



Small Business Storefront Activation Program
Pre-Submittal Conference Q&A

1) What type of organizations can apply for this RFP?

Through this program, the City is seeking community and economic development organizations that will be responsible for identifying vacant storefronts in their respective community areas, negotiating leases with landlords, sourcing local small businesses for these storefront activations. Both non-profit and for-profit entities may apply, given that the entity is a community organization that has the capacity to run the storefront activation, offer technical assistance to small businesses, and can provide the required documentation.

2) How will selected organizations be paid for this grant?

This is a reimbursement grant and no start-up funding will be issued. Delegate agencies will submit invoices through eProcurement's [iSupplier](#) vouchering system to be reimbursed for previously paid expenses. If all documentation is properly submitted, vouchers will be reimbursed (on average after) after 10 business days. Vouchers should be submitted monthly.

3) If my organization is chosen as a delegate agency, how long will this contract be?

This will be at the discretion of the applying organization and the desired contract start and end date should be noted in the RFP response. The anticipated term of the contract is up to 14 months. Contracts are expected to start as early as November 15, 2023 and end as late as May 31, 2025. Each activation may be a minimum of 2 months long to a maximum of 12 months long. The term includes time for preparation before activations start and additional time for reporting after activation ends. No extensions to the contract term will be allowed.

4) What is meant by “placemaking efforts?”

Placemaking efforts means making it a space for the community with accessible events that draw traffic to the area and is a benefit for the community at-large.

5) Where is the list of previously selected delegate agencies from the 2022 Storefront program?

Delegate agencies selected for the 2022 program can be found at:
[Chicago.gov/BACPRecoveryPlan](https://chicago.gov/BACPRecoveryPlan)

6) What is the maximum budget a delegate agency can have for this program?

Average awards for the Small Business Storefront Activation program are expected to range from \$30,000 to \$200,000 per commercial corridor. Organizations may



apply for up to 2 corridors (depending on the volume of applications, BACP may select only 1 of the corridors). The award amount must be proportional to the activation's length (approximately \$17,000 per month per corridor). Organizations in the Central City Area may apply for up to \$300,000 per corridor (approximately \$25,000 per month per corridor), due to higher average rent.

7) How and when can small businesses apply to participate in this program?

Once delegate agencies are selected to manage activations in their respective commercial corridors, the City will issue a standard application for interested small businesses. Both start-up and expanding businesses can participate in this program. This application is expected to be released by November 2023 and will be posted at: [Chicago.gov/BACPRecoveryPlan](https://chicago.gov/BACPRecoveryPlan)

All small businesses participating in this program must have fewer than 500 employees, be based in Chicago, be incorporated or active in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT) or have proof of pandemic related losses or increased costs proportional to the program benefit and have all necessary licenses by the time the activations begin. To determine QCT eligibility, visit the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's [website](#).

8) What level of support will small businesses receive from selected delegate agencies?

Start-ups are expected to receive the opportunity to showcase their services/products in a retail storefront incubator. In addition to that, expanding businesses are expected to receive assistance in identifying a potential storefront and negotiating leases with the landlords. Both business types are expected to receive ongoing technical assistance from selected delegate agencies to ensure their success through the duration of the program.

9) Are any small businesses not eligible to participate in this program?

Applicants should note that the following business types are not eligible for grant funding through this program: Liquor stores, Cannabis dispensaries, Pawn shops, Strip clubs, Night clubs (except thoughts whose primary mission is performing arts, e.g., live DJs), Adult bookstores, Track wagering facilities (or other businesses with 33%+ revenue from gambling), Branch banks and payday loan stores (or businesses that earn 25%+ revenue from lending), Places of worship, Political or lobbying organizations. BACP reserves the right to update this list at any time.

10) How are commercial properties and landlords selected for this program?

Selected delegate agencies will be responsible for identifying vacant storefronts in a commercial corridor, negotiating leases with landlords, and managing operations



for the space. There is no pre-existing list of pre-approved spaces. Delegate agencies will be required to have a competitive selection process for participating landlords.

Preference will be given to proposals that include vacant properties that are move-in ready, available at reasonable rental rates, with below-market rates preferred, and in high-traffic commercial corridors. The program must be open to any landlord that wishes to participate.

Delegate agencies are expected to partner with landlords that have been actively engaged in good-faith efforts to lease their properties for short or long term uses. Landlords that own buildings with serious and chronic code violations, or that have outstanding fines owed to the city, are not eligible to participate in this program.

11) What types of temporary cosmetic upgrades can be made to a selected vacant space?

Temporary cosmetic updates can include cleaning, installing wall partitions, hangings, or curtains, changing light bulbs, and painting. This program is for move-in ready spaces only. No funds can be used for construction, build outs, or any permanent upgrades. Any permanent items purchased required to prepare properties for use (e.g., tables, chairs, trash cans) are not eligible for funding. Selected delegate agencies will be expected to provide these items, or if needed, rent them for the length of the activation using grant funding.

12) Where can the Small Business Storefront Activation Program RFP be viewed?

To view this RFP, visit the [City's eProcurement website](#) and search by RFP #9649. The RFP submissions must be completed by October 13, 2023 by 12:00PM (Noon).

13) How does an organization apply for this RFP?

To apply for this RFP or any City RFP, you must register via iSupplier. To register and for more information, visit the City's [eProcurement website](#).

If you have questions about registration, use of the iSupplier or online bidding, please call 312-744-HELP Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm or email customersupport@cityofchicago.org.

14) Where can I view this program's pre-submittal conference, originally recorded on October 3, 2023?

Links for both the pre-submittal conference, the corresponding presentation, and a copy of program FAQs can be found at: Chicago.gov/BACPrecoveryPlan



15) If I have questions about this program, who do I contact?

For questions regarding the Storefront Activation Program, please email bacpeconomicrecovery@cityofchicago.org.