



## UNCONDITIONAL CASH FOR MOTHERS AND INFANTS

### The Bridge Project Expands to Appalachia

Launched in 2021, The Bridge Project provides mothers and their babies with regular, unconditional cash assistance. By investing directly and flexibly in early childhood, the program aims to break the cycle of stress and poverty passed down through generations, and enhance socioeconomic mobility of families.

Our goal is to build a foundation for prosperity that transcends generations. Through trust, cash and community, the Bridge Project supports over 1,800 mothers across New York, Wisconsin, and Connecticut in tackling child poverty. With our expansion to the Appalachian region, we will support an additional 500 mothers and babies across Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia.

### We Believe in Economic Empowerment

Putting money directly in the hands of mothers empowers women to make decisions about their finances and the wellbeing of their babies.

Support during the first 1,000 days of life can allow an entire generation to separate from the toxic stresses of poverty, break intergenerational cycles, and provide the environment for children to grow into healthy adults — physically, financially, and mentally.

Leading economists agree that early interventions have the highest return on investment (Heckman Curve).

**Our brains are 25% grown at birth**

**Our brains are 50% grown by age 1**

**Our brains are 80% grown by age 3**

### NO BABY SHOULD BE BORN INTO POVERTY



20% of children live in poverty in Appalachia



The infant mortality rate in Appalachia is 16% higher than the national average



1 in 6 Appalachian children are food insecure

### We Believe in the Power of Simple Solutions

Direct cash is a highly scalable solution that can be rolled out to large populations immediately. It minimizes interference and maximizes impact. It empowers participants to make their own choices for their families.

Cash is simple, flexible and empowering. Unrestricted cash assistance recognizes mothers' right to make their own financial decisions. Additionally, cash allows mothers the freedom to spend on essentials like food, rent, or childcare without restrictions. This approach challenges the stigma that marginalized groups can't manage their finances, promoting autonomy and dignity by trusting them to know what's best for their families.



**90% of participants reported improvements in their mental health and stress levels after receiving just one payment.**



**There was a 242% increase in participants having more than \$500 in savings after just 6 months in the program.**



**Mothers reported less chaos and more harmony in their households (clinical scales used).**



## THE BRIDGE PROJECT IN ACTION

The Bridge Project will provide 500 eligible low-income, pregnant individuals with unconditional cash – no strings attached. The cash can be spent on anything – food, formula, rent, childcare, diapers – truly, whatever the mother decides. The program duration is three years, with first payments beginning in April 2025.

### PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE:

**\$1,125** one-time, upfront prenatal stipend

**\$750** per month for the first 15 months of program participation

**\$375** per month for the remaining 21 months of program participation

### Appalachia will be on the cutting edge of research and evaluation

As part of our expansion to the Appalachian region, The Bridge Project is launching a first-of-its-kind research study to better understand the impacts of direct cash on maternal and infant health, nutrition, housing security, and other areas. In addition to the 500 Appalachian residents onboarded into the “high cash” participant group (the participants referenced elsewhere in this document), an additional 750 residents will be onboarded into a “low cash” participant group where they will receive compensation for completing research surveys and interviews.

## HOW DO MOTHERS APPLY?

Applications are available online beginning January 8, 2025. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis for eligibility and eligible program participants are selected by lottery. Applications will remain open until all program slots have been filled.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA INCLUDES:

- ▶ Live in the ARC-designated Counties within the States of Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia. All of West Virginia is considered within the Appalachian region
- ▶ Be 18 years or older
- ▶ Be 14 weeks pregnant or less
- ▶ Have an annual household income of less than \$44,000
- ▶ No SSN or ITIN required!



\*Map above is for demonstration purposes only. Please refer to [ARC's website](#) for the full list of eligible counties in Kentucky and Ohio

**APPLICATION LINK LIVE ON JANUARY 8th HERE:** [www.bridgeproject.org/apply](http://www.bridgeproject.org/apply)



### IMPORTANT DATES

**JANUARY 8**  
Online Program Applications Open

**APRIL 1**  
First Payment Disbursements

Learn more by visiting [www.bridgeproject.org](http://www.bridgeproject.org) or contact us at [info@bridgeproject.org](mailto:info@bridgeproject.org)