survivors of trafficking and violence are given opportunities to advance in tech careers, they have made it possible by cultivating an innovative training program that transforms survivors into software engineers, allowing them to secure sustainable, high-income opportunities building websites, developing applications, and providing technology support for small businesses.

Through strategic funding support from The Jensen Project, AnnieCannons will build organizational capacity, provide technical trainings to frontline partners, and scale their survivor-empowering tech program nationwide with an enhanced, accelerated engineering training model implemented through a virtual platform to reach new target audiences.

EDEN HOUSE - NEW ORLEANS, LA

Eden House seeks to create systemic change for survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation through legislative advocacy, housing, and comprehensive recovery services.

As the only facility of its kind in the New Orleans area, Eden House receives almost 100 requests per year for immediate assistance that they are unable to accommodate.

Strategic funding from The Jensen Project ensures Eden House can open and operate an emergency shelter for temporary housing and stabilization, offering survivors access to a team of licensed clinical staff, crisis counseling, safety planning, therapeutic support, medical care, case management, legal assistance, and resource referrals as they navigate next steps together.

MISSEY - OAKLAND, CA

MISSEY is a community-based organization responding to the commercial sexual exploitation of girls and young women by providing a wraparound service model that includes a drop-in center, intensive life coaching, advocacy, prevention, and career readiness.

Through strategic funding support from The Jensen Project, MISSEY will expand and strengthen its Thrive Program, focused the development of technical and soft skills, self-



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

regulation, positive work ethic, and more.

A Career Readiness Specialist will support up to 100 young adult survivors in a six-week training program to prepare them for employment and job placement. MISSEY will also provide 18-month paid internships to survivor leaders in the victim services and survivor empowerment field.

ELEVATE ACADEMY, REBECCA BENDER INITIATIVE – GRANTS PASS, OR

As a program of Rebecca Bender Initiative, Elevate Academy offers survivors of trafficking a safe space to learn, heal, thrive, and pursue their dreams while surrounded and supported by a community of peers, mentors, and coaches.

Online courses are designed for survivors by survivors, addressing topics related to personal and professional development.

Through strategic funding support from The Jensen Project, Elevate Academy will scale their technology platform, expand and improve the curriculum, and implement an extension of the academy for residential programs and drop-in centers. They will strategically increase the number of mentors, offer in-depth therapeutic support, and establish a Professional Partnership Network connecting survivors with successful business leaders and entrepreneurs.

REFLECTION MINISTRIES OF TEXAS – MIDLAND, TX

Reflection Ministries supports and empowers survivors of trafficking and exploitation by providing them long-term holistic resources through a multi-level and trauma informed program that offers safe housing, case management, trauma therapy, life skills development, educational and vocational training, mentorship, legal assistance and much more as they prepare for independent living.

Strategic funding from The Jensen Project will provide Reflection Ministries with a full-time licensed counselor for their campus, cover daily operational expenses, and ensure the delivery of non-residential services and support to survivors in the local community.

REST: REAL ESCAPE FROM THE SEX TRADE – SEATTLE, WA

REST provides pathways to freedom, safety, and hope for survivors of sex trafficking by offering programs centered on the strengths, needs, and choices of each person they serve through a continuum of care that includes housing, case management, medical and mental health services, and economic empowerment.

Strategic funding from The Jensen Project allows REST to expand capacity in their Path to Permanent Housing program by sustaining a specialized emergency shelter for women,



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

doubling the transitional living program, expanding financial assistance to subsidize permanent housing options, and employing a Housing Specialist to support clients as they navigate potential solutions on their journey to self-sufficiency.

RETHREADED – JACKSONVILLE, FL

Rethreaded has a mission to renew hope, reignite dreams, and release the full potential for survivors of human trafficking locally and globally through business by providing a safe, supportive environment where they can earn income, develop skills in all facets of the company, and access a holistic restoration program that also includes counseling and case management.

As they prepare to scale operations and double their employment capacity, strategic funding from The Jensen Project will enable Rethreaded to transition seamlessly to a larger production facility, purchase critical new equipment and furniture, develop customized therapeutic spaces, and maintain the salaries of clinical and administrative staff for the Survivor Development Program.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

TAKEAWAYS

As we entered the early stages of GrantTank, we knew there would be many lessons learned along the way and key areas we would want to evolve for future GrantTanks. Lessons emerged throughout the application, interview, and evaluation process and are captured here below.

INSIGHT ON THE MOVEMENT:

1. Collaboration within the movement and among key players is essential, but coordination is still lacking.

Many organizations pitched ideas in their applications they felt were new or revolutionary to the movement; however, in many instances, these initiatives were already being implemented by others across the country. This apparent disconnect likely stems from the speed at which resources and practices emerge without well-defined professional networks in place to identify and share them, as well as the turnover rate of full-time professionals in this sector. The pandemic added a new challenge when it put a halt on critical networking and resource exposure found at conferences or other gatherings. Ultimately, we can identify a spectrum of reasons why our movement remains largely disconnected. As the field continues to evolve, we can expect that there may always be an unintentional lack of streamlined communication, resource-sharing, and coordination state to state or region to region. Yet these connections are invaluable to each of us as we collectively work towards the same goal. For this reason, The Jensen Project believes we all shoulder the responsibility of imparting institutional knowledge that benefits the greater community and the movement as a whole and that we should all strive to see each other succeed at our missions. Following the GrantTank application evaluation, The Jensen Project team was honored to facilitate connections between agencies who share similar passions, visions, and initiatives with the hope of amplifying and expanding the excellent work being accomplished.

2. All anti-trafficking organizations are born to create a sustainable impact, but most struggle to execute the effective systems and measures that build sustainability.

Undeniably, there is a lot of heart in the anti-trafficking movement. In many instances, The Jensen Project team had the opportunity to speak directly with founders of applying organizations and hear how it all started for them. Although their stories were unique, each founder expressed the same beautiful passion for justice and change. They each began the work at a programmatic level to respond to a need or fill an existing gap in the field, oftentimes without the business or executive experience required to successfully run or grow a nonprofit. Over time,



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

in these cases, the organization's administrative or operational needs will outgrow what passion can deliver and the outcomes will begin to suffer. Understanding and organizing financial documents was also a noted gap in many organizations. These are common pitfalls of many nonprofits across the country and, without being addressed effectively, will eventually set the organization off course or stymie its ability to succeed. It is imperative for leaders to identify these challenges early and address them strategically through leadership coaching or training, hiring procedures, and strategic or sustainability planning. Organizations willing to invest in building a strong foundation up front or at pivotal moments have the greatest potential to scale their mission while tapping the strengths of their given leaders.

Although The Jensen Project did not initially plan to offer this type of support to any applicant as a part of GrantTank 2021, it quickly became apparent resources for strategic planning and sustainability could be incredibly beneficial and ensure stronger outcomes. The Jensen Project made the strategic decision to invest over \$100,000 in third-party resources to GrantTank applicants in addition to the allocated financial awards for selected recipients.

LESSONS FROM THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

1. The Jensen Project team recognized a lack of consistent language and definition interpretation in the anti-trafficking field during application review.

The terms and definitions related to housing and economic empowerment previously explained in the Proposal Insights section provides a behind-the-scenes look at factors considered during the evaluation process, but those specific definitions were not provided in advance to applicants. In hindsight, The Jensen Project team realized professionals view housing and economic empowerment on a spectrum which includes programs that fall outside the scope of what The Jensen Project initially defined. By providing clear definitions of these categories in advance for future award cycles, the application process will be streamlined and less confusing for eligible organizations.

Another term that deserves clarity moving forward is “strategic partner.” The intent behind GrantTank is not simply to provide funding and follow-up fiscal accountability. The Jensen Project aims to walk alongside the selected organizations, share lessons, practices, and resources, and build a relationship beyond those found with other funders. The Jensen Project desires to operate as an authentic partner invested and included in conversations related to all outcomes of the agency, and who will serve as an additional resource for strategic opportunities and solutions.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

2. The process must remain fair at all times for all applicants.

Rules were established in advance and strictly followed by all evaluators. The Jensen Project did not accept any early or late applications, did not watch any video submissions beyond the stated three-minute limit, and did not give a pass on any rules to applicants who had previously established friendships with evaluators. Applications were received from agencies that had been supported in the past and from those brand new to the team. In a dedicated effort to remain unbiased, all applications were reviewed with fresh perspective. Any applicant who relied on The Jensen Project's prior knowledge of their operations and, as a result, did not complete the application in full, struggled to advance through the process. Future applicants are encouraged to apply with a clean slate approach as if they are meeting The Jensen Project for the first time. Incomplete applications or those that do not specifically follow the stated rules and guidelines (such as time limits on videos) will be cut from the evaluation process upon arrival.

3. First impressions count.

Typos, misspellings, incomplete statements and other errors were rampant in applications, including cases where sections had been copied and pasted from unrelated documents resulting in missing information or unintended duplications from one page to the next. The unfortunate consequence of miscommunication related to editing errors may be a lack of clarity around the purpose of the organization or the funding request which, in turn, leaves room for doubt about the organization's ability to effectively manage the partnership and award. The Jensen Project recognizes that grant applications are cumbersome for organizations whose resources and capacity are thin and that a rush to meet deadlines may result in a few errors, but also highly recommends all organizations secure an objective internal or external reviewer to proof and edit the documents before final submission in order to put their best foot forward from the onset.

4. Capacity matters most.

Many applications were from well-established agencies seeking funding for a new pilot program. Through discussions, it became clear that they selected to expand their programming because funding was available through GrantTank. The Jensen Project encourages all agencies to prioritize funding for sustainability and scalability of existing successful programs rather than distract themselves prematurely with chasing funding streams for new endeavors. New projects and initiatives should be well-defined within the organization's strategic plan and be launched at the appropriate time when resources and capacity are in place to support healthy outcomes. Without this critical strategy, those projects can create mission creep and become a burden on the agency or its staff which ultimately outweighs the intended value added to the movement.



5. A thorough evaluation merits a generous timeline.

The Jensen Project severely underestimated the amount of time required to fairly assess each application. Although it was anticipated that applicants would be notified on their progress by the end of 2020, the evaluation process took much longer and led all the way to the established announcement deadline of March 2021. The applications received were thoughtfully written with substantial details and the evaluation team was committed to fully absorbing and considering each submitted. This award cycle set a more realistic benchmark for future GrantTank timelines and clear expectations on capacity required.

6. Streamlining procedures will be established.

a) Although the requirements for eligibility were listed in advance on the website and applicants were required to acknowledge they understood this during the application process, ineligible submissions were still received. Time spent reviewing applications that will eventually be ineligible results in wasted capacity on the part of the evaluators and bottlenecks the process for those entities that successfully meet criteria. To mitigate this moving forward, an eligibility quiz for GrantTank applicants will be instated as a pre-screening measure intended to disqualify entities who do not meet baseline eligibility requirements.

b) The evaluation team made an early commitment to call each candidate to notify them regarding their advancement to the final round or declination. Although this commitment was established to maintain an authentic and personal “touch” to the evaluation process with hopeful candidates, it became burdensome to the overall process when individuals were unavailable for calls, contact information changed, or the organization experienced turnover. In future GrantTanks, evaluators will send all announcements directly to the email account on record and require the primary contact be kept up-to-date throughout the application process.



NEXT STEPS

Our work together has only just begun! The Jensen Project team looks forward to collaborating with the GrantTank 2021 recipients to create a strategic impact in the anti-trafficking field. In essence, we believe that we are all stronger together and, collectively, better equipped to serve and support survivors nationwide. Each of our partnerships was established with the hope and expectation that all parties will strive to be thought leaders in this field, building, modeling, and sharing best practices with each other and those who seek their wisdom. We are committed to building capacity with the 2021 cohort and contributing our skillsets wherever needed as we seek creative ways to work together over the next two years.



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

THANK YOU

No one deserves to have their autonomy of choice removed. No one chooses a life of exploitation. As a community, we can and must continue to stand together and do our part to support survivors. We are grateful to every organization that made time to submit a grant application for this award cycle. We want you to know that we see the work you've done thus far and continue to do with sacrificial dedication. We are honored to know you, we value your expertise and the quality of your work and hope to find avenues for collaboration in the future.

If you read this report, you likely have a vested interest in eliminating human trafficking and other forms of sexual violence. Thank you for advocating with us, for investing your own time and capacity in this ongoing fight to create impact, and for committing yourself, as we have, to a continued learning experience regarding the gaps, challenges, and growth within the anti-trafficking space. We need a united front to make systemic and sustainable change and, looking back, it is always encouraging to see the collective impact made by so many dedicated and single-minded individuals over time.

As best practices are identified and evolve, we at The Jensen Project strive to accelerate the sharing of knowledge and experience so all can benefit from lessons learned. If you or your organization, foundation, or business can help support survivors financially or through in-kind donations, pro bono advocacy, victim services, scholarships, training, or mentoring, we encourage you to do so without hesitation. There are an innumerable number of trustworthy and credible organizations who would benefit from such support and countless survivors who desperately need it. The Jensen Project welcomes financial support and strategic partnerships that will advance our mission to build capacity and provide resources to nonprofits focused on sexual violence, sexual exploitation, and sex trafficking. We are dedicated to sustainable and measurable change at a community level.

If you are interested in learning more about the benefits of strategic partnerships through The Jensen Project or would like to support any of our current and future initiatives, please visit our website (thejensenproject.org) or contact us directly (compassion@thejensenproject.org) and one of our team members will respond promptly.

The Jensen Project does not provide funding to any organization or individual on an ad-hoc petition basis. All current and future funding opportunities will be made public through national press releases, peer-to-peer networks, and through our coordinated network of professionals. If you would like to be notified regarding future grant opportunities, we invite you to sign up for the newsletter by visiting our website (thejensenproject.org).



GRANTTANK 2021 INSIGHTS REPORT

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: REPORTING AND RESOURCES

REPORTING

If you believe that you or someone you know may be a victim of human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733 to make a report or request assistance.

To make a report to federal law enforcement regarding a suspected or confirmed case of human trafficking, call Homeland Security Investigations at 1-866-347-2423.

To make a report of suspected or confirmed child abuse, call your state's child abuse hotline or visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway website (childwelfare.gov) for additional resources and assistance.

To make a report regarding child sexual abuse material, child pornography, child sexual exploitation, online predators or online enticement, unsolicited sexual material sent to a child, or child sex trafficking, call the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (1-800-THE-LOST) or visit their website (cybertipline.org).

To make a report involving persons that you suspect are being exploited through labor or work situations in the United States, call the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division at 1-866-487-9243 or visit their website (www.dol.gov/agencies/whd).

RESOURCES

To locate social and legal services for victims and survivors of human trafficking, and connect with training and volunteer opportunities across the U.S. and its territories, visit the online Referral Directory hosted by the National Human Trafficking Hotline (<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/training-resources/referral-directory>). This online Referral Directory was designed by Polaris to support the growing needs of agencies nationwide and is made up of anti-trafficking organizations and programs that offer emergency, transitional, or long-term services to victims and survivors of human trafficking as well as those that provide resources and opportunities in the anti-trafficking field.

