

# Social Enterprise Crisis Response Fund

Our current crisis has made visible both the challenges and strengths of our global and national systems and illustrates our profound economic interdependence.

Given the critical and timely need for emergency relief funding for social enterprises impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, **RSF has developed a program to provide rapid response support to our borrowers.** Throughout this crisis we have been in close contact with all our entrepreneurs to find out how they are affected and how we can support them through this challenging time. Many of them are providing mission-critical services and goods to their respective communities and cannot continue to operate effectively without immediate resources to offset the losses caused by the coronavirus and attendant economic consequences.

After assessing the needs of each of the social enterprises in our community, RSF is providing loan payment relief and/or small grants. This loan relief includes deferred payments and interest-only payments for a period of time. The grants can be used for general operating needs or to cover a specific need related to the COVID-19 crisis. We are currently providing support to dozens of social enterprises serving diverse populations and plan to support many more in the coming weeks and months.

The Crisis Response Fund provides support to social enterprises working in the following areas:

- **Sustainable Food and Agriculture**
- **Arts and Education**
- **Climate and the Environment**
- **Economic Justice**

Our goal is to raise \$3 million for the Crisis Response Fund, which would enable us to support all RSF borrowers facing serious challenges due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Our interconnectedness and the importance of community are apparent now more than ever. And more than ever, we are committed to creating a more just, regenerative, and compassionate world with all of you.

**For more information, please contact:**

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## Social Enterprises



### The Runway Project | [therunwayproject.org](http://therunwayproject.org)

A nonprofit working in Oakland, CA and Boston, MA, The Runway Project (TRP) addresses the ‘friends-and-family’ funding gap for African American entrepreneurs by providing loans, culturally relevant technical support, and a community of mentors.

Because TRP works with small business owners, these enterprises are experiencing a significant loss of revenue during the COVID-19 crisis. In addition to loss of business revenue and personal income, entrepreneurs are also experiencing negative economic effects due to the shelter-in-place restrictions – resulting in loss of childcare, schools, and support; upheaval in entrepreneurs’ housing stability; and severe anxiety and stress on borrowers and their families.



### Geos Institute | [geosinstitute.org](http://geosinstitute.org)

The Geos Institute is an Oregon-based nonprofit that uses science to help people predict, reduce, and prepare for climate change. Through its three main initiatives: ClimateWise, Forest Legacies, and Working Waters, the Geos Institute team develops solutions that are science-based, effective, and equitable.

The largest financial impact of the COVID-19 crisis at Geos has been in the loss of projects in the ClimateWise program, which helps local governments adapt to changing climate conditions and address greenhouse gas emissions. Because local governments are on the front lines of emergency response in the pandemic, these community projects have been put on hold, resulting in a dramatic loss of income.

### Ceres Community Project | [ceresproject.org](http://ceresproject.org)

The Ceres Community Project is a nonprofit that provides low-income people with serious health challenges in Marin and Sonoma counties (CA) with free and low-cost, home-delivered, nourishing organic meals. Under the care of Ceres’ expert mentors, these meals are prepared by teens, who have the opportunity to learn to cook and eat for health, gain skills, develop leadership, become change-makers in their community, and discover the joy of giving back.

Ceres is navigating how to preserve these impactful programs, but also how to expand to meet the increased need caused by the COVID-19 crisis by providing meals to high-risk populations sheltering in place. At the same time, the important volunteer community that helps to do this work, has decreased by 60% and they have lost income due to the lack of classes and catering.