

## NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

### Food Waste Innovation Grants

The Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) is excited to announce that we will be soliciting applications for the first round of Food Waste Innovation Grants. These grants will provide support for restaurants, food manufacturers, shared commercial kitchens, and commercial corridors like Main Streets and Business Improvement Districts, to minimize their food waste going to landfill and minimize urban rat populations. This will help businesses meet the future requirements of the Zero Waste Omnibus Act while reducing costs in both food purchasing and waste disposal expenses.

Eligible applicants are food businesses that are appropriately licensed and Certified Business Enterprise (CBE)-eligible. Nonprofits are also eligible when providing direct support for multiple eligible businesses. There will be preference for proposals from rodent hot spots identified by DC Health: see below for location details.

DSLBD intends to award \$500,000 in a combination of direct grants and in-kind services.

#### **How do I apply?**

Full guidance and instructions will be available in the Request for Applications (RFA) that will be released on or before December 13, 2021, on the DSLBD website: <https://dslbd.dc.gov> under current grant opportunities <https://bit.ly/dslbdgrantopportunities>.

#### **Deadline**

The deadline to apply online is January 31, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. Applications will only be accepted through the online application system.

#### **Who can apply?**

Appropriately licensed businesses that are CBE-eligible, who are producing, processing, and/or serving food or beverages. This includes food manufacturers, restaurants, cafes, breweries, and caterers. Multiple applicants can also apply together for increased funding.

Nonprofits will be considered only if they are applying on behalf of a group of CBE-eligible businesses with signed letters of support from these food businesses. Eligible nonprofits include Main Streets and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), as well as waste-related or food-focused nonprofits that will serve eligible businesses. See the Request for Applications for additional eligibility requirements.

#### **How can the funds be used?**

The grant funds can be used for technological or process investments to reduce the volume of waste going to landfill: for example, increased freezer or refrigeration capacity to enable donation or preservation, menu development costs to increase cross-utilization or seasonal menus, or diverting food waste to composting & non-biodegradables into trash compactors. Additional allowed uses and restrictions will be outlined in the RFA.

**How will awardees be selected?**

Grant recipients will be selected through a competitive application process. All applications from eligible applicants received on or before the deadline will be forwarded to an independent review panel to be evaluated. There will be preference for businesses in rodent hot spots identified by DC Health: see below for location details. As outlined in the RFA, applications will prioritize reducing food waste, followed by increasing donation of edible foods, followed by food waste processing.

A program team will review the recommendations. The Director of DLSBD will make the final determination of grant awards. Grantees will be selected by February 15, 2021.

**Where are the rodent hot spots?**

DC Health has identified the following locations as commercial corridors with high rodent activity. These areas will be given preference in the review process, but businesses outside of these corridors are still encouraged to apply: 14th & U Sts NW, 14th & P Sts NW, 13th & H Sts NE, E Capitol St & Benning Rd NE, S Capitol & Atlantic Sts SE, 8th & D Sts SE, 7th & C Sts SE, 17th & Benning Rds NE, 5th & Kennedy Sts NW, and the 6200 Block of Georgia Ave NW.

**Questions?**

We will be offering a virtual Information session as well as a Grant Paperwork Bootcamp. Both will be virtual and will be recorded. Please refer to the DSLBD Eventbrite at [http://bit.ly/dslbd\\_events](http://bit.ly/dslbd_events) for the most accurate information about the date, time, and location of these meetings.

Questions may be sent to the Innovation & Equitable Development Team at the Department of Small and Local Business Development at [Inno.ED@dc.gov](mailto:Inno.ED@dc.gov). All questions must be submitted in writing. We will not respond to questions over the phone.

**Reservations**

DSLBD reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) or RFA, or to rescind the NOFA or RFA at any time.