



COVID-19 Small Business Support (CSBS) Program RFP # 8287

September 21, 2021

Departmental Overview

RFP

Q&A



Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP)

Business
Compliance
and
Enforcement

Local Liquor
Control

Office of
Labor
Standards

Outreach,
Education, &
Municipal
Television

Prosecution
&
Adjudication

Public
Vehicle
Licensing &
Inspections

Small
Business
Advocacy:
NBDC & CBC
Programs

Small
Business
Center:
Business
Licensing &
PWU
Permitting



The City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) will provide funding to **nonprofit (i.e. 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6)) organizations to deliver free business development assistance to small businesses impacted by COVID-19 pandemic**

Participants in the COVID-19 Small Business Support Program, known as “grantees”, will deliver highly specialized business programs/services to business owners aiding in their recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency

Grantees will work in partnership with the City of Chicago (City) to support small business by providing entrepreneurs and business owners with targeted expert training and resources to help address common challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic

Grantees will also serve as conduits for sharing information on COVID-19 relief resources provided by Federal, State and Local governmental entities

Qualified program applicants may apply to any, or all, of the program categories listed in this Request for Proposal



The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to provide a **maximum of up to \$60,000 per category** to organizations to support small businesses in Chicago that have been impacted by the pandemic

The program is designed to address the ever-evolving needs of Chicago's diverse business community due to the pandemic and assist in mitigating financial hardship such as declines in revenues and increased costs, to address the impacts of periods of closure/capacity restrictions, to implement COVID-19 prevention or mitigation tactics, or to assist with business planning needs related to COVID-19

Submissions for multiple categories will require multiple proposals



To ensure that the aforementioned small business owners and entrepreneurs receive the expert guidance and support they need to recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic, *this program encourages respondents to identify their core competency and focus only on the program category or categories their organization can effectively implement within the specified timeframe.*

There is no limit on the number of proposals an organization can submit, however, separate proposals are required for each category.



Outreach and General Business Assistance

- Direct outreach, resulting in coaching and advising to existing small and medium businesses in your organization's service population area, to inform them of available financial relief and other services to support their recovery from the economic impact of the pandemic. Outreach may include staff time for in-person outreach or phone calls, flyers, mailings, support with applications for financial relief programs, connections to loan programs or other financial resources, general coaching to improve business model resilience, etc.

Specialized Technical Assistance

- Specialized training or one-on-one sessions to help existing small and medium businesses cope with the operational changes necessitated by and interruptions caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Examples could include topics providing access to professional services such as pivoting to online sales and orders, online advertising, cash flow management and accounting, inventory management in light of recent supply chain shifts, reconfiguring processes/ layout to support public health guidance and employee/ customer health concerns, etc.

Language Access

- Language access services to help small and medium businesses better access COVID-19 relief funds and support services, such as translation line services or part time staff to support more non-English speaking clients than your organization is currently able to serve.

Vacant Storefronts and Pop-Up Support

- Small grants to commercial property owners who have lost tenants due to the pandemic, to pay rent to drive traffic towards those spaces. A requirement of that support is that they allow a local business to use the space in pop-up capacity until a long-term tenant is identified. Additionally, pop-up support can be provided to support existing businesses that were harmed by the pandemic (revenue loss, lost their storefront) in launching a pop-up space or retail event in vacant storefronts.



Back to Business Support

- Funding to support "open for business" type campaign/events that would draw customers back to businesses that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19. The campaigns must focus on activating corridors that have seen a heavy impact from the pandemic.

Street Ambassadors

- Organizations will identify staff to serve as ambassadors for the commercial corridors impacted by COVID-19. The ambassadors will promote shopping safely by doing the following: wear a mask reminder, making masks available, encouraging social distancing. Ambassadors may also serve as a friendly, official presence at heavily trafficked corridors or special events.

Outdoor Plazas

- Funding to support outdoor plazas to provide communities impacted by COVID-19 with space for outdoor activities such as dining to promote public health and support local businesses impacted by the pandemic (for example, Chicago Alfresco plazas or other Make Way for People areas). These areas must be in use by early October to be eligible.

COVID-19 Related Training and Outreach Materials

- Organizations will prepare materials and lead trainings on their use so that other business service organizations can best use them to support the above services. In particular, we are seeking outreach and navigation materials for use across the network (aggregated lists of all relief programs currently available, guidance on how to decide which programs to apply for, etc.) and training programs that can be shared across the network to support COVID-19 resilience for businesses (e.g., online marketing, how to adjust your business model to cope with COVID-19 impacts, other relevant topics).





SELECTION CRITERIA

The mission of the organization is aligned with objectives of the program; which include demonstrated experience working with small businesses in low to moderate income communities

Experience, or verifiable ability, in performing the business support activities noted in the RFP

Fiscal capacity to administer the program by demonstrated experience and ability to utilize grants with proper controls and in compliance with federal and local regulations within an expedited timeframe

Demonstrated ability with administering federally funded programs, with a particular focus on proper monitoring, record keeping and accounting

Applicant clearly demonstrates how they will be successful in performing activities listed in this RFP, given that all services must be performed prior to December 31, 2021, including their plan for scaling up current activity levels (where relevant)

Number of years the agency has had positive net assets or fund balances as evidenced by IRS Form 990

Overall quality and completeness of the application

Not responding to any question in the application will render the application incomplete and will disqualify the applicant



Monitoring – 15 points

Program Summary – 40 points

Budget Information – 15 points

Organizational Capacity – 15 points

Overall Responsiveness – 15 points



**CONTRACT
TERM**

The anticipated start date of the contract is October 15, 2021 with an end date of December 31, 2021

**FUNDING
SOURCE**

This initiative is funded by the Coronavirus Relief Fund with the US Department of Treasury

DUE DATE

October 1, 2021, 12:00 PM, NOON CDT

**SUBMISSION
LOCATION**

Proposals must be submitted via online application @ chicago.gov/eprocurement

Emailed or faxed proposals will not be accepted

QUESTIONS

Email to nbdc@cityofchicago.org



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Commissioner

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