

# COVID-19 Impacts on Women of Color Owned Small Businesses



Artwork by Alexandra Bowman

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on small businesses all over the U.S. and while some research exists about the impact of COVID-19 on businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, much less has been said about the specific impact on Women of Color (WOC) owned businesses.

Given the importance of small businesses to the national and state economy, the sharp decrease of women from the workforce caused by the pandemic, and the growing racial and ethnic diversity within the state of Oregon, it is essential to understand how WOC business have been impacted.

The Institute for Policy Research and Engagement (IPRE) at the University of Oregon (UO) received CARES Act funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center to to engage in applied research to address specific challenges, meet specific needs, or solve specific problems resulting from the economic impacts of the COVID-19.

Our team at IPRE is proposing to collect information on the experiences of Women of Color owned businesses through focus groups and interviews with women across the state to inform a report detailing policy recommendations. IPRE will be partnering with business leaders and community-organizations to facilitate and coordinate focus groups that are regionally focused. Members of the IPRE research team will engage additional Women of Color Business owners, particularly in rural areas, through interviews.

For more information, please contact our faculty Project Manager, Melissa Graciosa, at [mgracios@uoregon.edu](mailto:mgracios@uoregon.edu)

## Deliverables and Expected Outcomes

3+ Focus groups

20+ Interviews with  
business owners across  
the state

2+ partnerships with focus  
group facilitators from  
external organizations

1 full term of tuition  
funded for a graduate-  
level student

1+ student intern funded

A policy white paper  
amplifying the  
experiences of Women of  
Color business owners

Convening space for  
Women of Color business  
owners to network and  
connect



UNIVERSITY OF  
OREGON

Institute for Policy  
Research and Engagement