



just

Introduction

The ideals of our country are about the freedom to create a better future. If you have ambition, perseverance, and a strong work ethic you can achieve your dreams. Right?

Unfortunately, the reality is that hundreds of thousands of women in Texas have all these qualities and more, but still struggle to make ends meet and support their families. This is largely because they do not qualify for a simple loan - one that would help them start a small business or buy a home. In short, they cannot establish credit or build wealth, and they are stuck in a generational cycle of poverty.

JUST is raising funds to invest in underestimated communities to be their own change agents. Launched in January 2016, JUST developed an innovation on the Nobel Peace Prize-winning approach to microcredit through a client-centric leadership program (the JETA Program).

Instead of being a financial institution serving the community, this program would allow us to be one that is both led and owned by our clients. We are a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that makes business loans across the state of **Texas based on trust, not a credit score.**

This model works - we have lent

\$21M



and maintain a **99%**

repayment rate

With 2,200 women entrepreneurs currently benefiting from JUST, we prioritize scalability and sustainability, driven by our belief that if our programs effectively serve low-income communities, it's our responsibility to extend our reach as much as possible. With this commitment, we seek partners to support JUST's growth in our current markets as we build our plan to expand Texas-wide.



This case for support addresses the problem, our approach to change, our impact, and plans for growth.

Vision for a JUST Texas - and a model for the nation

In 2023
75% of Texans in poverty are
ARE HISPANIC OR BLACK.



Despite Texas ranking **#2** in minority entrepreneurs, **their loans are denied 3x** more than white-owned businesses,



Black-owned businesses secure only 1% of bank loans in their first year. Arguably the most insidious barrier is the trust gap between minority business owners and financial institutions. This barrier, highlighted by the Tapestry Project, remains unaddressed in most models. JUST prioritizes bridging this gap for more effective and inclusive economic solutions.

JUST is a nonprofit CDFI working to make generational wealth possible by investing in Hispanic and Black female entrepreneurs in Texas through capital, peer coaching, and community. Our higher purpose is to help people live with less stress and more joy.

To support our clients' dreams, we've crafted three signature programs:



1. **GROW:** Business Growth Journey focuses on business acceleration for larger bank loans



2. **JOY:** Financial Stability Journey enhances money awareness and savings confidence



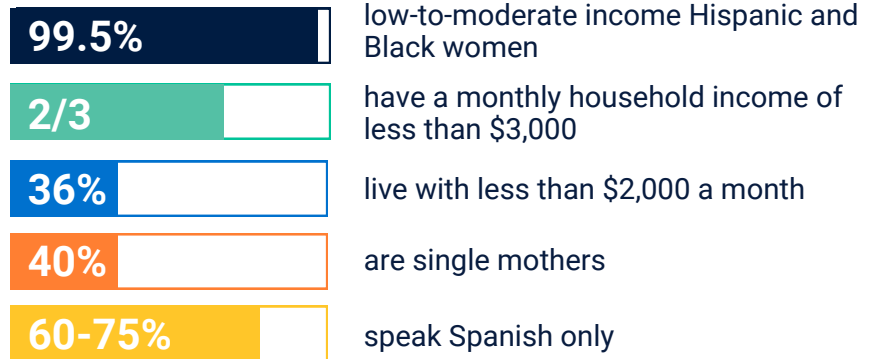
3. **WEALTH:** Wealth Journey aims to remove homeownership barriers, offer flexible income, and improve investing knowledge for eligible JETAs.

These journeys combine community support and financial tools to assist clients in meeting their families' essential needs, growing their businesses, and transitioning from being **beneficiaries of low-cost capital to owners of productive, wealth-creating assets.**



Who We Are

JUST is led by our clients



Many female entrepreneurs, and over 90% of JUST’s clients, have operated a business on an informal cash basis but have difficulty documenting its financial operations, making them unable to qualify for a business loan from a bank.

Systemic barriers such as credit scores and collateral further impede access to traditional financing options. Yet, ambition abounds. Many clients hold multiple jobs while maintaining their role as head of household. Having faced great challenges, JUST clients remain resilient and open to new ways of thinking, living, working, and thriving.

Now, more than ever, entrepreneurial women across Texas need realistic, long-term solutions to permanently break the cycle of poverty and achieve generational wealth.



What makes JUST *unique*?

Client-led:

Our innovation to global microfinance is our client-centric leadership program, known at JUST as the JETA program (JUST Entrepreneur Trust Agent). JETAs are clients who have graduated from our leadership program and subsequently launch their own business support groups with other entrepreneurs she trusts. Because of our relationship with the JETA, we lend based on her word, underwriting her entire group. Our JETA model, centered around client agency and trust, creates a decentralized network of entrepreneurs across the state, rooted in peer support.

512 
JETAs lead
 our distributed client network across 4 markets

Focused on peer support:

People closest to the problem are best suited to understand the need and deliver the solution. Focusing on the power of social proof becomes a catalyst for potential, inspiring clients to strive for their success as they witness the achievements of their peers. Being invited into a lending group is a way for entrepreneurs to hear that their work is seen, valued, and worth being invested in.

just 
 hosts more than **300** small business support groups weekly


Co-designed:

In addition to leading business support groups, **JETAs play a pivotal role in co-creating products and experiences.** Their unique position within the community, informed by lived experiences, ensures that JUST is grounded in the realities of the entrepreneurs we serve.

3 
personalized journeys
 developed with JUST clients

Tech-enabled:

Our trust-based, inclusive strategy provides unprecedented access to capital for individuals who have historically been structurally locked out of the formal financial system. This unprecedented access is coupled with our **fully digitized loan system allowing JUST to minimize administrative burden, disburse, and collect capital efficiently while we focus on relationships.**

In 2022, 
JUST lent 195% more capital than our cdfi peers and disbursed **292%** more loans.



How We Do It: Capital, Coaching & Community

Our model is built around the idea that investing capital, coaching, and community in ambitious women will help close the racial wealth gap.

We deliver these interventions through distinct journeys that enable ongoing growth.

Capital



JUST offers diverse financial products to boost income, enhance credit scores, and build assets. Clients find a capital solution that works best for their individual needs, and they can choose a new solution as their assets grow:

- **Small Dollar Loans:** Tailored for starting or expanding small businesses, these loans range from \$750 to \$10,000, with repayment over 26 weeks.
- **Growth Loans:** Available up to \$30,000 for clients with filed business taxes and formal registration, accompanied by additional business support services.
- **Personal Loans:** Ranging from \$500 to \$1,000, these loans help cover personal expenses, providing a payday lending alternative that improves both credit and financial health.
- **Investments:** Eligible clients receive principal allocations from JUST's balance sheet into shared ownership products from high-yield savings to real estate (including their own homes).

Coaching



Rooted in the leadership of our JETAs, hundreds of business support groups meet weekly and encourage consistent goal setting, experience sharing, and mutual support to overcome personal and entrepreneurial challenges. **This approach fosters a caring and compassionate lending environment that can scale**, focusing on small groups of near peers where social proof catalyzes potential.

Community




We nurture social capital by facilitating small group meetings, online forums, and statewide events, fostering camaraderie and support for clients, particularly those facing isolation. This cultivates strong repayment habits and a thriving entrepreneurial community.



Impact


JUST utilizes a data-driven approach to continuously enhance its programs, combining qualitative and quantitative research to identify effective strategies and refine interventions. With data partners, we've analyzed extensive inputs to develop a predictive algorithm for identifying delinquency risks. We complemented this research with qualitative key findings:

Network Effect:



On average, each **JETA** brings **5** peers into our programs.

JETA Effect:



While 99% of all clients repay JUST loans, a client with a strong **JETA** is **20%** more likely to pay on time.

just recently partnered with third-party impact firm 60 Decibels, to better understand our impact on clients' lives. The results provided strong validation for our model.



96

Net Promoter Score on a scale from -100 to 100. The highest recorded of over 600 global organizations.



97%

are flourishing according to the Harvard Flourishing Index.



71%

affirm that the financial, educational, and peer support from JUST contributes to them becoming better employers and leaders.

The greatest representation of our impact is our clients. See the stories of our JETAs here: **Selina, Dalonika, Isa.**



[Selina](#)



[Dalonika](#)



[Isa](#)



Building a Repeatable Playbook for Good Growth

Our vision is a just Texas which means a product-led pathway to prosperity for our clients. It also means that JUST is approaching financial self-sufficiency through earned revenue. Our strategy is to use the JETA to build a more efficient and impactful model of investing in female entrepreneurs that accelerates wealth creation by leveraging relationships and JUST's balance sheet. This strategy is made up of **three key priorities**:

1

Expansion: Shifting from Paid to Organic Growth

JUST aims to improve our operations in existing markets using data-driven strategies learned in 2023, focusing on retaining clients and reducing inactive ones to below 10%. **Expansion plans will be influenced by philanthropic funding and market demand.** Testing Wealth Club initiatives will set the stage for future growth.

2

Wealth: Continuum to Ownership

Wealth comes from ownership, so our three-year plan focuses on helping clients achieve financial stability and build wealth through ownership. We are developing a Wealth journey with investment options tailored to our clients' needs. **This year we're expanding the wealth club across Austin and piloting a home investment product with specific clients.**

3

Sustainability: Value-led, Earned Revenue

Sustainability is crucial. We'll introduce new revenue streams and balance expenses with growth. **Our priorities include larger business loans, alternative investments, and more Wealth Club revenues.** By 2026, we aim to achieve market self-sufficiency through careful financial management and innovative revenue models.



Leadership

JUST's leadership team brings decades of experience in launching, scaling, and operationalizing non-profit and for-profit enterprises. JUST's CEO and founder, Steve Wanta, brings more than 16 years of experience in supporting microentrepreneurs, the first 10 with the Whole Planet Foundation where he was responsible for overseeing the Foundation's global portfolio of over \$70MM.

Fundamentally, we understand that individuals must be able to see themselves in a community and its leadership in order to feel comfortable joining it. **To that end 90% of our operations staff are entrepreneurs, 75% are previous clients, 80% of staff are female and 87% are BIPOC.**

Conclusion

A just society only occurs when everyone stands on fair footing. JUST has proven that trust can drive successful lending and the financial stability and independence that follows transform lives.

We need your partnership to close the racial wealth gap creating a **just Texas** and modeling a way forward for the nation.



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