



City of Charleston
Small Business Investment Grant Program

Spring 2021 - GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION



Small Business Investment Grant Program Spring 2021 - Grant Guidelines, Requirements & Application

The City of Charleston has created a special Small Business Investment Grant program to aid small businesses and merchants in the community. The grant program is intended to incentivize and motivate small business owners to:

1. repair/renovate a building's exterior and make physical enhancements in a manner that keeps with the historically appropriate feel of the respective surrounding area.
2. improve the small business making it more attractive for current and future customers; or
3. enhance a small business's marketing and customer service capabilities via e-commerce, web development, social media marketing, etc.

Grant Program Overview

1. Under this program, an eligible small business in the City of Charleston is defined as having no more than 35 employees (FTE) and no more than \$2 million in annual gross revenues.
2. An application must be for a small business located in the city limits of Charleston.
3. A total of \$80,000 in grants will be awarded as part of each of the three phases of this program, and grant awards may be prioritized based on documented opportunities to grow a small business's profitability and enhance sustainability.
4. The maximum annual grant award for any one business is \$10,000. Grant funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis, and all grant awards must be matched by 25%.
5. An applicant must submit a written request summarizing the original budget, previously received funds and a brief description of the project and its benefits.
6. This is a competitive grant. A scoring review group will receive and consider all grant applications. The group will make a limited number of awards based on established program objectives, scoring criteria and total allotted funds.

7. Grant applications will be scored based on completeness of application, project's relevance to enhancing the small business's growth and sustainability and outlined benefits to the city of Charleston.
8. Grant funds will be issued once the approved project is completed and sufficient project documentation is reviewed and accepted.

Grant Project Activities

An application must outline one of three project activities:

1. Construction / Repair / Equipment Projects: These projects are defined as any outward facing surface of a building visible from street level, any exterior elevation impacting a public space or right-of-way or any significant interior projects. Elements eligible for funding are:

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Doors | • Stairs | • Painting |
| • Windows | • Roof | • Siding Repair |
| • Framing | • Fences | • Stucco Repair |
| • Kick Paneling | • Tile/Flooring/Carpet | • Removal of Retaining Walls |
| • Entryway Ceilings | • Signage | • Ramps/Lifts |
| • Exterior Lighting | • Awnings | • Equipment |
| • Cornices | • Masonry Repair | |

2. Demolition Projects: A demolition project must include a contract outlining work to be performed, rehabilitation of affected property and prior review and approval from all necessary city agencies, including any applicable state and city historic preservation reviews.

3. Broadband Connectivity or Marketing & Advertising Enhancement Project: This project shall be a one-time need and must include a description of service specifications and an explanation of how this will benefit the small business in its operations, web development, e-commerce/marketing, customer service, etc.

Grant Stipulations

All applicants must be registered and in good standing with the City Collector's Office. (If you have questions regarding your status please call the City Collector's office at 304-348-8024.)

General Design Considerations for Construction / Repair Projects:

- The visual prominence of the building and its location;
- The aesthetic quality and historic accuracy of the design proposal;
- The potential impact on the attractiveness of the city streetscape;
- The particular building, and the economic development of the designated project area;

- The comprehensive approach of the design and the long-term maintenance plan; and
- Grant monies or matching monies shall not be used for foundation and structural work, administrative/operational costs or inventory purchases.

Where applicable, proposed designs must comply with a CURA district Renewal Plan of the City of Charleston and must be approved by the City.

All storefronts and lighting shall be designed, constructed and maintained to complement and accentuate the architectural features of the building. All accessories, signs and awnings shall likewise harmonize with the overall character of the building and the area around it.

Construction/remodel/demolition projects must be approved and have appropriate building permits before work can be commenced. Work started prior to receiving a written grant award notice will not be included in the reimbursement.

Upon request for the grant funding distribution, an applicant shall provide a listing of applicable expenses/contract work and before and after photos of the project.

The Grantee must provide proof of financial match.

The applicant may be the property owner or a tenant. If a tenant, you must submit the property owner's signed consent (see attached form).

If project work has not commenced within six months of a grant award, the award will expire. Moreover, if any project is not complete within one year of a grant award, the grant will expire.

By submitting an application, the applicant grants permission to the City to take and use before and after photos of the project for publicity, educational and promotional use. Each business receiving a grant agrees to allow the city to publish its name and any photos acquired as part of media and promotional activities.

The completed project must be left in its approved design and colors for a period of two years from the date of completion, or as otherwise agreed up between the grant recipient and the City.

Application Deadline

All applications must be received via email by 5 p.m. on March 31, 2021.

Email to: jane.bostic@cityofcharleston.org.

For more information please contact: Jane Bostic, Special Assistant to the Mayor, at 304-348-8000 or jane.bostic@cityofcharleston.org.



Small Business Investment Grant Program Spring 2021

APPLICATION FORM

Please print and provide all information:

Name: _____

Business: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Business phone: () _____ Cell phone: () _____

Email: _____ Year business was established _____

Brief description of your business: _____

Property Information:

Address of property to be renovated (if different than above):

- Own
- Lease (*If lease, please provide proof of building owner approval by having the attached Owner Authorization form completed and notarized.*)

Check if any apply:

- Woman owned
- Veteran owned
- Minority/black owned
- Disability owned
- Entrepreneur or start-up business

Proposed time schedule for the project:

Start Date: _____ / _____ / _____ Date of Estimated Completion: _____ / _____ / _____

I hereby submit the attached plans, specifications and details for this proposed project, and I understand they are subject to the approval of the scoring review group of the city of Charleston. I have read and understand the attached requirements. I understand this is a matching grant program. I understand that no work should begin before my request for funding has been approved, and that this money is granted on a reimbursement basis, following completion of work and that design changes not approved by the city will not be funded. I agree to turn in receipts and a written report accounting for the total reimbursement amount to the city.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date of Application: _____ / _____ / 21

All applications are due via email no later than 5 p.m. on March 31, 2021.

Email to: jane.bostic@cityofcharleston.org

For more information please contact: Jane Bostic, Special Assistant to the Mayor, at 304-348-8000 or jane.bostic@cityofcharleston.org.

AFFIDAVIT
IN SUPPORT OF CITY OF CHARLESTON SMALL BUSINESS
INVESTMENT GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

I, _____ (hereinafter, the “Affiant”), being duly sworn, hereby depose and say as follows:

1. That I am the _____ [Affiant’s capacity] _____ [business name] (hereinafter, the “Business”), and that I am authorized to sign the Business’s City of Charleston Small Business Investment Grant Program Application (hereinafter, the “Application”);
2. That the information supplied in, attached to, or otherwise incorporated into the Business’s Application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge;
3. That the Business is a small business with no more than 35 employees (FTE) and no more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) in annual gross revenues; and
4. That I understand, by affixing my signature hereto, falsification of any portion of the City of Charleston Small Business Investment Grant Program Application that this Affidavit is intended to support, or falsification of any portion of this Affidavit, may constitute false swearing, perjury, fraud, or other crimes or torts cognizable under the laws of the State of West Virginia.

Further, affiant saith not.

Signature of Affiant

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA,

COUNTY OF KANAWHA, TO WIT:

Signed and sworn to before me by _____, in Kanawha

County, West Virginia, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

My commission expires: _____

NOTARY PUBLIC

RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

Release executed on the _____ day of _____ 20__

by (Property Owner) _____

And (Tenant – if applicable) _____

Of (street address) _____

City of Charleston, County of Kanawha, State of West Virginia, referred to as Releasor(s).

In consideration of being granted monies for restoration, modifications, signage, or other physical changes to the property located at the above address, the Releasor(s), understands that they are solely responsible for providing their own contractors, and to assure that those contractors are fully insured and licensed and have obtained all necessary permits in accordance with City of Charleston regulations. The Releasor(s) waives, releases, discharges, and covenants not to sue the City of Charleston, its employees, contractors, officers, agents, volunteers, or affiliates for loss or damage, and claims or damages therefore, on account of any work that has been performed as part of the Small Business Investment Grant Program.

Releasor(s) agrees that this release, waiver, and indemnity agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of West Virginia and that if any portion of the agreement is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

Releasor(s) further states that Releasor has carefully read the above release and knows the contents of the release and signs this release as its own free act.

Releasor's obligations and duties hereunder shall in no manner be limited or restricted by the maintaining of any insurance coverage related to the above referenced event.

This release contains the entire agreement between the parties to this agreement and the terms of this release are contractual and not a mere recital.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20__

Property Owner Signature _____
Witness

Property Owner Name Printed

Tenant Signature (if applicable) _____
Witness

Tenant Name Printed

Owner Authorization for Tenant to Carry Out Small Business Improvement and/or Rehabilitation Project

Please Print

I, _____(property owner) hereby
authorize _____ (tenant) to carry out improvements as specified
in the accompanying Small Business Investment Grant Program application, on my property
located at:_____

I also agree to and have signed the Release and Hold Harmless agreement included in the
application packet that releases the city of Charleston staff, volunteers, and affiliates from legal
action pertaining to this project.

Property Owner Signature

Date

State of West Virginia

County of _____

This record was acknowledged before me on _____ by _____
(date) (name)

Notary Public _____

My commission expires _____
(date)



Please review this checklist to make sure you have completed and included everything needed to score your grant.

CHECKLIST

- Did you complete all information regarding your business?
- Did you provide a description of your project and how this grant will enhance your ability to grow or sustain your business?
- Did you include your budget and attach cost estimates from vendor(s)?
- Did you include the time schedule for your project?
- Did you sign your application?
- Did you sign and include the Hold Harmless Agreement?
- If you lease your property, did you have the owner sign the owner authorization form?
- Did you have the owner authorization form and the affidavit notarized?

NOTE: If your application is not completed, signed and does not include the required forms it cannot be scored and will not be considered for funding.

All applications are due via email no later than 5 p.m. on March 31, 2021.
jane.bostic@cityofcharleston.org