

# DEPARTMENT OF SMALL AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

### Fiscal Year 2025 ReFashion Pitch Competition

**Application period:** Applications for this grant opportunity will open on or about November 18th, 2024 and will be available for eleven (11) weeks and will end on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 at 2PM EST.

This NOFA, in combination with the Request for Applications (“RFA”), which will be released when the grant opens, constitutes the full set of instructions to assist applicants with completing eligibility applications for the Fiscal Year (“FY”) 2025 ReFashion Pitch Competition. **Applicants are encouraged to read both documents in their entirety before applying.**

#### 1. Objective

The District of Columbia (“DC,” “D.C.,” or “District”) Department of Small and Local Business Development (“DSLBD” or “Department”) is excited to announce that it will be soliciting applications for the FY 2025 ReFashion Pitch Competition starting November 18th, 2024.

The FY25 ReFashion Pitch Competition is designed to provide direct monetary support to small and local fashion economy businesses that foster innovation, circularity and business empowerment within the sustainable fashion economy in Washington DC. This competition is an opportunity for businesses to pitch their sustainable fashion business to a panel of judges outlining a problem or opportunity in the sustainable fashion market with a viable solution resulting in a pitch award between \$2,500 to \$6,000 during Small Business Week on May 7th, 2025.

The Department anticipates awarding 6 grants for eligible business that meet the criteria outlined in the RFA and successfully compete in the ReFashion Pitch Competition event on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Only businesses that are properly licensed and are compliant with all District taxes and fees are eligible to apply for a FY 2025 ReFashion Pitch Competition.

#### 2. Application Deadline

The deadline to submit the Eligibility Application (Part One: Eligibility Stage) is January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, at 2PM EST. No exceptions. Only applications submitted through the application portal will be considered.

#### 4. Who can Apply?

To be eligible for this funding opportunity, applicants must be for-profit, DC-based entities that are appropriately licensed pursuant to DC laws and regulations. Applicants must also be in compliance with the Office of Tax and Revenue’s (OTR) “Clean Hands Certification”, hold a FEIN for the business applying, must be able to participate in person at the pitch competition event during Small Business Week on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

In addition, applicants must demonstrate the following prior to receiving a grant award: (1) must outline a problem or opportunity in the sustainable fashion market and how the business service

or product provides a viable solution in this space, (2) proof of a business bank account for the receipt of funds if awarded; and (3) signature of all required attestations requested of the applicant. Full eligibility requirements will be further outlined and posted in the official RFA on DSLBD's website when the grant opportunity opens.

Applications that do not meet eligibility requirements, and/or do not contain complete and/or verifiable documents, information and/or attestations will not be evaluated for further review for Part Two Pre-Pitch Stage. If an applicant submits multiple applications, DSLBD will only review the last submitted application and automatically reject prior applications submitted by the same entity. False information may result in competition forfeiture.

### **5. How can the Funds be Used?**

Grant funds may be used to cover business expenditures incurred from May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 through August 30, 2025 for standard business expenses, including but not limited to regulatory and licensing costs, fees, insurance, commercial rent, equipment and inventory. A list of Allowable Use of Funds are in the RFA for further guidance.

### **6. How Will Awardees be Selected?**

ReFashion Pitch winners will be selected through a pitch style competition process by competition track (Textile Alternatives/Upcycling Track or Fashion Empowerment Track).

Three (3) applicants from each pitch competition track for a total of six (6) applicants will be pre-selected to present at a live in-person pitch competition in front of a judging panel during Small Business Week May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

FY25 ReFashion Pitch Competition pre-selectees will be announced in February 2025. The pre-selectees will receive an email to be informed of their status to pitch at the ReFashion Pitch Competition event during Small Business Week 2025.

The six (6) selectees will pitch within their selected competition track at the ReFashion business pitch competition and will have three (3) minutes to present their pitch for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prizes.

### **7. How do I Apply?**

Full guidance and instructions will be available in the RFA, to be released on or about November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 via the DSLBD website: <https://dslbd.dc.gov> under current grant opportunities <https://bit.ly/dslbdgrantopportunities>. **Applicants are encouraged to read the full RFA before completing the application.**

### **8. Questions?**

DSLBD will hold a virtual information session concerning the application process and grant awards. Details on the dates and times of the information sessions will be made available in the RFA. Any questions not asked during the information sessions must be submitted in writing to DSLBD via email at [Inno.ED@dc.gov](mailto:Inno.ED@dc.gov). DSLBD will not respond to questions over the phone. **Applicants are highly encouraged to attend an information session.**

**9. Reservations**

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