



**District of Columbia
Department of Small and Local Business Development
FY 2023 CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant
Request for Applications (RFA)**

Open August 14, 2023, through August 25, 2023, at 2:00 pm Eastern Time

The District of Columbia (DC or District) Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD or Department) is excited to announce in this Request for Applications (RFA) that applications will be accepted for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant program, starting August 14, 2023.

The program's grants are only for DSLBD Certified Business Enterprises (CBEs) who are also deemed Equity Impact Enterprises (EIEs). CBE EIEs that apply and meet all eligibility requirements by the final deadline, August 25, 2023, by 2:00 PM Eastern Time, will be placed in a lottery for a program grant. Businesses that received a CBE Green Equitable Back Office and Marketing Services Grant award in FY 2023 are not eligible to apply.

The grant funds will be a reimbursement to awardees for eligible expenses incurred to maintain business operations and viability while in pursuit of contracting opportunities with the DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) company and or similar sustainable industry companies between October 1, 2022, through August 25, 2023. DSLBD intends to award \$4,900 each to approximately ten (10) businesses from the total \$50,000 in available program funding for FY 2023.

How to use this document to guide your application process:

This Request for Applications (RFA) is the full set of instructions for applicants to understand how to complete the application. **Before beginning an application, all applicants are encouraged to read this entire document, which** is divided in the following important

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sections:

1. **Objective**—What DSLBD seeks to accomplish with this grant program.
2. **Online Application Deadline**—Where online and when eligible businesses must apply.
3. **Eligibility & Checklist** —What businesses are eligible to apply.
4. **Date Restrictions on Expenditures for Reimbursement**
5. **Allowed and Disallowed Expenditures for Reimbursement**
6. **Selection Process**
7. **Award Information**—What happens if you are awarded a grant.
8. **Important Legal Disclaimers**—Additional DSLBD legal reservations.
9. **Appendix A**—Eligible business types.

Look for CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant information sessions at <https://dslbd.eventbrite.com>. Outside of an information session, **send all questions in writing to Business.Opportunities@dc.gov**. *No phone calls will be accepted.*



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1. Objective

In partnership with DC's Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE), DSLBD's objective with the CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant Program is to support CBE expansion in the green and sustainable energy and buildings market for CBEs pursuing contracting opportunities with DCSEU and other similar companies.

2. Online Application & Deadline

Online Application

All applicants must apply online at <https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/CBEGreenLottery>. *If an applicant is typing in this address, it must exactly match this address, including the exact lower case and capitalized letters. To start your application, you must create a ZoomGrants account by logging in at ZoomGrants.com or the link above.*

Only complete applications submitted by eligible CBE EIEs through the ZoomGrants portal, an online grant application system used by DSLBD, will be accepted and entered into the lottery. No application materials will be accepted outside of the application system or after the grant application deadline.

It is recommended that applicants submit their applications through ZoomGrants at least 24-48 hours before the final deadline to ensure that any technical difficulties, if they arise, are resolved.

ZoomGrants, Inc. is a third-party provider that offers customer assistance for login issues, issues with saving your application, and other IT related issues for your application. ZoomGrants provides technical support Monday – Friday from 10am-7pm eastern time. Reach out to ZoomGrants at any time during the application period if you have technical difficulties by emailing Questions@ZoomGrants.com.

Important Deadlines:

- The last date to ask DSLBD questions about the application or grant is August 24, 2023, 2:00 pm Eastern Time.
- The application submission final deadline is August 25, 2023, at 2:00 pm Eastern Time. No exceptions.

DSLBD will not accept late applications for any reason.

Notifications to selected applicants are anticipated to be sent by email on or around September 1, 2023.

3. Eligibility & Checklist

Only CBEs compliant with applicable District laws are eligible to apply for a CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant. Applicants must be the business owner(s) or authorized representative of the CBE. *Third party support may be added to the application but cannot apply on behalf of a CBE.* Required documentation must demonstrate:

- Active CBE status
- Active Business Licensure
- Compliance with DC Tax and Licensing Laws

Failure to demonstrate eligibility

Applications from applicants who do not meet eligibility requirements will not be placed in the lottery for a grant. All documents and attestations showing eligibility must be submitted through the online ZoomGrants application system. False attestations can result in grant forfeiture and other penalties as appropriate.

Applicants interested in applying for a CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant MUST submit the required Eligibility Documents and Attestations outlined below.

Required Documents and Attestations for Eligibility Checklist

Eligibility Documentation Checklist	
Required Items	Description
1. Active CBE Certification Number	The number must be for the applicant business and should be the same number listed on the DSLBD website at https://dslbd.secure.force.com/public/ .
2. Active Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP) Business License Number	Must be searchable in the DLCP Business License Look Up (https://scout.dcra.dc.gov) or uploaded to provide proof of alternative licensure if DLCP licensing is not required for business type.
3. Office of Tax & Revenue (OTR) Compliant “Clean Hands” Document issued April 1, 2023, or later	Applicants can check their Clean Hands status and generate a notice of compliance (if compliant) for free at https://otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/certificate-clean-hands .
4. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Employment Identification Number (EIN)	Available for free at IRS.gov
5. IRS W-9 2018 form or later	Available at https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf

Attestation Checklist	
Required Items	Description
1. Not a 2023 Awardee	Attest that the business <u>did not</u> receive a 2023 CBE Green Equitable Back Office and Marketing Services Grant
2. Business Operation	Attest that the business is open and operating. <i>(Businesses that are not open AND operating are not eligible.)</i>
3. Equity Impact Enterprise	Attest that the CBE is deemed an Equity Impact Enterprise (EIE)

4. Contracting Opportunities	Attest the business has actively sought and continues to pursue contracting opportunities with DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) and other similar companies or entities
5. Applicant is owner or authorized representative	Attest that the applicant is the business owner or an authorized representative applying with full knowledge of the business owner. (The business owner, if awarded, must provide proof of ownership and knowledge of grant application prior to signing the grant agreement.)
6. Qualified, Reimbursable Expenses	Attest that the business will be able to provide full receipts and documentation of \$4,900 of qualified business expenditures, within one week of award acceptance, with bona fide receipts that the expenditures were made between October 1, 2022 and August 25, 2023
7. No Double Dipping	Attest that the business has not been reimbursed for these receipts by another DC Government or other business grant, and if awarded will not request reimbursement for these same expenses from another grant source.
8. Accountability	Attest that the business has completed all reporting requirements for DSLBD and DC Government grants previously received and closed in the last 2 years. (Failure to complete reporting for previous DSLBD direct to small business grant rounds will result in disqualification from this grant round.)
9. Can Receive Electronic Funds	Attest that the business has a business bank account that can receive electronic funds transfer if awarded the grant

10. Full Accuracy	Attest that all information provided in the application is true and accurate. Failure to honestly and accurately represent the factual truth in the attestations may result in being disqualified, forfeiture of an awarded grant, or greater penalties as applicable.
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The above checklist covers ALL the required documentation used to determine an applicant’s eligibility. **Applications that fail to provide complete and verifiable documents, information, and attestations will not be entered into the lottery.**

4. Date Restrictions on Expenditures for Reimbursement

All business expenses reimbursed by the CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant must have occurred between October 1, 2022 through August 25, 2023. All receipts must be dated between this period to be considered for reimbursement with the grant funds.

5. Allowed and Disallowed Expenditures for Reimbursement

The CBE Green Business Support Lottery Grant program has allowed uses and disallowed uses of grant funds.

Allowed Uses

DSLBD will allow the use of grant funds for the reimbursement of the business’ expenses that cover the following:

1. Employee Wages and Salaries
2. Insurance
3. Rent
4. Utilities
5. Inventory
6. Online Costs
7. Taxes, Debt Service

DSLBD will consider allowing other cost categories proposed by a business, except for disallowed uses, and will decide in DSLBD’s sole discretion.

Disallowed Uses

DSLBD will not allow the use of the grant funds for reimbursing disallowed costs which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Expenses incurred before October 1, 2022 or after August 25, 2023.
2. Expenses that are reimbursed by a different grant from the District of Columbia Government.
3. Assistance to bring legal charges against or to lobby or influence the District of Columbia Government.
4. Any undocumented expense.
5. Donations or charitable giving to non-profits organizations.
6. Vehicle purchase.
7. Real estate purchase.
8. Lobbying the District of Columbia government.
9. Lawsuits against the District of Columbia government.
10. Any activity, goods or products deemed illegal by the District of Columbia Government.
11. Any activity, goods or products deemed ineligible by DSLBD in its sole discretion.

6. Selection Process

Application Acceptance or Rejection

Following the closing of the application deadline, DSLBD will not accept any applications. DSLBD will disqualify submitted applications that do not comply with the instructions in this RFA. DSLBD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications if the Department determines it is in the best interest of the District of Columbia Government to do so. The Department will notify the applicant if it rejects an application for ineligibility. Rejected applicants may request a debrief by DSLBD of its ineligibility to enter the lottery pool by following the Grant Debrief and Grievance procedures found on DSLBD's website at <https://dslbd.dc.gov/grant-debrief-and-grievance-procedures-applicants>.

Selection Criteria and Review Process

DSLBD intends to select grant recipients through a lottery process. Eligible applications will be assigned a random number. The Department will use a random number generator to develop an ordered list of selected recipients. The Director of DSLBD will approve and announce the selected grant awardees.

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7. Award Information

Grant Award Notification

Grant notification announcements of selected awardees will be made on or around September 1, 2023. DSLBD will notify successful applicants of its selection decision **by email** and send a Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) to the selected awardees along with additional post- award instructions.

Selected grantees will need to complete reimbursement expenditure reporting for \$4,900 of qualified business expenses from October 1, 2022 – August 25, 2023 and sign a grant agreement with DSLBD. The Department anticipates signing grant agreements between DSLBD and the grantees between September 5, 2023 and September 14,2023.

Grant Award Acceptance

Applicants must accept the award within three (3) business days from the date of the NOGA and provide receipts within five (5) business days of acceptance.

If agreements are not executed within 10 business days from the date of the NOGA, for any reason, then the grant may be forfeited. The grant agreement will require additional documentation and reporting. This will include electronic fund transfer information (an ACH form) for the business bank account and final report about how the grant benefited the business.

Grantees are required to prepare a description of the impacts of the grant.

Expense Reporting Requirements

Applicants are required to submit proof of all expenses to be reimbursed within five (5) days of the NOGA. DSLBD will reconcile the receipt and expenditure documentation. If \$4,900 of allowable, reimbursable expenses cannot be reconciled from the provided documentation, the grant award may be reduced to the amount of allowed expenses documented.

Reimbursement Requirements

- Proof of expenditures may be submitted in the form of dated receipts, dated payroll documentation, or bank/credit card statements. (Non-responsive information, such as expenses for which the business is not requesting reimbursement, balances, overdue notices, or bank/credit card statements may

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be redacted by the grantee to protect the privacy of the business and is encouraged.)

- All uploaded receipts and documentation must be clearly legible.
- Receipts under \$500 must be batched into files of \$500 or more, with an included list of each receipt.
- All uploads must be accurately reflected in the budget chart.
- All expenses must be expenses for the business location applying for the grant.

Disbursement (Payment)

Terms of disbursement shall be determined after applicants are selected, but may include the collection of additional documentation, such as an ACH payment documentation. We anticipate grants will be disbursed in one lump sum to selected grantees. The District of Columbia Government pays all invoices within thirty (30) days of receipt of invoice. **This 30-day timeline starts after an executed grant agreement is in place and a recipient is fully registered to receive payment via the District of Columbia Government’s payment system or a selected third-party payment system, and the grantee successfully submits an invoice with all receipts and eligible proof of payment for the submitted expenditures to DSLBD.**

Modifications

Additional or modified information may be required as part of a final grant agreement. An awardee that cannot provide these and other requested materials by September 14, 2023, may be disqualified and DSLBD may award the grant to another eligible applicant that was in the lottery pool but not initially selected.

8. Important Legal Disclaimers

This section includes the following reservations made by DSLBD in releasing this RFA.

A. Contingent

Funding for this award is contingent on continued funding from the District. The RFA does not commit the Department to make an award.

B. Application Acceptance

Following the closing of the application deadline(s), DSLBD will not review applications that do not comply with all instructions in the RFA. DSLBD reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if the Department determines it is in

the best interest of the District to do so. The DSLBD may suspend or terminate an outstanding RFA pursuant to its own grant making authority or any applicable District or federal laws or regulations.

Applications must be made through the online ZoomGrants portal. DSLBD will not accept applications submitted via hand delivery, email, mail, or courier service. DSLBD will not review late submissions or incomplete applications.

C. Notice of Funding Availability

DSLBD published the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the DC Register on August 11, 2023. The NOFA is available at

D. Conflicts

In the event of a conflict between the terms and conditions of the grant application and any applicable District or federal law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control, and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

E. Costs of Applications

Neither DSLBD nor the District of Columbia Government shall be liable for any costs incurred by an applicant in the preparation of any grant applications. All costs incurred in developing and preparing any grant application shall be the applicant's sole responsibility.

F. Reservation of Rights

1. DSLBD reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of the NOFA or RFA, or to rescind the NOFA or RFA. DSLBD will post addenda or amendments in the online application. Applicants are responsible to review and adhere to any RFA addenda or amendments.
2. DSLBD may suspend or terminate an outstanding RFA pursuant to District or federal laws or regulations.
3. DSLBD may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in a grant application.

4. DSLBD serves as its own reference in evaluating applications. Grant decisions may reflect applicants' performance in managing previous grants.

5. DSLBD may enter into negotiations with an awardee and adopt a firm funding amount or other revision of the awardee's proposal that may result from the negotiation.