

# BIPOC Business Technical Assistance

One-time Capacity Building Grants  
&  
Certified Access Academy



**SAINT PAUL**  
MINNESOTA

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## Background and Goal

- In 2021, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority allocated \$250,000 for business technical assistance directed toward Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)
- Additionally, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority retains a balance of \$73,000 allocated for business technical assistance
- Our primary goal is to increase the business and economic development capacity for entrepreneurs of color and historically disadvantaged business and cultural districts.



## Recommendations

To best meet this goal with the funds available, we recommend the following:

1. Capacity building grants - Offer one-time grants to organizations serving the BIPOC business community and/or historically disadvantaged communities with business technical assistance. Grants of up to \$25,000 would be awarded to the top 10 applicants in a competitive process
2. Direct training - Approve 10 scholarships for women of color entrepreneurs to participate in the Certified Access Academy (\$5,000 each)



## Budget Summary

With a total of \$323,000 available, the recommended sources/uses would be as follows:

Sources:

\$250,000 BIPOC business technical assistance

\$73,000 Business technical assistance

\$323,000

Uses:

\$250,000 Direct operating grants to business support organizations (10 @ up to \$25K each)

\$23,000 Contracted program administration

\$50,000 Certified Access Academy scholarships (10 @ \$5K each)

\$323,000



## Capacity building grants: Target services

Funds may be used for general operating support, program development, or direct technical assistance. Funds are designed to be flexible and build the organizations capacity to serve BIPOC entrepreneurs and small businesses in historically disadvantaged communities and cultural districts.

Examples of BIPOC-focused business technical assistance services include:

- Small business financial services, proforma development, or budgeting
- Navigating government financial and technical services
- Design and architectural services
- Legal services
- Marketing/branding assistance for businesses or corridor
- Market research and analysis
- Site search or real estate brokerage
- New business development training
- Tech-focused business services and accelerator programs



## Capacity building grants: Eligible organizations

Eligible organizations must:

- Be an organization in Good Standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State.
  - Organizations could be a for-profit, nonprofit, public benefit corporation, or cooperative. Target business support organizations include local business associations, community development corporations, community development financial institutions, neighborhood cultural organizations, and/or business training organizations
- Have a track-record for serving BIPOC entrepreneurs and small businesses in historically disadvantaged communities and cultural districts with the previously mentioned targeted services

Preferences will be given to:

- Forward-looking proposals to serve BIPOC businesses and businesses operating in target communities that effectively leverage this funding and build long-term capacity



# Capacity building grants: Application and Reporting

- Applicant will need to complete an application including:
  - Overview of neighborhoods and populations served
  - Proposed use of grant funds
- Annual report will request the following\*:
  - # of entrepreneurs served from training, coaching, consulting
  - # of hours provided in training, coaching, consulting
  - # of new businesses launched
  - # of small businesses retained
  - # of jobs created/retained
  - # of funding applications supported
  - \$ of financing secured from applications
  - \$ of revenue increased

\*outcomes in all areas are not required to be eligible for funding



# Capacity building grants: Administration and Timeline

- PED staff will:
  - Select an outside partner to administer the grant by Dec 15, 2021
  - Finalize a professional service agreement by Jan 15, 2022
- Grant administrator will:
  - Develop final application and outreach materials by Jan 31, 2022
  - Announce grant opportunity by Feb 5th, 2022
  - Close applications by Feb 25th, 2022
  - Recommend ranked awardees to PED by March 15th, 2022
  - Send award grant agreements by March 30th, 2022
  - Collect impact summaries, develop annual report by March 30, 2023





## Direct training: Certified Access

- Certified Access exists to create more equitable business practices and economic opportunities within the supplier diversity and procurement ecosystem(s)
- Certified Access vision is to increase the number of certified women of color "WOC" owned businesses by 10% and government and corporate spend with WOC owned businesses by 10%
- Certified Access works in three areas:
  - Consulting: Culturally competent and actionable services
  - **Academy: 8-week educational program for women of color**
  - Summit: Gathering of women of color business owners, corporate and government leaders



## Direct training: Certified Access Academy

- Certified Access Academy
  - 8-week educational program for women of color with a mindset focused on our 5C's by giving them support applying for certifications and tools to scale and sustain strong relationships in the industry
  - Curriculum
    - Access Readiness focused on the nuts and bolts of certification
    - Access Granted focused on taking certification to the "marketplace"
    - Access Sustained focused on building a strong business that leads to long-term opportunities
  - Past Outcomes
    - 32 applications received for inaugural CA Academy, 18 accepted
    - 94% participation retention for all 8 weeks
    - 10 Women of Color are either State TGE, CERT, and/or WBENC certified



## Direct training: Administration and Timeline

- PED staff will:
  - Confirm funding allocation by Dec 15, 2021
  - Finalize a professional service agreement by Jan 10, 2022
- Certified Access team will:
  - Announce Certified Access Academy Saint Paul scholarship mid Jan, 2022
  - Close applications and select scholarship recipients late Feb, 2022
  - Operate 8-week Academy mid-March 2022
  - Send an Academy impact summary