

**DEPARTMENT OF SMALL AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)**

**Fiscal Year 2024 Robust Retail Grant Program**

A robust retail sector is critical to maintaining the vibrancy of DC neighborhoods, but retail businesses are under threat of business decline and closure due to the market realities of past years. In response to these market conditions, the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD or Department) is offering Robust Retail grant(s), which are direct-to-business grants to assist existing DC-based retail businesses with the maintenance of business operations and viability.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Robust Retail Grant Program includes three different funding pools: (1) Robust Retail: Citywide, (2) Robust Retail: Upper Georgia Avenue Main Street Corridor, and (3) Robust Retail: Deanwood Heights Main Street Corridor. DSLBD is excited to announce that the Department will be accepting applications for the following grant programs:

**A. 2024 Robust Retail: Citywide Grant Program**

DSLBD intends to award up to \$10,000 per business to 48 businesses from the total \$480,000 in available funding for Fiscal Year 2024. Businesses may be located anywhere in the District. Businesses that received a Robust Retail Citywide Award in FY 2023 are not eligible to apply.

**B. 2024 Robust Retail: Upper Georgia Avenue Main Street Corridor Grant Program**

DSLBD intends to award up to \$10,000 per business to nine (9) businesses from the total \$90,000 in available funding for businesses located on the Upper Georgia Avenue Main Street corridor in FY 2024.

**C. 2024 Robust Retail: Deanwood Heights Main Street Corridor Grant Program**

DSLBD intends to award up to \$10,000 per business to nine (9) businesses from the total \$90,000 in available funding for businesses located on the Deanwood Heights Main Street corridor in FY 2024.

**Eligibility applications will open on March 20, 2024 and close on April 15, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET).**

Each grant program will operate as a reimbursement grant, awarded via lottery, to retail Businesses located within the District that meet all eligibility requirements.

**Final Deadline**

The final deadline to submit the eligibility application online is April 15, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. ET, with no exceptions. Applications will only be accepted through the online application system listed in the Request for Applications (RFA) on DSLBD's website.

**Who can apply?**

Only for-profit, consumer-facing, small, and independent retail businesses with fewer than 25 full-time employees (FTEs), with a licensed retail location will be considered. Review the RFA on DSLBD's website for more information.

Home-based, online only, and non-profit organizations are not eligible for this grant opportunity.

Applicants must be compliant with the Office of Tax & Revenue's Clean Hands requirements and be properly licensed as a retail business in the District.

**How can the funds be used?**

Grant funding may be used to reimburse the business for expenses that DSLBD deems reasonable to assist with the maintenance of business operations and viability, incurred between October 1, 2023, and April 15, 2024. Examples of allowable and disallowed uses are detailed in the full Request for Applications (RFA), available on DSLBD's website during the application period.

**How will awardees be selected?**

Grant recipients will be selected through three (3) separate lotteries. For the Robust Retail: Citywide Grant Program, at least half of the grants awarded will be evenly distributed across all eight (8) DC wards. For the Robust Retail: Upper Georgia Avenue Main Street Corridor Grant Program and the Robust Retail: Deanwood Heights Main Street Corridor Grant Program, two (2) individual lotteries will be held, one (1) for each corridor. All applications deemed eligible and received by or before the deadline will be entered into the lottery system.

The Director of DLSBD will approve all grant awards at the final stage. Announcements of selected awards will be made on or around April 25, 2024.

**How do I apply?**

Instructions are included in the RFA, available for download on DSLBD's website on or before March 20, 2024. Applicants are encouraged to read the full Request for Applications at <https://dslbd.dc.gov/service/current-grant-opportunities>.

**Questions?**

DSLBD will hold virtual information sessions online to provide an overview of the grant application process. Applicants are highly encouraged to attend a virtual information session. Details on information sessions can be found on the DSLBD Eventbrite page using the following link: <https://dslbd.eventbrite.com>.

All other questions not asked during an in-person information session must be submitted in writing to DSLBD at [DC.MainStreets@dc.gov](mailto:DC.MainStreets@dc.gov). DSLBD will begin answering questions after the grant opens on March 20, 2024.

**Reservation of Rights**

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