



## COVID-19 PREVENTION & RESPONSE FUND

# Asian Americans United

**Location:** Chinatown, Philadelphia  
**Org Focus:** Pan-Asian immigrant services  
**Grant Funding:** COVID education & vaccine clinics  
**Website:** [aaunited.org](https://aaunited.org)

Awareness about COVID began earlier for our community because of connections to family and friends in Asia. As early as January 2020, Chinatown businesses were going into crisis; there was fear rising and misinformation forming. Parents pulled children from our after-school programs much earlier. The prior administration was targeting Asian and Chinese communities as the origin of the virus, and we were seeing a rise in anti-Asian violence.

At the very beginning, a lot of what we were trying to do was give information. Language access has been a constant struggle. It's not something you can win a campaign or create a policy; it requires ongoing monitoring and implementing. You see the effects of it when a crisis hits. We saw it in schools, with families misunderstanding what was happening with online learning. When restaurants closed, workers who didn't know the language lagged weeks or months behind in applying for unemployment. When factory workers got sick, they couldn't go home, but they couldn't communicate well enough to connect with city resources. The most vulnerable in our communities were exponentially more vulnerable in these situations.

The things AAU was founded around — immigrant rights, language access, public education, strengthening communities by honoring culture and traditions — all of those continued through the pandemic. But every few months we needed to change the tactics we're using. Initially, we gave out PPE. We moved all youth programs online. We distributed funding to undocumented folks who couldn't receive government assistance. During the election season we did extra texting and phone banking. We brought on former youth participants with language skills to help communicate and started a new youth leadership development program. In 2021, we shifted very quickly to vaccination, collaborating with other immigration services organizations to create a safe space and address language access.

We move with our communities. Our communities aren't separate from us; they're our families, the young people we work with in school every day. If it's your community, you can't step away from what's impacting it.

*Alix Webb, Executive Director*

**This project to increase vaccine education & access was funded by the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund, a community-led effort to invest in neighborhood-based solutions to urgent needs. More than \$1.2 million has been distributed to 133 nonprofits, small businesses & individuals. Learn more at [philanthropynetwork.org](https://philanthropynetwork.org).**

# About the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund

Launched in April 2021, the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund is a community-led effort to invest in neighborhood-based solutions to urgent needs related to COVID-19. The Fund seeks to increase rates of vaccinations in communities that are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and to address the challenges exacerbated as a result of the pandemic.

The Fund uses a participatory, trust-based philanthropy approach to lower barriers to entry for groups that are often excluded from traditional grant opportunities. To ensure the funding process was inclusive and accessible to smaller organizations and informal groups, Community Investment Advisors made recommendations on how to establish the Fund's priorities, eligibility, grant process, and funding allocations. This group comprises people living and working in the community, representing Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. Beyond grant dollars, the City of Philadelphia's Philly Counts office cultivates a community of practice for grantees, providing ongoing information, training, and logistical support.

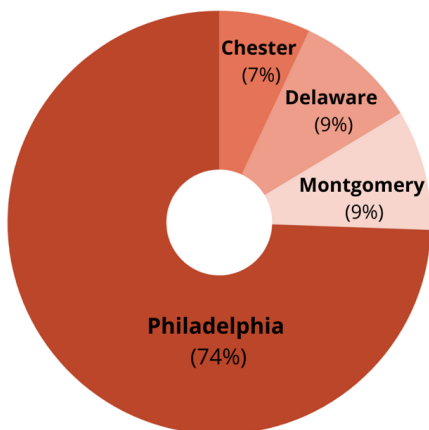
Oversight and management for the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund is coordinated by Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia.

Across three rounds, the Fund has distributed **\$1,204,535** in funding to **133** organizations in the greater Philadelphia area.

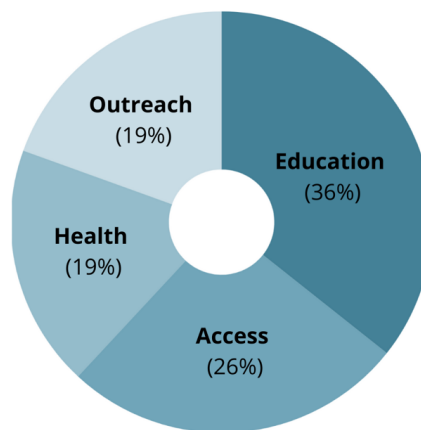
**76%** to organizations with a leader of color

**\$550K** to organizations with >90% BIPOC staff

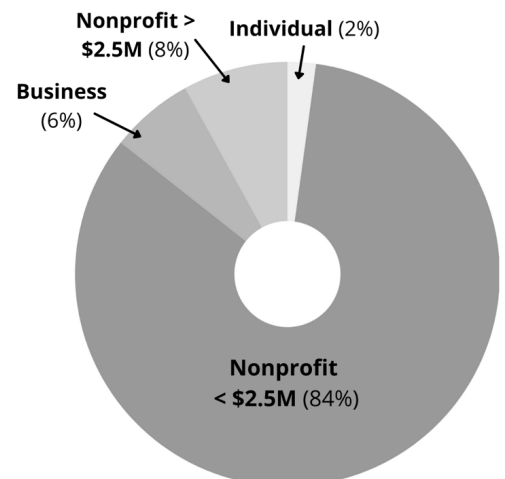
**\$560K** to organizations with >90% community-based staff



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