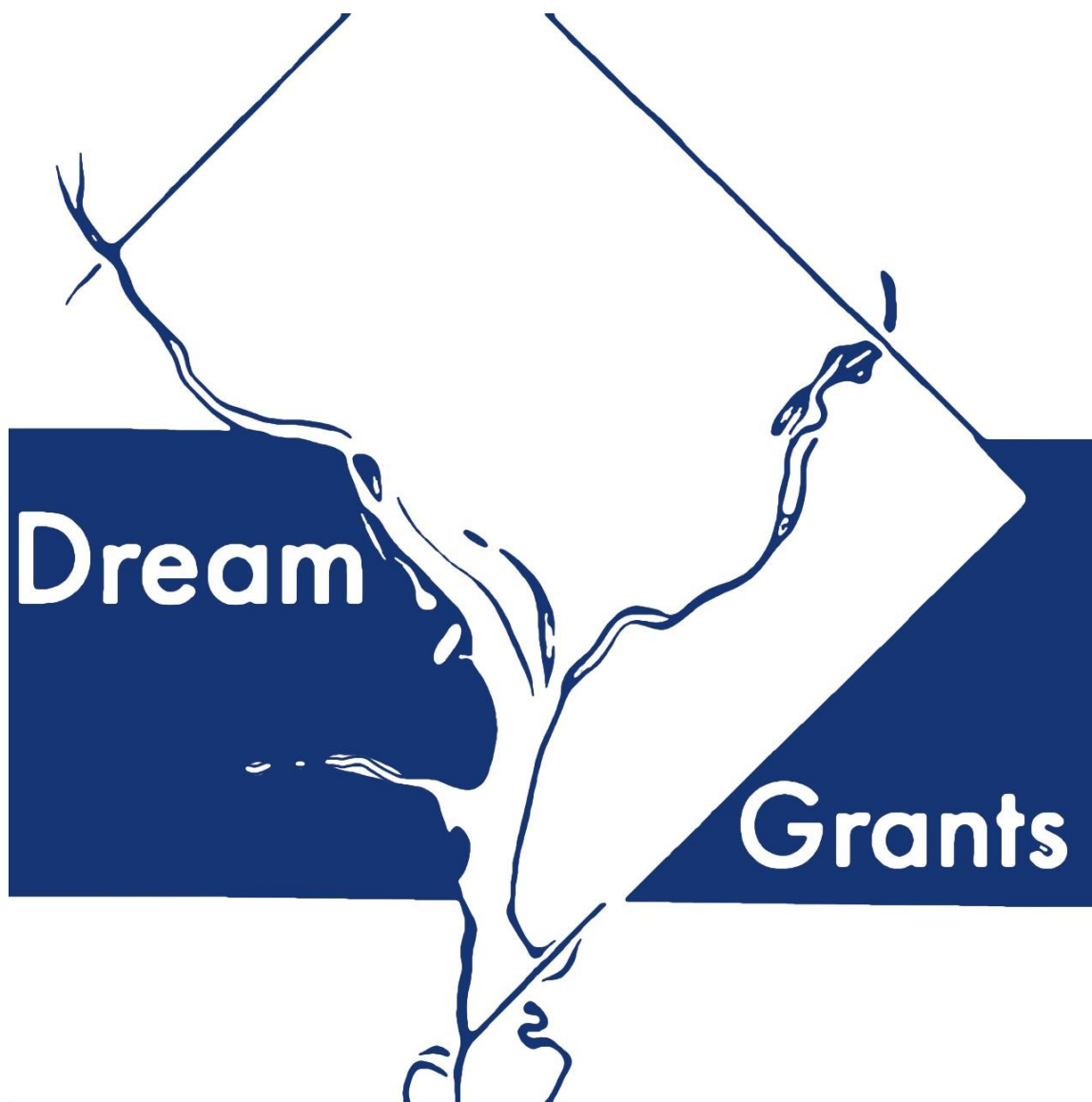


Ward 7 & 8 Microbusiness Dream Grants Official Request for Applications (RFA)

Open September 1, 2019 through November 15, 2019
Issued by the Department of Small & Local Business Development



Look for paperwork boot camps & grant information sessions at <http://bit.ly/DSLBDeventbrite>. Outside of an information session, send all questions in writing to Inno.ED@dc.gov.

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. All applicants are encouraged to read this entire document. It outlines the following important sections:

1. Objectives

What DSLBD seeks to accomplish through the grant.

2. Application & Deadline

Where eligible businesses can submit an application online.

3. Restrictions on Allowable Uses of Funds

How the funds can & cannot be spent.

4. Eligibility

What businesses are eligible to apply & the needed paperwork.

5. Narrative Template

The competitive application.

6. Scoring Criteria

How the review committee will score the grant narrative.

7. Selection

How DSLBD decides awardees.

8. Award Information

What happens if you are awarded grant.

9. Important Legal Disclaimers

DSLBD legal reservations in addition to those listed above.

Questions?

DSLBD will hold multiple information sessions throughout the grant period as advertised via the DSLBD Eventbrite at: <http://bit.ly/DSLBDeventbrite>.

All other questions will be answered via email only by DSLBD's Inno.ED staff Kate Mereand or Virginia-Marie Roure via the Inno.ED@dc.gov email address. Please submit all questions not asked in an information session to Inno.ED@dc.gov.

1. Objective

The Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) is excited to announce that we will be soliciting applications for the 2020 **Ward 7 and 8 Microbusiness Dream Grants starting September 1, 2019.**

The grants are to provide business development support to the growth of microbusinesses in Wards 7 and 8. These microbusinesses must **be appropriately licensed, have fewer than five (5) employees, the business must be located in Ward 7 or 8, and Ward 7 or 8 residents must have ownership of 50% or more** of the of the business.

DSLBD intends to award between 20 and 25 grants, of up \$10,000 each, from the \$200,000 in total available funding for 2020.

2. Online Application & Deadline

Apply at <https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/2020DreamGrants>, if typing in the address it must include this exact capitalization.

Only applications submitted through the online system will be accepted and scored. No application materials will be accepted outside of the application system.

Zoom Grants is a third-party provider that offers 24-hour customer assistance for log-in issues, issues with saving your application, and other IT related issues for your application. Reach out to Zoom Grants at anytime during the application period if you have technical difficulties by emailing Questions@ZoomGrants.com.

The last date to ask questions about the grant application is November 13, 2019, 2 pm.

The final deadline is November 15, 2019, at 2 pm. No exceptions.

Grants will be reviewed between November 15, 2019 and January 15, 2020. Notifications to applicants are anticipated by February 1, 2020.

3. Restrictions on Allowable Uses of Funds

Grant funds have several allowed uses and several restricted uses. The "Period of Performance" is after January 1, 2020 and before August 30, 2020, or a shorter period based on a grantees insurance coverage. All expenses funded by this grant must occur during this time and the grantee must carry general liability coverage.

The proposed use of funds must be accepted by DSLBD, and will be outlined in individual grant agreements per grantee.

Allowed Uses

The funds can be used for the following business development uses:

1. Product or service development;
2. Market research;
3. Customer development;
4. Licensing;
5. Developing prototypes;
6. Providing engineering design;
7. Leasing equipment; and
8. Obtaining professional services; such as accounting, tax, and legal services or capital-asset management, OR,
9. Other expenses accepted by the agency not listed as ineligible below.

Disallowed Uses

The funds cannot be used for any of the following uses:

1. Financing existing debt, including payment of taxes owed
2. Expenses incurred outside of the period of performance
3. Expenses which are reimbursed by a different grant from DC Government
4. Personal use or other uses not related to the business identified in the grant

4. Eligibility Checklist

Only appropriately licensed microbusinesses with fewer than five (5) employees, located in Ward 7 or 8, and with Ward 7 or 8 residents maintaining ownership of 50% or more of the of the business are eligible for funding. Businesses that were awarded a Dream Grant in the last two years are not eligible for the 2020 grants.

Applicants who do not meet eligibility requirements will not be awarded a grant. All documentation and attestations must be appropriately made under the "Eligibility Documentation" tab of the Zoom Grants application.

Applicants who complete eligibility documentation by October 3, 2019 or October 31, 2019 will receive a courtesy review of their eligibility.

This checklist covers the required documentation used to determine applicants' eligibility. Applications that do not provide these documents and appropriate attestations will not be scored. Need help with your eligibility paperwork? You can attend a Grant Paperwork Bootcamp as advertised via the DSLBD Eventbrite: <http://bit.ly/DSLBDeventbrite>

| Eligibility Checklist | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Employment Identification Number (FEIN). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An FEIN is available for free on the IRS website www.irs.gov |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photo ID for the Ward 7 & 8 residents who are majority owners of the business. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DC Driver's License, DC Non-Driver Identification Card, passport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Second residency document demonstrating applicants live in Ward 7 & 8 in addition to the ID current as of September 1, 2019 or later to confirm current residency. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility bill, bank statement, Government check, formal letter from the Government verifying residency, or paycheck (a deed will not be accepted) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of majority ownership through corporate records or by formally attesting that the business is a sole proprietorship. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate registration documents or attestation of sole proprietorship. (Any applicant shown to have falsely attested may forfeit the grant.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attest to the business having 5 (five) or fewer full-time employees (FTEs). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attestation within Zoom Grants to FTE staffing (Any applicant shown to have falsely attested may forfeit the grant.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current with DC Taxes, fees, and fines—DSLBD must be able to confirm "Clean Hands" status for the applicant business with the Office of Tax & Revenue. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anyone can check their Clean Hands status for free at https://otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/online-clean-hands-application |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of current General Liability Insurance, or intent to purchase general liability insurance if awarded a grant. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSLBD cannot provide carrier recommendations – grantees must have coverage during grant activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scanned copy of valid DC Business License and valid business license number. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scanned copy of business license must be a PDF, not an image file, and enter the business license number in Zoom Grants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dun & Bradstreet Number | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free registration at https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master Supplier Form (including ARIBA Supplier Number) from Office of Contracts and Procurement This form may be subject to change. DSLBD will provide an announcement in the grant system if this form is updated. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master supplier form can be downloaded at https://ocp.dc.gov/publication/pass-master-supplier-form |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current IRS W-9 reflecting the business FEIN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> W-9 must be signed and dated https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf |

5. Narrative Questions of the Application

The full narrative is submitted within the Zoom Grants application system. We have listed the narrative questions here.

1. Please complete this phrase: "My dream for my business is _____."
2. What is your business, what is it called, and where is it?
3. Who owns the business, how long have you owned it, and who operates the business day to day?
4. Do you provide products or services? Provide a description of what your business provides, and describe your current or expected market and customer base, your products and/or services.
5. What challenges do businesses like yours face? What are you doing and what more would you like to do to overcome those challenges?
6. Detail exactly how you would use \$10,000 to support your business development—provide a complete and detailed budget breakdown.
7. How will this funding change the trajectory of your business to better achieve sustainability and growth? Is this funding helpful or critical to your business success? How so?
8. How have you approached business development as you build your business? Describe the formal and/or informal business development support you have sought, your perspective on development, and any barriers you have faced in receiving support that is important for DSLBD to recognize.
9. Do you have employees who are DC residents? Does your business have a direct community impact? If so, tell us about it!
10. We are asking everyone to upload one visual document about your business—a photo, logo, chart, etc. Describe the visual element you have chosen to include, and explain why that is the visual that you want to share.
11. Anything else you think a review committee scoring your business against other wonderful businesses should know about why funding your business would be a positive use of public funds?

6. Scoring Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate all applications.

1. Does the use of funds help the business become sustainable? (20 points)
2. Does the use of funds help the business grow? (10 points)
3. Does the use of funds demonstrate a trajectory change that supports the business address the stated challenges? (10 points)
4. Are the goals realistic and achievable during the period of performance? (10 points)
5. Is this a positive use of public funds to support the overall public interest? (10 points)
6. Does this funding help the business achieve the owner's dream for the business? (5 points)

7. Selection Process

DSLBD will select grant recipients through a competitive application process. A review panel may be composed of agency partners, members of the public, and DC Government employees to review eligible applications received by the submission deadline and score them against the above criteria with respective weight

The DSLBD program team will review the panel reviewers' recommendations and the Director of DSLBD will make the final determination of grant awards. Applicants who best demonstrate that they are qualified to achieve the program objectives of growing microbusinesses in Ward 7 or 8 will be awarded the grant(s).

8. Award Information

Grant notifications will be made on or around February 1, 2020. All other applicants will be notified of the decision no later one week after the initial notification is made to selected applicants.

Selected applicants will need to sign an individual grant agreement with DSLBD. The agency anticipates signing grant agreements between DSLBD and the grantees by March 15, 2020. If agreements are unable to be executed by May 15, 2020 because the awarded grantee cannot meet the post-award requirements for any reason, then the grant funds may be forfeit. The grant agreement will require additional documentation and reporting. This will include an approved budget and only costs outlined under the grant with appropriate documentation (receipts) will be accepted as proof of appropriate expenditures.

Grantees are required to prepare a final report by October 15, 2020, providing a proof of appropriate expenses made and impacts of the grant.

Terms of disbursement shall be determined after applicants are selected. We anticipate most grants will be disbursed in one sum prior to performance of grant activities. DC Government pays all invoices within thirty (30) days of receipt of invoice. **This timeline does not start until after an executed grant agreement is in place, a recipient is fully registered to receive payment in DC**

Government payment systems, a purchase order number has been successfully created, and the grantee successfully submits their invoice on the DC Vendor Portal.

Additional information may be required as part of a final grant agreement. An awardee that cannot provide these and other requested materials by May 15, 2020 may be disqualified and DSLBD may award the grant to another applicant.

8. Important Legal Disclaimers

This section includes reservations that DSLBD makes in releasing this RFA.

A. Contingent

Funding for this award is contingent on continued funding from the grantor. The RFA does not commit the Agency 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. The Agency reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if the Agency determines it is in the best interest of the Agency to do so. The Agency may suspend or terminate an outstanding RFA pursuant to its own grant making rule(s) or any applicable federal regulation or requirement.

Applications must be made through the online 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 and the OPGS Funding Alert. The NOFA is available at <http://dslbd.dc.gov/>.

D. Reservations

Funding for any grant award is contingent on continued grantor funding.

Publication of Request for Applications does not commit DSLBD to make any awards.

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 (see below). Applicants are responsible to review and adhere to any RFA addenda or amendments. Funding for this award is contingent on continued funding from the grantor. The RFA does not commit the Agency to make an award.

DSLBD may suspend or terminate an outstanding RFA pursuant to its own grant making rule(s) or any DSLBD federal regulation or requirement.

DSLBD reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if DSLBD determines that it is in the best interest of the District to do so.

DSLBD shall not be liable for any costs incurred by an applicant in the preparation of one or more grant applications for this Program. The applicant understands and agrees that all costs incurred in developing and preparing any grant application shall be the applicant's sole responsibility.

DSLBD may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in a grant application.

DSLBD serves as their own reference in evaluating applications. Grant decisions will reflect applicants' performance in managing previous grants.

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 negotiations.

In the event of a conflict between the terms and conditions of the grant application and any applicable federal or local 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.