

BIPOC-Owned Business Grant Program Summary

The BIPOC-Owned Businesses Grant Program is an initiative providing grants to qualifying people of color¹-owned small local businesses that enable the City retain and grow existing businesses, and/or assist with start-up activities.

Eligibility Framework:

In order for a business to be eligible, they must demonstrate they meet defined criteria around BIPOC-ownership, license to conduct business in the City of Alexandria, compliance with City fiscal and regulatory policies (“in good standing”). Criteria will also clearly define businesses or organizations that are not eligible.

Grant Amount:

Businesses awarded a one-time grant of up to \$7,000. Grant awards will be tiered based on business maturity (eg. years in operation, brick and mortar presence, employment provided) and need (capital/equipment expenses versus operational expenses), with average grant size expected to be \$5,000.

A grant fund of \$250,000 with average grant size of \$5,000 allows for approximately 50 businesses to be served by the program, the number of businesses ultimately dependent on the average grant request.

Acceptable Use of Grant Funds:

Given the barriers with access to capital, acceptable uses are aimed to be flexible covering documented expenses related to:

- sustaining business operations (running a business),
- enabling resiliency (long-term profitability of the business) and
- growth (capital and equipment expenses).

Review:

It is anticipated that the number of eligible applicants may exceed the total funding currently available. Businesses that did not receive prior Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES”)/American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) grants (Back to Business Round 1, Back to Business Round 2, Back to Business All-Weather Grant, Queen Street Corridor Grant, Childcare Workforce Stabilization Grant Program) through the City (business grant programs administered by AEDP/ACT for Alexandria) will be prioritized. After this prioritization, if the number of prioritized eligible applicants exceed the funding available, it is anticipated that awardees shall be selected by lottery from the prioritized pool.

Performance Agreement & Reporting:

Grantees will be required to enter into a Performance Agreement (PA). The PA will outline how the business intends to use the grant funds and include a reporting requirement. The City anticipates using a third party for compliance and reporting, or will require a certification process for compliance and reporting.

Anticipated Timeline:

- October: City Council release of contingency reserve funds
- November: Finalize grant application based on final round of outreach
- December: Launch grant program and receive applications
- January: Application review and selection
- February: Notification of awards to grantees and execution of Performance Agreements
- March: Transfer of grant funds to businesses
- March – June: Reporting period and close-out.

¹ [§ 2.2-1604 Code of Virginia](#)