



## Ascend and NuProject Launch ROOTS Program to Prepare Cannabis Businesses for Corporate Supply Chains

April 7, 2026

*Applications open now through May 11, 2026*

NEW YORK, April 7, 2026 /PRNewswire/ - [Ascend Wellness Holdings, Inc.](#) ("AWH," "Ascend," or the "Company") (CSE: AAWH.U) (OTCQX: AAWH), a multi-state, vertically integrated cannabis operator, today announced a partnership with [NuProject](#) to launch ROOTS — Readying Opportunities for Operational & Trade Sustainability — a new business readiness program designed to support small businesses within the cannabis industry.



ROOTS provides targeted support and practical tools to licensed cannabis operators and ancillary companies in Massachusetts and New Jersey. The program aims to help businesses improve financial processes and systems, strengthen leadership practices, and prepare for enterprise procurement opportunities within competitive cannabis markets. Applications for this cohort are open now through Monday, May 11.

"Sponsoring ROOTS is the continuation of Ascend CO-LAB's commitment to creating a stronger and more equitable cannabis industry. We are looking to deepen our impact and build on our partnerships. Creating strong relationships between large and small businesses is the way our industry thrives," said Danielle Drummond, Ascend VP Social Equity.

The six-month cohort launches in May and provides coaching, technical assistance, and structured training designed to strengthen operational and financial readiness. Participants will have access to mentors, a self-paced curriculum, and subject matter experts who will provide valuable finance and accounting services to improve cash flow and financial mastery crucial for business stability. The program concludes with an opportunity for participants to present their businesses and growth strategies to potential buyers and partners connected to Ascend's supply chain network.

"Securing procurement contracts with large customers is an important growth and stability goal for burgeoning companies, but one that can be challenging without connections to decision-makers or knowledge of necessary requirements. NuProject helps founders land their 'big fish' clients, and we are thrilled to have a partnership with Ascend that provides the resources to build up a cohort of founders with the skills and preparation needed to be successfully positioned for growth," added Jeannette Ward, CEO of NuProject.

This work builds on Ascend's social equity efforts, which center those most affected by the war on drugs and prioritize collective growth, community investment, and economic opportunity. To date, Ascend has conducted over 60 expungement clinics nationally, donated close to \$2 million to grassroots organizations, and supported over 150 social equity, Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) businesses.

ROOTS builds on NuProject's work supporting cannabis entrepreneurs through capital access and business coaching, including more than 5,000 hours of coaching and \$4.9 million deployed through mission-based lending.

More information and the application are available at: [www.nuproject.org/roots](http://www.nuproject.org/roots)

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is also available on the application page.

### ***About NuProject***

Founded as a non-profit in 2018, NuProject invests in historically excluded cannabis entrepreneurs through low-interest loans and grants, hands-on coaching, and funding-ready technical assistance. With \$4.9M funded through mission-based lending and 5,000+ coaching hours delivered, NuProject is addressing critical equity gaps for historically-excluded entrepreneurs.

### ***About Ascend Wellness Holdings, Inc.***

Ascend is a vertically integrated cannabis operator with assets in Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Ascend owns and operates state-of-the-art cultivation facilities, growing award-winning strains and producing a curated selection of products for retail and wholesale customers. Ascend produces and distributes its in-house Ozone, Simply Herb, High Wired, Honor Roll, Royale, and Effin' branded products. For more information about AWH, visit [www.awholdings.com](http://www.awholdings.com).

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