

FISCAL YEAR 2025 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Government of the District of Columbia
DC Department of Housing and Community Development

Program: Neighborhood-Based Activities

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES:

Small Business Technical Assistance (SBTA) and Façade Improvement Services

Check Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the RFA at DHCD's website:
dhcd.dc.gov/solicitations

RFA Issue Date: **June 21, 2024**

Submission Deadline: **July 31, 2024, 11:59 pm EST.**

ZoomGrants Application Link: Here is the direct link to apply for the [Small Business Services Program](#).

Affirmative Marketing/Accessibility Training June 20, 2024, 1:00 p.m.
Inquiries accepted through July 12, 2024

Nina Albert
Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

Colleen Green, Director
DC Department of Housing and Community Development
1909 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE | Washington, DC 20020



SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

The District of Columbia Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD” or “the Department”) receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to develop programs and to provide services that support community development in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. DHCD is authorized by HUD to award these funds to community-based organizations as subrecipients. These grantees or subrecipients work in partnership with DHCD to deliver services for community development to DC residents and/or DC businesses. The Department seeks to fund non-profit community organizations that can provide specific services listed in **Section 3.2**. These lines of service support activities for Small Business Technical Assistance and Façade Improvement Services.

1.2 Purpose of Request for Applications (RFA)

Request for Applications (RFA) applications from community based non-profit organizations to provide services in one or both of the RFA areas:

- Small Business Technical Assistance (SBTA)
- Façade Improvement Services (FIS)

Such services are to be provided in targeted commercial corridors of the District. These corridors are in low- and moderate-income census blocks which is a specific goal of this Federal funding.

In both areas of activities (SBTA and FIS), applicants must demonstrate organizational competence, performance capacity, and responsiveness to local needs and market demands appropriate to meeting the obligations of these programs.

SBTA Goals:

- Provide customized small business technical assistance (training or guidance) to small businesses in low-to-moderate areas of the District.
- Advocate for small businesses priorities in local revitalization efforts, through collective business support activities.
- Support the Department’s effort to market business support and technical assistance services made available by DHCD funds.

These goals are realized through these activities:

- Technical assistance and business support services provided by Selected Applicants to empower start-ups and established businesses for the purpose of revitalizing targeted commercial corridors in low- and moderate-income census blocks.
- Services to attract and retain new businesses and create and retain jobs in those corridors.

Façade Goals:

- Provide guidance in improving the façade of their small business.
- Assist the small businesses in making applications to the Department for project approval and funding.
- Assist small businesses in obtaining contractors and navigating governmental approval processes such as permits.

Façade Improvement enhances the image and overall economic viability of neighborhood business districts by improving the function and appearance of individual building facades; and by spurring new private investment in commercial properties in the same location and in adjacent commercial districts. Proposed projects should manifest readily observable outcomes that positively affect the community. Funding will be for actual construction costs (the actual faced work) for selected and approved projects. Façade development projects require an intensive effort involving multiple skills and areas of expertise including, business/property owner recruitment; design development; pre-construction; and construction management. Successful project plans will demonstrate clear strategies for success. Applicants for this funding should present projects which complement other neighborhood revitalization activities being conducted by the District government.

Proposed projects will be funded on a case-by-case basis following submission of all required documents and presentation to the Department. Projects should be completed within six (6) months of the Notice to Proceed.

Façade services do not include interior spaces or outdoor patios or emergency projects. The services are limited to the exterior of the façade and may include signs, paint, and windows/doors. Depending on funding availability, projects may include awnings and limited security updates.

Facades that have been funded within the past 20 years may not be eligible for new funding. Please note: If a project is funded, a covenant will be placed on the deed requiring repayment of the expended public funds when and if the property is re-financed or sold.

All Applicants to Demonstrate Capacity

An applicant should be able to demonstrate that it has strong project management and administrative capacity and a proven track record of delivering timely and professional quality services described in this RFA.

All applicants will be required to submit a marketing and outreach plan, work plan, and budget for the technical assistance and business support services to be provided.

All of the services are intended to benefit (a) DC residents and/or (b) low- or moderate-income neighborhoods. Other uses of the funds are not permitted. Grant funds therefore may not be used for residents in neighboring jurisdictions or outside the District. Additional points will be awarded to applicants who commit to using a higher percentage CDBG for the benefit of LMI households. Applicants who commit to using the fund to benefit a higher

percentage of DC LMI households will receive the designated points. Applicants must maintain records to justify their LMI client base throughout the compliance period.

Additional Points will be awarded as follows:

51% funds used for DC LMI Households (required minimum):	0 Points
Minimum of 75% funds will be used for DC LMI households:	5 Points
Minimum of 90% funds will be used for DC LMI households:	10 Points

1.3 Current Grant Environment

The FY25 RFA is offered at a time when covid funding from the Federal Government has ended. Covid funding represented about 35% of CDBG funds received in each prior year. Coupled with that, the FY25 Federal Budget shows a reduction of \$400 million of CDBG Entitlement funding across the nation affecting every state and the District.

The Chronicle of Philanthropy in the March 2024 article, *Are We Getting Back to Normal? New Reports Forecast Fundraising Growth* reported on three research predictions which all indicate an upward growth in giving. Specifically, the report said philanthropic giving in the US will grow by an inflation adjusted percentage of 4.2% by the end of 2024 and by 3.9% in 2025. Peter Hoskow at CCS commented on this data saying this “should be used [by organizations] as an optimistic tool and gear their plans and their goal setting” accordingly. Charity Village noted that a diversification of funding sources is recommended for all non-profit organizations. The current economic climate also encourages organizations to focus on their areas of strength and specialize in those services where their energies and resources have greater impact. This, in turn, opens the door to collaborative relationships with other organizations.

1.4 Definitions

“**Applicant(s)**” or “**Applicant Organization(s)**” refers to Non-Profit Organization which the Internal Revenue Service has determined to classify as a 501c3. Such an organization needs to be registered to do business in the District of Columbia and registered with the Federal Government (at SAM.gov).

“**Client Business**” or “**Client**” or “**Business**” refers to an owner (including the owner’s legal entity) of a commercial for-profit activity located in the District of Columbia or to a potential owner who is a District resident and is interested in establishing such a commercial activity in the District of Columbia.

“**Grantee**” refers to a Selected Applicant that has submitted all required documentation on deadline and whose documentation has been approved by the Grantor.

“**LMI**” refers to low and moderate income and may be applied to people or areas such as census tracts or census blocks.

“**Selected Applicant(s)**” refers to an Applicant that has been selected for a conditional award.

1.5 Competitive Process

Applications to this RFA are entering into a competitive process. A competitive Applicant will have the technology needed for tracking clients and services. Existing grantees should have records which demonstrate their capacity to meet programmatic goals which include measurable outcomes, meeting deadlines for reporting and payment request, compliance with Federal and District funding requirements and demonstrated responsiveness to DC residents' inquiries.

New and existing applicants should be able to demonstrate in this application their ability to produce positive outcomes for the available programs and services. The applicant must be able to demonstrate that it has strong abilities in the following areas: project management, case management, responsiveness to clients, record keeping, administration, accounting, and reporting. Applicants must show a proven track record of delivering timely and professional quality services, similar to those for which they are applying in this RFA.

1.6 Application Submission Deadline (Date and Time) and Award Period

- A. Applications are due no later than 11:59 p.m. (local time) on July 31, 2024. All applications will be recorded upon receipt. Applications submitted at or after midnight (August 1, 2024) will not be considered or awarded grants. Any additions or deletions to an application will not be accepted after the deadline.
- B. All applications will be made through an online portal (ZoomGrants). Applications submitted through an alternative process will not be considered.
- C. Applicants are encouraged to e-mail their questions as described in **Section 5.10** (below) on or before July 12, 2024. Questions submitted after the deadline date will not receive responses. If making an inquiry by postal service, please allow ample time for mail to be received prior to the deadline date.
- D. Applicants must apply to provide services for at least one of the services listed in Section 3.2. Applicants may apply for more than one service (subject to the conditions of this RFA including Item E below).
- E. Use of consultants falls into one of two areas: (a) as a provider of services that support the work of the organizations or (b) as a provider who will perform the work for which funding is provided. Prior to retaining a consultant to provide direct grants services, the applicant/grantee should contact Neighborhood Based Activities to discuss and obtain approval. In all cases ["a" or "b" above], consultant agreements should protect the organization and the Department, and therefore should include clear set of deliverables, services, and expectations with an established timeline as well as budget of expenses for services/deliverables.
- F. At its sole discretion, the Department may award grants in one (or more) services applied for without obligation to award in other lines of service. Work plans and budgets for these services are anticipated for a period of twelve months and are

subject to the Department's approval or revision. Workplans should conform to the description of services and specific activities listed therein. Workplans should include projections of measurable outcomes. Applicants should use a whole number only. Ranges (for example, 5 to 15 new businesses) should not be submitted and will not be accepted. Any range provided will be understood as a submission for the lowest number in the range. The absence of an estimated outcome will be understood as zero resulting in the Application not being considered for that line of service.

- G. At its sole discretion, the Department may choose to extend the agreements under this RFA for additional periods in future fiscal years up to one year at a time. In such cases, documents to extend the grant will be requested must be submitted by stated deadlines.
- H. By applying in the RFA and being selected, Applicants selected are agreeing to the following:
- i) All selected awardees are required to attend post- award conferences and meetings during the grant year where programmatic and compliance requirements are explained.
 - ii) Selected Applicants are also required to provide programmatic information as requested. Selected awardees should be certain their paperwork and disclosures support this requirement and that their intake procedures capture the information needed for reporting on activities and beneficiaries of services.
 - iii) Selected Applicants will be required to assist clients to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from Sam.gov (if one is not already acquired by the client) and to report the same to the Department in compliance with District and Federal reporting requirements.
 - iv) Selected awardees must let clients know that services are provided free of charge through this DHCD grant and their participation in providing beneficiary data assists the District of Columbia to obtain continued Federal funding for counseling programs as well as local programs.
 - v) Selected awardees will be advised of a conditional award and the services for which the conditional award is made. (See Section 4.3.) At that time, documents (see 5.19) will be requested as a part of the review by various DC Government agencies with specific deadlines. Failure to submit documents requested by the deadline will delay the execution of the grant. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in withdrawal of the conditional grant award.

1.7 Award and Amounts

DHCD will evaluate each applicant's work plan and budget for adequate capability (both fiscal and programmatic) to provide the services indicated. Notifications of a conditional award will be made on or about September 30, 2024. There is no prescribed award amount for any

service, or for any specific grant.

1.8 Conditions of Awards

1. **Adherence to Funding and Program Requirements:** The Department as the grantor of funding will require successful applicants to adhere to Federal and District funding requirements as well as programmatic requirements, including those of the Department. Failure to be in compliance with these requirements may result in suspension of the grant (temporarily pending corrective actions or permanently).

These requirements include (but are not limited to) timely submission of properly supported requests for reimbursement, reporting on grant performance and activities, submission of beneficiary data about clients receiving services, submission of language access reporting, being subject to monitoring reviews, and fulfilling all grant close-out requirements at the end of each fiscal year.

2. **Forms and Spreadsheets:** Where the Department provides forms and spreadsheets to be used, selected awardees may not modify or replace the provided form or spreadsheet. Grantees who fail to provide information needed for reporting to the Mayor and Council, to support Department programs, and to fulfill HUD reporting requirements risk temporary or permanent suspension of the grant.
3. **Business Hours:** Awardees shall observe business hours of operation onsite in their service location(s) that align with District government days and hours of operation specifically Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm (DC holidays excepted¹) and shall ensure that sufficient staff are onsite at Grantee's place of business to carry out Grant services.
4. **Live-answered Phones:** During hours of operation, Awardees must have live-answered telephones for incoming calls. If Grantee's phone system utilizes voicemail or auto attendant functions, an announced option to the caller must include an option to press a certain key on the keypad (such as zero for the Operator) to be connected to a staff person in real time who can answer and field questions or redirect callers to a staff person who can address callers' inquiries. The Office of the Attorney General in addition to DHCD may monitor Grantee's compliance.
5. **Virtual and In-person Services:** Appointments as well as group informational or educational activities may be offered virtually but clients must also have an option for in-person services (including both in-person appointments as well as some in-person group informational or educational activities). Applicants selected for an award may not refuse to offer in-person services or only provide virtual opportunities.
6. **Centralized On-line Calendar:** Successful applicants shall use the DHCD on-line

¹ DC Holidays include New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, Washington's Birthday, DC Emancipation Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth National Independence Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous Peoples' Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day.

calendar to post group activities such as orientations, workshops, and classes. The centralized calendar will allow DC residents to register for one or more of these group activities.

7. **DC Residents:** Grant dollars must be directed for services to DC residents and not for residents of other jurisdictions. Services are also intended for low- and moderate-income households. (See **Section 1.2** above.)
8. **Customer Service:** Selected applicants are expected to follow high standards in customer services including response time and quality of response to inquiries from the general public and with existing clients. If the Department receives a concern from a DC resident, the details will be communicated to the executive director (or his/her designate) for resolution. It is important that the resolution or the outcome is communicated to the Department. Organizations are to have a written policy governing call-backs and response time to potential or actual clients.
9. **Language Access:** Selected applicants are required to see that language is not a barrier to DC residents receiving services. To this end, the Department provides Language Access training annually for all staff being paid on the grant. In addition, selected applicants agree to provide services in the language of client whether by using bilingual staff, in-person professional interpreter, or telephonic translation services.
10. **Various Documents:** Section 5.9 lists documents that are required to be uploaded in ZoomGrants. Other documents during the grant year are required and specified in the grant agreement. For example, annual audit, cost allocation plan, and the memo regarding costs covered by the indirect costs rate.

SECTION 2: APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

2.1 Eligible Organizations

Applications are requested from qualified non-profit organizations that have a history of serving the residents of the District of Columbia through activities or services described in this document. The Department encourages applications that reflect the concerns of the diverse populations and cultures that exist throughout the District of Columbia.

2.2 Organizational Capacity

A successful applicant has the staff and board resources available to provide quality counseling services and/or group training to provide effective business support and guidance, technical assistance in keeping with best practices in the target commercial corridors. Section 3.2

The applicant's overall administrative capacity as it relates to all requirements of program and grants management will be closely examined. Applicants will be evaluated on the basis of financial stability, management capacity, community support, staff qualifications, ability to provide excellent customer service, ability to track productivity and report results, and demonstrated understanding of issues involved in performing activities required under CDBG program administration. Any organization selected must demonstrate its ability to fundraise and leverage DHCD funds with other funding sources.

Any organization selected for funding must:

- Submit timely reports (on deadline) regarding service accomplishments, along with analysis of client progress.
- Submit timely requisitions (on deadline) for disbursement according to defined program requirements.
- Utilize a quality control system for service delivery, which must be approved by the Department.
- Comply with requirements when engaging consultants for grant funded activities. Selected applicants will be expected to engage Neighborhood Based Activities staff when contemplating using consultants for expenses over \$10,000 and/or when engaging consultants to provide direct services funded by the grant.
- Produce reports as requested from a well-developed performance data tracking system approved by the Governing Body.
- The successful applicant will demonstrate that its board or other governing body:
 - Is broadly representative of the community at-large, including low- and moderate-income residents of the District.
 - Possesses skills and/or experience in affordable housing, community development, and/or neighborhood revitalization, with special emphasis on the services described in this RFA; and
 - Possesses the legal, business administration, and management capacity to ensure appropriate execution of the described activities in partnership with the District government.

- The Department prefers at least 51% of the applicant organization’s governing body membership be comprised of: (1) low- and moderate-income residents of the District; (2) owners or senior officers of private establishments and other institutions located in and serving the District of Columbia’s low- and moderate-income households; and/or (3) representatives of District neighborhood organizations with a proven track record of serving low- and moderate-income residents.

2.3 Experience-based Evidence of Performance

Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the complex social and economic factors affecting the communities in which they are active, provide evidence of previous accomplishments, and reveal how their efforts will bring about measurable positive change. Proposed services must result in measurable, quantifiable outcomes for the District’s low- and moderate- income area they serve, for the client business, as described in Section 3, “Programmatic Requirements.”

2.4 Partnerships

Successful applicants have the capacity to leverage resources from other private and public entities. Therefore, demonstrated working relationships with key stakeholders— including banks and other lenders, law firms, accounting firms, technical assistance providers, federal government agencies, foundations, other non-profits, etc.—are essential qualifications for grant applicants. Applicants are encouraged to formalize these relationships and submit documentation to support the relationship, such as Memorandum of Understanding or Letters of Intent.

2.5 Threshold Applicant Requirements

In addition to demonstrating the ability to meet and implement program requirements, a successful applicant must meet the following threshold requirements:

- The applicant must be a non-profit/tax-exempt corporation, so designated by the Internal Revenue Service.
- The applicant must be in good standing in the District of Columbia and must be current on all obligations to the District and Federal governments (*i.e.*, Federal, and local taxes, and outstanding loans).
- The applicant must have written conflict of interest policies and procedures governing employees and board members regarding the award and administration of contracts and other financial interests and benefits. These procedures must include a requirement for the retention of written conflict of interest declarations executed by each employee and board member.

- The applicant must demonstrate in the application its ability to obtain the insurance policies required under this grant or show evidence of insurance policies obtained.
- Nondiscrimination in the Delivery of Services. The applicant must comply with federal and local laws which prohibit discrimination in the delivery of programs and services, including, but not limited to, the following laws and regulations:
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.)- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
 - Section 109 of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (24 CFR Parts 6,180,570)- No person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with community development funds.
 - The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101-07) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (24 CFR Part 8), as amended provides that "No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States ...shall solely by reason of his handicap be excluded from the participation in or be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...".
 - All federal and local laws and regulations which offer consumer protections from prohibited lending practices; also, the District of Columbia's Lending Revisions Act of 2002 (14-354) and mortgage foreclosure procedures enacted in the "Mortgage Foreclosure Procedures Reform Act of 2003."
 - Title III, American with Disabilities Act (ADA), 28 CFR Part 36, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities. The applicant's site of business must be accessible or have a plan to be in compliance within ninety (90) days after execution of the grant.
 - D.C. Law 3-76: District of Columbia Architectural Barriers Act of 1980, Section 1500.1 et. Seq. states in part, "...all buildings, structures, and premises which are used by the general public, and which are regulated by this Code be made accessible to physically handicapped persons."
 - The Architectural Barriers Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. SS4151 et seq.) is an Act to ensure that certain buildings financed with Federal funds are so designed and constructed as to be accessible to the physically handicapped.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Eligibility for Federal Funding

The services in this RFA will be conducted through grant agreements using Federal funds (Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and as available some District Funds. The Department will provide a full informational briefing to the awarded grantee(s) about the ongoing administrative and programmatic requirements of the grant funding source. Whether grants awarded under this RFA are funded locally or with federal funds, all grants will be managed to the higher standards and requirements whether Federal or District. The

Department requires a minimum of 51% of the funds to be spent on services in low- and moderate-income census tracts or to low- and moderate-income households.² Grantees are encouraged to exceed that percentage to provide services to traditionally underserved populations.

3.2 Services contemplated in this RFA

Whether an applicant is providing SBTA services or Façade Improvement Services, the selected applicant is expected to document the services to be provided to the “client business”.

Selected applicants must be able to track and provide detailed client portfolio data, including client demographics (specifically client addresses and UEI numbers).

Selected applicants must assist client businesses who do not have Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) to obtain one from sam.gov as a part of the action plan. The UEI must be recorded by the selected applicant and maintained as a part of the client portfolio data.

SBTA Services

Small Business Technical Assistance (SBTA) is vital in stabilizing and revitalizing commercial areas, including neighborhood retail businesses and overall economic development. Applicants will provide their approach for designing and providing tailored technical assistance based on the lifecycle or stages (Start, Grow, Expand and Transition) of an operating a small business. Applicants are expected to incorporate items from the technical assistance service areas (below) into their work plan. In instances where applicants propose technical assistance activities that do not align with the menu below, they should describe what assistance will be provided, the curriculum for the assistance (if applicable), and the methods for tracking the performance of the activity relative to program goals.

² Services provided to households requires tracking by specific household information including income, ward, and demographic information) while services to low- and moderate-income census tracts requires tracking by address and ward.

Stage 1: Start-ups and entrepreneurs

- 1A: Design action plan for SBTA services provided by your organization
- 1B: Navigating the District's business regulatory landscape
- 1C: Business plan development or equivalent alternative tool
- 1D: Provide in-depth industry sectoral expertise (food, construction, healthcare, hospitality, etc.)

Stage 2: Growing businesses ³

- 2A: Securing required Federal and District licenses or certifications
- 2B: Identify, Secure and Manage contracts (Government/Private)
- 2C: Marketing and Branding (traditional, online, social media etc.)
- 2D: Product or Service development and pricing
- 2E: Co-working space or incubation
- 2F: Information Technology (Point of Sales, Inventory, Systems)
- 2G: Real Estate Acquisition and Management (Purchases/Rentals)
- 2H: Human Resources Training or Management guidance

Stage 3: Expanding businesses seeking capital

- 3A: Credit Building (financial literacy, understanding and awareness, monitoring, building, dispute resolution and management)
- 3B: Financial Management (budgeting, forecasting, accounting, payment receivables management and tax preparation)
- 3C: Financing (loans, grants, equity, debt, valuation, Great Streets applications)
- 3D: Business expansion, Franchising (Pros & Cons, Regulations, Finance)

Stage 4: Transitioning businesses adapting to changes or closing

- 4A: Planning for business succession, selling, or closing due to changing ownership or market needs.
- 4B: Navigating District or Federal Government process for selling/closing a business

Façade Improvement Services

- **Outreach**—the program is marketed to all qualifying businesses in the service area/target area by the grantee. Each business/property owners will agree to participate under the terms established by the grantee (within the parameters established by DHCD).
- **Consult Phase** - the grantee works with the business/property owner to develop an action which leads to the development of a design, a scope of work for the project and a budget.

³ In developing DHCD's definition of business life cycles, the Department considered a number of resources from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Association for Enterprise Opportunity, the Coalition for Non-Profit Housing and Economic Development, Prosperity Now, Aspen Institute, and the Community Action Partnership.

- **Pre-development** - at this stage, the project is submitted formally to NBA including document between grantee and client, design/scope of work and budget/ proposed start date, list of contractors to be used and any documents needed for OPM checklist list. At this point, the grantee indicates what part of the cost of the project, the business can contribute. The grant covers the balance.
- **Pre-Con**—When NBA is satisfied with the SOW, Design and Budget document, a Pre-Con Meeting is scheduled with OPM which includes the grantee, the Façade Client/Business Owner, all contractors, architects, or design experts. The OPM checklist is completed and sent to OPM. Prior to the meeting, OPM obtains a Davis-Bacon wage decision which is communicated to the grantee and contractors at the Pre-Con. At the Pre-Con, the start date for the project is identified and set.
- **Notice to Proceed** - Prior to the start date, NBA provides the grantee with a Notice to Proceed. Work must commence with the Notice to Proceed. The Notice to Proceed will not be issued until there is a firm start date agreed in writing by all parties.
- **Construction** - Construction is begun. Grantee can submit invoices for reimbursement of construction minus 10% retainage. Retainage is paid out for all project top each grantee at the end of the grant period.
 - The selected applicant should document by photographs and data the progress of the project including the before and after appearances. Photographs and other relevant information should be shared with the Department.
- **Project Completion** - When a project is completed the selected applicant shall notify the NBA staff of the completion. Project completion should occur before September 30, 2025, the end of the fiscal year and no later than 25 weeks after the Notice to Proceed is issued.
- **Events** - Any events in connection with the project and especially its completion should include notification to the NBA staff.

3.3 Geographic Distribution of Services

The Department’s decision to select one, or more, grantees to provide services will be influenced by the potential geographical distribution of service among the qualified applications received. Applicants are free to designate their own proposed service areas in the District based on their by-laws, Board policies, etc. However, the Department reserves the right to designate any service areas it deems appropriate or necessary in making awards, and in negotiating grant terms. In reviewing the applicant pool, the Department’s priority will be to ensure that excellent affordable counseling and/or training services are provided to all low- and moderate-income citizens of the District of Columbia. The Department will seek to bring parity in quality of all services provided for all areas of the District through the award and ongoing management of these grants.

3.4 Marketing and Outreach

Marketing Plan to be submitted: Marketing and Outreach is a critical aspect of the grant's work. Grantees' efforts ensure the success and desired impact of these programs and services. No Grantee or service is exempt from this requirement. Applicants must submit a detailed marketing and outreach plan for the services for which they are applying. The plan should be detailed and not assume an understanding that has not been stated. Marketing should be included in the proposed budget and work plan.

Aspects of Marketing and Outreach to be considered:

- Continuous and consistent marketing and outreach is essential to achieve the objectives of these services and to achieve maximum public awareness of DHCD programs.
- Because DHCD's target population is diverse, grantees must utilize a full range of marketing tools.
- Grantees are responsible for distributing DHCD program materials at community forums, public events and homeownership meetings and fairs. Marketing and outreach may include, but is not limited to websites, email blasts, blogs, listservs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Hope Hotline, flyers, door-to-door visits, community meetings, use of cable television (Channel 16), and public service announcements.

Coordinated with the Department: Marketing and outreach provided by the Grantee must be coordinated with any DHCD marketing and outreach efforts. Grantees are expected to continually assess the success and impact of their marketing efforts in order to identify the most effective and efficient ways of reaching low- and moderate- income populations.

Participation in Department Marketing Activities: Grantees must participate, as required by DHCD, in public activities, and events related to economic development opportunities. These may include but not limited to tabling at events, being a part of panel discussions and providing speakers to groups, agencies or organizations that request a speaker.

DHCD Acknowledgement: In any distributed print or electronic materials, grantees must always acknowledge assistance activities as programs of the Department of Housing and Community Development. All such materials must be approved by DHCD prior to distribution.

Use of DHCD Logo: All written or printed materials distributed or posted by Grantee; that publicize the activities being funded by the D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development shall include information that the service, activity, or program is being supported and funded, partially or fully, by the Department.

1. The written or printed materials must include the authorized DHCD logo.
2. Written or printed materials include, but are not limited to, newspaper, radio and television announcements or advertisements. websites, stationery, publicity materials, and written media communications, including newsletters, flyers, and brochures.
3. Grantees must abide by DHCD style guidelines when using the authorized DHCD logo.
4. Grantor may require that specific templates be used when promoting certain grant-

funded programs. In those instances, DHCD will provide the templates and instructions to Grantee.

5. Grantee must provide copies of all marketing materials, brochures, flyers, and other materials that publicize grant-funded activities to Grantor via email at dhcd.occo@dc.gov
6. Grantee shall publicize as appropriate to its constituency through social media, print, and online postings, DHCD communications and events that are related to Grant supported activities.

Diversity and Language Access in Marketing: Grantees must demonstrate capability to effectively serve and communicate with the various non-English speaking and special needs populations in the District. This means that marketing and outreach materials must be made available in various languages and media, based on the needs of those populations. The grantee must demonstrate its intent and capability to comply with the District’s Language Access Law. In addition, grantees must demonstrate the availability of appropriate staffing to ensure compliance with the District’s Language Access Law.

3.5 Focus Areas and Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA)

DHCD has identified certain areas of the District as “Focus Areas”. These Areas represent neighborhoods where the District has invested for funding to create and preserve affordable housing. Focus Areas follow main routes through the District and their associated neighborhoods. Business owners in many cases are centered on these major routes, while resident services will be seen as more appropriate for those in the neighborhoods. Applicants will need to be certain that services be delivered to low- and moderate-income households or areas as their particular program (Housing Services, Small Business Technical Assistance, Façade Improvement). This is a CDBG requirement.

- For Housing Counseling applicants these Focus Areas should be used to plan outreach activities to inform residents of their services.
- For SBTA and Façade grantees, the Focus Areas define the geographical areas of the District in which they will provide services. In this later case, the Focus Areas define not only their outreach area, but also their service area.

Each applicant is asked to designate the Focus Areas in which they propose to be active as a part of their application. Applicants will be asked to provide reporting on outreach activities.

NRSAs Targeting East of the River

The Department has obtained the HUD designation for the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) for the Focus Areas in Ward 7 and Ward 8. DHCD has designated areas of Historic Anacostia in Southeast and Far Northeast communities in the city as Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs). This designation will allow the city to target Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding that supports economic and community revitalization efforts.

For communities outside of the NRSA areas, DHCD has designated Focus Areas throughout

the District. Applicants are encouraged to partner with other community-based organizations. This collaboration can include cross-disciplinary collaboration. For example, a Façade grantee may partner with an SBTA grantee to provide business owners with a range of services encompassing both disciplines. Housing service grantees may partner to promote or provide services which one grantee provides but another may not. Key to collaboration is an outlook of being partners not competitors.

The following is a list of the Focus Areas and some of their associated neighborhoods. Other nearby neighborhoods can be included in the outreach plans, mindful of the low and income requirements.

Focus Areas/Neighborhoods

- **16th St NW Corridor** near the intersection with Havard St NW (Columbia Heights) in Ward 1
- **Georgia Ave and New Hampshire Ave NW Corridor** (Petworth, Park View, Brightwood, Walter Reed, Takoma) in Ward 4
- **Rhode Island Ave and South Dakota Ave NE Corridor** (Manor Park, Woodridge, Ft. Lincoln, Michigan Park, Brentwood, Langdon) in Ward 4 and Ward 5
- **M Street and South Capitol Streets SW Corridor** (Greenleaf and Waterfront) in Ward 6
- **Benning Road and Florida Ave NE Corridor** (NoMa/Ivy City/Trinidad) in Ward 5 and Ward 6
- **Minnesota Ave and Benning Rd NE Corridor** (Benning, Greenway) in Ward 7
- **Pennsylvania Ave and Minnesota Aves SE Corridor** (Randle Highlands, Penn Branch, Hillcrest) in Ward 7
- **East Capitol and Benning Rd Corridor** (Capitol View, Lincoln Heights, Benning Heights, Deanwood, East Corner, Mayfair/Parkside) in Ward 7
- **Marion Barry Ave and Martin Luther King Aves SE Corridor** (Historic Anacostia, Fairlawn, Buena Vista, Barry Farm, St. Elizabeth) in Ward 8
- **Marion Barry Ave and Alabama Aves Corridor** (Skyland, Woodland, Garfield Heights) in Ward 8
- **Martin Luther King Ave and Alabama Ave Corridor** (Congress Heights, Shipley Terrace, Douglas) in Ward 8
- **South Capital St and Chesapeake St SE Corridor** (Bellevue, Washington Highlands) in Ward 8

SECTION 4. SELECTION PROCESS

4.1 Review Panel

The review panel for this RFA is composed of qualified, professional individuals who have been selected for their unique experiences in the community, in public service, in commercial development, and in neighborhood revitalization. When the review panel has completed its evaluations, the panel will make recommendations for awards based on the highest combined scores of the application. The Department and review panel will determine together minimum thresholds for each proposed project or activity for each which must be met in order for an applicant to be awarded funding. The process of evaluating applications may require applicants to make an oral presentation before the panel and/or require the panel to conduct a site visit of the applicant's facility.

4.2 Decision on Awards

The recommendations of the review panel are advisory only and are not binding on the Department of Housing and Community Development. The final decision on awards vests solely with the Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development. After reviewing the recommendations of the review panel and any other information considered relevant, the Director for DHCD will determine the award funds to the designated grantees. The Director is not required to award grants based on the applications received and reserves the authority to re-advertise for services and activities discussed in this Request for Applications.

4.3 Award Process

Conditional Award: The conditional is not a final grant award. The final award is contingent on notification to the District and the full commitment of HUD funding. This notification is anticipated on or about November 15, 2024. The conditional award is also contingent on the Selected Applicant supplying all documents requested by the deadline provided. Some documents require review by other agencies of the District Government. These reviews can take an unpredictable amount of time. Therefore, deadlines will be set to provide the best assurance that these reviews can be completed by November 15, 2024. Failure to keep these deadlines will delay grant execution and may affect the final award decision.

These contingencies and conditions will be provided in a Letter of Conditional Award.

Providing services is expected to begin on October 1, 2024, and continue until September 30, 2025. With this Letter of Conditional Award, the prospective grantee begins programmatic work and reporting. Reimbursement of funds cannot take place until the Federal commitment is received, and a Grant Agreement is executed, and the requisite purchase order(s) are created.

Document Deadlines: Selected applicants are encouraged to provide documentation by the deadlines provided by the Department.

Grant Agreement: Any applicant that is approved for funding must enter into a grant agreement with DHCD for implementation of the funded activity or project. This grant agreement will include provisions that will ensure compliance with federal and/or District laws and regulations and define the terms of the disbursement of funds.

Review of Workplans and Budgets: Prior to Conditional Award of the grant agreement, successful applicants will meet with DHCD staff to discuss the specific activities and projects that will be conducted under the grant agreement so that the applicant's mission, community needs, and District Government priorities are addressed. This effort will result in a detailed work plan, outcome measures, and budget that will become elements of the grant agreement.

Payment Reimbursements: Upon execution of the agreement, which is anticipated in late November and early December 2024, the organization will become eligible to receive disbursement of funds under the grant agreement.

Monitoring: In accordance with federal and District requirements, DHCD will conduct periodic evaluations of each awarded organization's use of grant funds. The areas of review will include financial management, regulatory compliance, and program performance. The reviews may also include scheduled or unscheduled site visits. Accordingly, each organization will be required to make available to DHCD all information and records necessary for the completion of its evaluation.

SECTION 5. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

5.1 Application Format

The application must be completed via ZoomGrants - [Small Business Services](https://www.zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2146&limited=5317) (<https://www.zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2146&limited=5317>).

It has five key parts:

- Application Summary
- Application Questions
- Budget
- Tables
- Documents

Certain documents will be uploaded to ZoomGrants portal. DHCD is not responsible for malfunctions with the platform.

- Applicants are expected to use the file names as prescribed. Failure to do so will result in loss of points.
- Similarly, applicants are expected to use the forms provided by the grantor without modification or alternation.
- Failure to follow application instructions will result in loss of points and potential disqualification from funding opportunity.

5.2 Technical Requirements

This Request for Applications RFA will be available on the DHCD website at <https://www.dhcd.dc.gov> on June 21, 2024. Those wishing to make an application in response to this RFA will need to do so via ZoomGrants. To use ZoomGrants to submit applications, you'll need a computer, internet access, and a valid email address. Don't have an email address? Signing up for a free email address and account on services such as Gmail and Yahoo is easy. Learn more:

- Setting Up Your Applicant Account and Creating Applications: <http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/setting-up-your-account-and-creating-applications/>
- I am a grant writer or represent multiple organizations or people. How can I use ZoomGrants? <http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/zg-for-grantwriters/>
- How do I change or reset the email address or password on an applicant account? <http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/how-do-i-change-or-reset-the-email-address-or-password-on-an-applicant-account/>
- How can I invite another user to work on my application or add someone else to our account? <http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/invite-collaborators/>

5.1 What Devices Can I Use?

You can access ZoomGrants via any internet-enabled device, including computers, tablets, and phones. A printer may also be handy if you'd like to print saved PDF copies of your application and any post-decision reports or invoices you must submit (if applicable). Depending on the specific requirements of each opportunity, you may also need access to a scanner. Click the Contact Admin tab in the application if you need additional information about the particulars of an application.

5.2 What Browser Do I Need?

ZoomGrants can be accessed using recent versions of nearly any browser, including Firefox, Safari, Chrome, and Edge. For the best experience, please use your most recent browser version. (You can download the latest version of those browsers by visiting their websites or going to <https://browsehappy.com/>.)

5.3 Application Process

Organizations that have ZoomGrants accounts for NBA grants may use the existing log-in. If an organization does not have a ZoomGrants account, that organization will have to create one. The same portal is used for monthly reporting.

5.4 How Do I Save My Application?

ZoomGrants will automatically save your progress via an auto-save feature that triggers when you click outside a field. For example, you'll see a brief flash of a saving screen if you're finished with a text response and your mouse into the following text box. Learn more about the auto-save feature here: How does the auto-save feature work? The 'Saving' screen is still flashing. How can I be sure my application is saved?
<http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/how-do-i-save-my-application/>

5.5 Can I Invite Others to Work on My Application?

Yes. Each account has an "Application Owner," the primary name of the account. The Application Owner can give access to other users as collaborators by inviting Collaborators. This gives these collaborators the ability to contribute to the application while you retain the ability to submit the completed application. Similarly, the Applicant Owner can remove access to Collaborators. Neither DHCD nor ZoomGrants can add "Collaborators". Only the main contact at the Organization can do this. Access may be given to others at any time.

Please note: If two users work on the same question simultaneously, the last person to auto-save their answer by clicking outside the box will overwrite anything previously saved by others. Be sure to check with your colleagues and use the Refresh Page button often to see the latest version of the application and ensure that you aren't overwriting one another's data. When working on the application simultaneously, we recommend that each user works in a different section or on different questions to avoid accidental overwriting.

<http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/invite-collaborators/>

5.6 Application Submission

Application owners will have a Submit button in their application. (Collaborators cannot submit applications.) Click that button to initiate the check for completion. If the check doesn't find any blank required questions or document requests, you can enter your initials to confirm agreement with the terms, then click the Submit button again to submit your application.

<http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/invite-collaborators/>

The application will be available to the receiving organization immediately. Verify that your application was submitted and that you are done. Learn more:

- Collaborators: I can't find the Submit button. How do I submit an application?
- How can I verify that my application was submitted?
- <http://help.zoomgrants.com/index.php/zgu/how-can-i-verify-that-my-application-was-submitted/>

Once you click the Submit button to submit your application, the system will check your questions and the required document request slots to ensure they are complete. If you've skipped any displayed questions or neglected to upload a file in any request marked "required," the system will list those items in red at the top of the application. Complete those items, click the Refresh Page button to refresh the page, then try to submit again.

5.7 Required Attachments

The following attachments are required to be completed form and can be found in the Library Tab section:

1. Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws
2. Organizational Chart noting key personnel (Names and Position)
3. Resume for each member of the Board and Corporate Officers
4. Staff Resumes (Management and Counseling Staff)
5. Staff Certifications, if applicable
6. Signed Conflict of Interest Statements by Board & Staff
7. Conflict of Interest Policy
8. IRS Letter of Determination
9. Proof of Federal Unique Entity Identifier
10. Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) if applicable
11. Copy of most recent Audit
12. Copy of most recent IRS 990
13. Copy of the Cost Allocation Plan or Copy of the Federal Indirect Cost Rate (if a Federal rate has been approved)
14. Certificate of Good Standing from DCLP (dated within the last 30 days)
15. Customer Service Policy
16. Accessibility & Affirmative Marketing Plan
17. Sample of Intake Forms

18. Sample of Disclose Form
19. Misc.
20. Proposed Workplan (Excel Only) PDFs will not be reviewed. The work plan should not be altered. Applicants are asked to complete all sections about the Service for which they request funding.
21. Marketing Plan (Word Only) PDFs will not be reviewed.

Questions related to AMP Accessibility Certification and Façade Accessibility Certification may be directed to Sonia Gutierrez, Fair Housing Coordinator, at (202) 442-7238.

Applicants may obtain the Certificate of Good Standing from the DC Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection <https://dlcp.dc.gov/>

5.3 Inquiries of Prospective Applicants

Applicants are encouraged to mail, e-mail, their questions to the contact person listed below on or before July 12, 2024, Questions submitted after the deadline date will not receive responses. Please allow ample time for mail to be received prior to the deadline date.

For further information, please contact:

William Winston
Associate Director for Community Development
Department of Housing and Community Development
1909 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave SE, Office # 304, Washington, DC 20020
771-208-9628
Bill.Winston@dc.gov

5.4 Resources

- For more information about the Department of Housing and Community Development, please visit <https://www.dhcd.dc.gov>
- Information regarding federal regulations which apply to Community Development Block Grants can be found on the US Department of Housing and Urban Development website: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning
- CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6214841a79953f26c5c230d72d6b70a1&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl
- Single Audit, which details federal audit requirements, is available from the US Office of Management and Budget: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/office-federal-financial-management/> and the Federal Audit Clearinghouse: <https://www.fac.gov/welcome/>
- Information on DC's Small Business Policies can be found at the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development's Small Business Policy Project. Consider the Small Business Policy Project Progress Report: Implementation of Recommendations:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/8xq6nunOdtony8y/2016%20Progress%20Report%20Small%20Business%20Policy%20Project%202-15-17%20final.pdf?dl=0>

- Consider the Start your business in 10 steps Guide: <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/10-steps-start-your-business/>

5.5 Public Legal Notice to Applicants

In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq., (Act) the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is also prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is also prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.