

## ***BACP Program: Neighborhood Business Development Centers (NBDC)***

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### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

The City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) will provide funding to not-for-profit organizations to provide business development assistance to Chicago's small business community through its Neighborhood Business Development Centers (NBDC) program. Participants of the NBDC program, also known as NBDC "grantees", will deliver customized business counseling, foster neighborhood engagement with the local business community, drive neighborhood economic vitality through business attraction and retention, enlist small businesses in making their neighborhoods safer for business, and build their capacity to more effectively deliver services. NBDC grantees will work in partnership with the City of Chicago (City) to significantly improve the small business experience in Chicago by providing small businesses, and fellow NBDC grantees, with expert training and resources to help address common challenges and support key City priorities. NBDC Program applicants may apply to any, or all, of the program categories listed below.

### **PROGRAM CATEGORIES:**

To ensure that small businesses, and NBDC grantees, receive the expert guidance and support they need, the City seeks NBDC Program participants to work directly with the small business community to provide specialized services, or with fellow NBDC grantees to help build their capacity to successfully serve Chicago's small businesses and neighborhoods. The City is seeking NBDC Program participants to provide services that fall into the following six (6) categories:

1. Generalist
2. Diversity Outreach
3. Small Business Opportunity Centers (SBOC)
4. Innovation Centers
5. Special Projects
6. Peer-to-Peer Training

Applicants must identify which category, or categories, they are applying for, and be able to comply with the following minimum requirements for each category:

- Implement the activities and fulfill the targets set in the approved grantee work plan;
- For program compliance, all NBDC grantees will be required to submit documentation and reports, also known as "deliverables", to validate completion of program activities;
- For fiscal compliance, all NBDC grantees will be required to submit vouchers/invoices and participate in all City and BACP-sponsored audits, site visits, evaluation, and quality assurance activities.

### **CATEGORY 1: NBDC - GENERALIST**

The City seeks not-for-profit organizations, as NBDC - Generalist grantees, to provide geographic-based business development assistance to Chicago's small business community in defined geographic areas, which includes providing customized business counseling, fostering neighborhood engagement with the local business community, driving neighborhood economic vitality through business attraction and retention, enlisting small businesses in making their neighborhoods safer for business, while also building their capacity to more effectively deliver services.

#### **NBDC - Generalist Key Functions:**

- Maintain current and quality strategies for supporting businesses and neighborhoods.
- Serve as an extension of the BACP's Small Business Center,

- For business owners who are ready to apply for a City of Chicago business license and/or Public Way Use permit:
  - Identify the type of license/permit that aligns with the business activity
  - Prior to business investment (lease and/or purchase of property), identify via the City of Chicago Zoning map if the desired business location is properly Zoned to allow the business activity.
  - Identify issues/challenges in securing the license/permit
  - Support the applicant through the application process
  - Advise applicants of the online business license application system in addition to in-person consultations/applications
- For business owners who are not ready to apply for a City of Chicago business license and/or Public Way Use permit:
  - Provide them with mentorship, technical assistance and/or next steps to be ready to apply for a license/permit
  - If not offered in-house, recommend capacity building resources (e.g. entrepreneurial training program, business incubator)
  - Ensure the applicant is on a path to successfully secure a license/permit
- Business Consultations (non-Tax Increment Financing (“TIF”) related): These services include identifying the business or entrepreneur’s needs as they start-up and grow, as well as providing progressive actions to address their needs to a final resolution. Examples include, but are not limited to: helping businesses with financial counseling; business planning; access to training and resources; applying for City licenses and permits; and helping businesses navigate City government.
- Business Consultations (TIF-related) (where applicable): This service includes marketing TIF to current or prospective businesses, developers, and investors and assisting them in securing the TIF incentive.
- Welcomes, and provides ongoing support to, newly licensed businesses within their geographic region as identified from the City Data Portal.
- Provides referrals for businesses seeking assistance to both business and non-business resource partners.
- Connects with partners to support businesses, for example connecting with the nearest Small Business Opportunity Centers, Innovation Centers, and Microlenders.
- Forms a coalition with at least 2-3 geographic and/or industry-based partners to develop a regional strategy or initiatives the support the small business landscape in their geographic region.
- Develops business events, that will foster engagement and communication, which can include Networking, Educational, Business Roundtables, Business-to-Business, Safety Seminars, Working Group/Task Force
- Develops consumer events, to promote local spending, which can include: Producing Festivals, Marketing Events, Buy Local Event, and/or events designed to drive customer traffic.
- Produces campaigns that showcase assets and/or leverages several business owners to create engaging, unique ways for consumers to connect with the business community (e.g. Buy Local Campaign).
- Maintains an active and viable list of real estate vacancies in the district by gathering listing information from property owners and/or real estate brokers.
- Develops and maintains a community profile to be used as a business attraction strategy.
- Maintains relationships with local property owners and brokers, and plays an active role in business attraction to storefronts.

- Must have a functioning website, email, phone and social media outlets that at minimum include City and local resources for businesses; links to the City of Chicago Small Business Center Website and Site Selector; links to aldermen’s offices for the NBDC service area; and calendar of events, e-blasts and e-newsletters.
- Attend the triannual mandatory NBDC grantees meetings called “ChiBiz Chat”. At least one NBDC grantee staff member is required to attend each one of the three (3) ChiBiz Chats per year, and stay for the duration of the meeting. The events are an opportunity for NBDC grantee representatives to learn about the latest NBDC Program-related updates, participate in speaker discussions, network and exchange best practices.

## **CATEGORY 2: NBDC - DIVERSITY OUTREACH**

The City seeks not-for-profit organizations, as NBDC - Diversity Outreach grantees, to provide diversity-based business development assistance, and support services, directly to target populations in Chicago’s small business community. Target populations include, but are not limited to, minorities, women, people with disabilities, LGBT individuals, returning citizens, New Americans, and military veterans.

NBDC - Diversity Outreach Key Functions:

- Provide 1:1 business counseling and referral services to the target populations
- Work collaboratively with other NBDC grantees, including, but not limited to, participating in a Regional Impact Project
- Host business events such as Networking, Educational, Business Roundtables, Business-to-Business, Safety Seminars, Working Group/Task Force
- Help their target population(s) businesses lease or purchase commercial sites in the City
- Implement activities that attract customers to their target population(s)’ businesses
- Convey stories about agency’s impact on their target populations
- Must have a functioning website, email, phone and social media outlets that at minimum includes City and local resources for businesses; links to the City of Chicago Small Business Center Website and Site Selector; links to aldermen’s offices for the NBDC service area; calendar of events, e-blasts and e-newsletters.
- Attend the triannual mandatory NBDC grantees meetings called “ChiBiz Chat”. At least one NBDC grantee staff member is required to attend each one of the three (3) ChiBiz Chats per year, and stay for the duration of the meeting. The events are an opportunity for NBDC grantee representatives to learn about the latest NBDC Program-related updates, participate in speaker discussions, network and exchange best practices.

## **CATEGORY 3: NBDC - SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY CENTERS (SBOC)**

The City seeks not-for-profit organizations, as NBDC - SBOC grantees, to provide support, counseling and coaching assistance to entrepreneurs in Chicago’s small business community that require access to capital. This includes accepting referrals from NBDC grantees, and other referral partners, of business owners looking to borrow funds and be matched with the right lender. NBDC-SBOCs are expected to develop a curriculum/individualized work plan for business owners based on their stage in the loan-readiness process.

**NBDC - SBOC Key Functions:**

- For business owners who are ready to apply for a small business loan:

- Identify the best financing product to pursue and recommend options for financing (e.g. microloans, SBA loans, conventional loans, crowd funding, etc.)
- Enhance an applicant’s existing loan activity so the SBOC can make stronger referrals
- Help assemble business loan application documents
- For business owners who are not ready to apply for a small business loan:
  - Provide them with mentorship, credit building coaching, technical assistance and/or credit counseling opportunities and providers
  - If not offered in-house, recommend capacity building resources (e.g. entrepreneurial training program, business incubator)
- Maintain relationships with financial institutions and programs that provide access to capital
- Must have a functioning website, email, phone and social media outlets that at minimum includes City and local resources for businesses; links to the City of Chicago Small Business Center Website and Site Selector; links to aldermen’s offices for the NBDC service area; calendar of events, e-blasts and e-newsletters.
- Attend the triannual mandatory NBDC grantees meetings called “ChiBiz Chat”. At least one NBDC grantees staff member is required to attend each one of the three (3) ChiBiz Chats per year, and stay for the duration of the meeting. The events are an opportunity for NBDC grantee representatives to learn about the latest NBDC Program-related updates, participate in speaker discussions, network and exchange best practices.

#### **CATEGORY 4: NBDC - INNOVATION CENTERS**

The City seeks not-for-profit organizations, as NBDC - Innovation Center grantees, to create, or develop, neighborhood-based shared work environments for small businesses and entrepreneurs through an incubator, accelerator, and/or co-working center.

NBDC - Innovation Center Key Functions:

- Identify the type of shared working space the applicant will develop or expand: incubator, accelerator, and/or co-working center
- Describe the business profile of those served by the applicant’s Innovation Center (e.g., targeted population and/or industry, annual sales, etc.)
- Develop space and programming to support the needs of the applicant’s targeted enrollee (e.g., office suites, conference rooms, internet access, B2B meet-and-greets, etc.).
- Develop a recruitment/marketing approach (e.g. expos, flyers, website, newsletters, aldermen’s offices, word of mouth)
- Screen entrepreneurs and/or businesses and provide ongoing management and support:
  - For entrepreneurs/businesses that are enrolled in the applicant’s Innovation Center:
    - Keep baseline data that will be collected periodically throughout their tenure and upon graduation from the Innovation Center
    - Provide services such as, but not limited to: access to capital, business plan development, legal assistance, technology, marketing; data analysis, coaching, classes/workshops, and other business services; refer enrollees when needed to appropriate City resource partners (e.g. (e.g. Small Business Opportunity Centers (SBOCs), Microlenders, and legal services)
    - Create an Exit Strategy for enrollees that may include, but is not limited to:
      - Create an action plan with an assigned coach
      - Connect enrollee with relevant City resource partners
      - Monitor revenue growth

- Monitor capacity/space needs
- Monitor jobs created
- Monthly check-ins/updates
- Create exit plan (custom to each business)
- Execute exit plan 12-18 months from start of action plan
- For entrepreneurs/businesses that are not enrolled in the applicant’s Innovation Center:
  - Provide them with mentorship and connection with the appropriate referral partner in the Innovation Center network based on their needs (e.g. business is not ready for an accelerator and is referred to an incubator, or a mid-growth company is too large for an incubator and is referred to an accelerator) as well as referrals to City resource partners (e.g. SBOCs, Microlenders, legal services)
- Create/update an Innovation Center Toolkit that is scalable and user-friendly for NBDCs to know how to work with Innovation Centers
- Must have a functioning website, email, phone and social media outlets that at minimum includes City and local resources for businesses; links to the City of Chicago Small Business Center Website and Site Selector; links to aldermen’s offices for the NBDC service area; calendar of events, e-blasts and e-newsletters.
- Attend the triannual mandatory NBDC grantees meetings called “ChiBiz Chat”. At least one NBDC grantees staff member is required to attend each one of the three (3) ChiBiz Chats per year, and stay for the duration of the meeting. The events are an opportunity for NBDC grantee representatives to learn about the latest NBDC Program-related updates, participate in speaker discussions, network and exchange best practices.

#### **CATEGORY 5: NBDC - SPECIAL PROJECTS**

The City seeks not-for-profit organizations, as NBDC - Special Project grantees, to work directly with small businesses and/or other NBDC grantees through current, expanded and/or innovative pilot projects that will spur small business growth and/or neighborhood economic development.

#### **NBDC - Special Project Key Functions:**

- State the gap for proposed project(s) for the geographic area, targeted population and/or targeted industry/sector
- Identify the expected impact of the proposed project(s)
- List reasons why the applicant is successful in implementing the project(s)
- Proposed program, expected outcomes, and evaluation methods
- How the proposal will expand an existing program or is innovative
- Identify up to five short-term goals for the project and how they align with your long-term goals
- Identification of meaningful indicators that show the impact of the applicant’s proposed activities (e.g., jobs created or retained, businesses created or retained, increased sales or fundraising, or other relevant outcomes or metrics)
- How the impact will be tracked, quarterly metrics, and final deliverables
- Experience and credentials in delivering similar services or programs
- Why funding from the NBDC-Special Project program is required to achieve goals
- Must have a functioning website, email, phone and social media outlets that at minimum includes City and local resources for businesses; links to the City of Chicago Small Business Center Website and Site Selector; links to aldermen’s offices for the NBDC service area; calendar of events, e-blasts and e-newsletters.

- Attend the triannual mandatory NBDC grantees meetings called “ChiBiz Chat”. At least one NBDC grantees staff member is required to attend each one of the three (3) ChiBiz Chats per year, and stay for the duration of the meeting. The events are an opportunity for NBDC grantee representatives to learn about the latest NBDC Program-related updates, participate in speaker discussions, network and exchange best practices.

#### **CATEGORY 6: NBDC - PEER-TO-PEER TRAINING**

The City seeks not-for-profit organizations, as NBDC - Peer-to-Peer Training grantees, to work directly with NBDC grantees, with a focus on building the capacity of the organization.

#### **NBDC - Peer-to-Peer Training Key Functions:**

- Determines objectives that will be pursued collectively with the NBDC grantee and establishes timelines to meet them
- Sets clear short-term and long-term goals for activities and outcomes and establishes the priorities, guiding the plan and providing a shared sense of purpose
- Identifies best practices/models taking into account needs of the community
- Tracks growth and improvement through metrics
- Develops activities and initiatives that will promote growth and expansion
- Provides training and technical assistance as well as tools and resources
- Establishes regular meetings and check-ins
- Must have a functioning website, email, phone and social media outlets that at minimum includes City and local resources for businesses; links to the City of Chicago Small Business Center Website and Site Selector; links to aldermen’s offices for the NBDC service area; calendar of events, e-blasts and e-newsletters.
- Attend the triannual mandatory NBDC grantees meetings called “ChiBiz Chat”. At least one NBDC grantees staff member is required to attend each one of the three (3) ChiBiz Chats per year, and stay for the duration of the meeting. The events are an opportunity for NBDC grantee representatives to learn about the latest NBDC Program-related updates, participate in speaker discussions, network and exchange best practices.

#### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

NBDC grantees will be required to track a range of metrics using BACP-mandated platforms and report on targets agreed upon by the applicant and the City. A portion of these will be measured against preset agency targets as part of their contractual obligation, while others will be collected for information-gathering purposes for the City. Proposed metrics for the 2019/2020 NBDC program include, but are not limited to:

- Business consultations and referrals
- Contacting newly licensed businesses
- Stories/photos about helping businesses start and/or grow, profiling successful implementation of a neighborhood engagement project, and receiving media coverage
- Business and consumer events
- Commercial attraction activities

#### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

***All program specific questions, requirements, forms, or templates that applicants must answer or complete will be available on the City of Chicago eProcurement site.***

**SELECTION CRITERIA:**

All proposals that are received by the deadline will undergo a technical review to determine whether all required components have been addressed and included. Proposals that are determined by BACP to be incomplete may not be considered. BACP reserves the right to waive irregularities that, within its sole discretion, BACP determines to be minor. If such irregularities are waived, similar irregularities in all proposals will be waived. Proposals that are determined to be complete will be forwarded to a Review Panel. The Review Panel will evaluate and rate all remaining proposals based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Applicant demonstrates it has the following key existing capacities for the NBDC program section of this RFP:
  - Ability to provide assistance to businesses according to the program requirements as listed in the “Key Functions of NBDCs” above
  - Experience in or verifiable ability of performing contractual obligations to execute expected commitments of NBDCs
  - Filling a noted program gap and describing why/how the NBDC funding is required to achieve goals. The applicant must identify any 2017/2018 NBDCs currently servicing the proposed geographic area and describe how their services are distinctive from the services provided by the 2017/2018 NBDCs.
- Applicant demonstrates how it is successful in performing activities listed in the “Key Functions of NBDCs” section of this RFP.
- Number of years the agency is financially in the black as evidenced by IRS Form 990’s.
- Overall quality and completeness of the application.
- Not responding to any question in the application (e.g. stating the agency is “not a City grantee” etc.) will be considered an incomplete application and may disqualify the application.

BACP reserves the right to recommend qualified funding proposals out of rank to ensure adequate geographic distribution of services. Qualified proposals will be scored against proposals in the same modality or type of service. City funding for the NBDC program is meant to be a minor supplement to an applicant’s fundraising efforts, member dues, or revenue from events or other sources.

**PRIOR YEAR STATISTICS FOR THIS PROGRAM:**

Applications received:	N/A
Projects funded:	90
Range of funding:	\$15,000 to \$92,000
Total funding:	\$3,360,000

**PROGRAM CONTACT:**

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