

THE BRIDGE PROJECT

The Bridge Project is scaling the idea of a guaranteed income as an innovative, simple, and empowering solution to poverty and inequality, starting with mothers and babies in New York City.



The Bridge Project is New York City's first guaranteed income program. Launched in June 2021 by The Monarch Foundation, The Bridge Project is designed to support low-income mothers in New York City during the first 1,000 days of their children's lives by providing them with consistent, unconditional cash on a biweekly basis.

The first phase of The Bridge Project provides either \$250 or \$500 every two weeks to 100 low-income, primarily BIPOC mothers living in Washington Heights, Inwood, and Central Harlem. The program will be dramatically expanded in early 2022 to include a cohort of 500 additional pregnant mothers across the project's existing neighborhoods, along with East Harlem, Central Bronx, and South Bronx. The Bridge Project aims to eliminate the deeply paternalistic approach the U.S. takes to poverty and the social and racial inequities present in our society, empower those who have been repeatedly torn down by a system that doesn't trust, and start a nationwide conversation and movement.



WHY BABIES?

In one of the richest cities in the world, nearly one in four children under the age of 3 live in poverty. That rate is about ten percentage points above the national childhood poverty rate, and the numbers are even worse for Black and Hispanic children.

49%

Nearly half of New York City's kids live in lower-opportunity neighborhoods with poverty rates of at least 20 percent

38%

More than a third of young children live in families who could not afford one or more basic necessities

60%

of New York City's babies and young children ages zero to three were within 200% of the poverty line

An investment in mothers with young babies has the potential to allow a whole generation to separate from the toxic stresses of poverty during a crucial period of emotional and mental development, break intergenerational cycles, and grow into happy, healthy adults.

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WHY CASH?

It's easy, and it's intuitive. Poverty by definition is a lack of cash — low-income families lack flexible cash, live paycheck to paycheck, and are unable to save and generate wealth.

It's flexible. We get the biggest bang for our buck, and mothers do too. The cash we put in the hands of mothers can be spent on food and formula, rent or car repairs, childcare or diapers — we really don't care and neither should you. No one tells us how to spend our money, and all mothers deserve the same.

It's empowering. The existing web of government programs and public support can feel arbitrary and demeaning. Let's move away from the narrative that low-income families and women of color can't be trusted to make their own decisions, and start allowing them to choose what's best for their own, unique situations.



PHASE I DESIGN:

100	pregnant mothers or mothers with a baby under 1 year
\$500	for 50 mothers for 36 months
\$1,000	for 50 mothers for 36 months

PHASE II DESIGN:

500	pregnant mothers
\$1,000	for the first 18 months
\$500	for the last 18 months

TOTAL: \$16.2M

OUR PARTNERS



We know this will work, but for each phase, we are dedicating resources to gathering the numbers and stories to prove it. As we build out our Phase II, we will expand our partner base to additional grassroots organizations, continue to center the lived experiences and voices of the mothers in our program and in our communities, and engage in local and national advocacy around reforming our social safety net programs for our families.

LET'S CREATE A BRIDGE TO A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.