



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, ROOM 2101
BOSTON, MA 02108

FY2023 Community Empowerment and Reinvestment Grant Program

Request for Proposals (RFP) Program Guidelines and Application Template

Open Date: **Monday August 1, 2022**

Information Session: **Tuesday August 9, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.**

Application Deadline: **Wednesday September 14, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.**

Questions: [**eoledgrants@mass.gov**](mailto:eoledgrants@mass.gov)

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A. INTRODUCTION

The Baker-Polito Administration is pleased to announce the second round of the Community Empowerment and Reinvestment Grant Program. This program seeks to develop, strengthen, and invest in community-led efforts to bring positive economic outcomes to communities that face historically disproportionate challenges to economic growth. Specifically, the program was developed to support communities with high rates of incarceration and/or recidivism, widespread poverty, and large groups of disadvantaged and underrepresented populations.

The Community Empowerment and Reinvestment program is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and offers flexible grant funding to support local partnerships. The program is designed to support projects in communities and neighborhoods across the Commonwealth that are led by these community-based coalitions, to carry out programming that meets the goals of the program as outlined in the state budget line item.

Like EOHED's Urban Agenda Grant Program, the initiative seeks proposals for projects and programming that entail community-driven responses to community-defined economic opportunities, and that build leadership, collaboration, and capacity at the local level. The Administration recognizes that some communities face unique challenges, and that the path to success lies in tapping into and strengthening the unique local assets that they already possess.

The program will make general operating grants, on a competitive basis, primarily to projects proposing to mitigate the negative impacts of incarceration through education, training, and small business development, as well as recovery, prevention, and other social support services to individuals and families that to help reduce justice system involvement. The program will not fund capital projects or purchases, including but not limited to real property purchase and/or renovation.

The Commonwealth's economic development plan, *Partnerships for Growth*, highlights Equitable Opportunity as a guiding principle – noting that opportunity and growth to people and places that have not fully benefitted from the state's overall prosperity, will have significant positive effects on families and communities. In addition, the Governor's Black and Latino Advisory Commissions both published reports outlining strategies that emphasized workforce advancement and business competitiveness as critical to advancing equity and increasing economic outcome in communities that have historically been disadvantaged, and the Administration believes that these recommendations offer a clear path forward for progress.

B. PROGRAM PURPOSE

To distribute grant funds to projects that meet the goals as outlined by the state budget line item 7002-2021: "...developing, strengthening and investing in communities: (i) that are disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system; (ii) where a high percentage of individuals' incomes fall below 250 per cent of the federal poverty level; and (iii) with a large population of socially and economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented groups..." This RFP incorporates recommendations and feedback provided by the Community Empowerment and Reinvestment Board.

EOHED will prioritize funding to applications that seek to advance equitable opportunities, including but not limited to alignment with the recommendations of the Governor's Black Advisory and Latino Advisory Commissions. Applicants are encouraged to build or enhance collaborations that include Black and Latino owned businesses and Black and Latino youth, and to strive to strengthen neighborhoods, increase workforce participation, and expand opportunities in ways that drive diversity and inclusiveness.

C. RFP SCOPE AND DETAILS

Total Grant Funds Available	\$1,600,000 (Additional Funds Subject to Appropriation)
Recommended Grant Range	\$75,000 - \$500,000
Minimum Grant Size	\$75,000 Generally for smaller organizations, such as resident-led associations or neighborhood groups
Maximum Grant Size	\$500,000 Requests over \$500K, up to \$1M, will be considered, but will require additional information and confirmation of grantee's capacity to manage and fully spend the grant by 6/30/23
Number of Awards	Multiple
Acquisition Method and Contract Payment Terms	Cost reimbursement contracts. 50% of grant will be paid at time of contract signing; 25% will be paid following a timely and complete first quarterly report;

	remaining funds to be disbursed after the final report is submitted and approved, with documentation substantiating all project expenditures.
Grant use	General operating support, including overhead costs.
Performance Period	Grants will be awarded to support the operations of a project from January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023.
Project Categories	Community Based Workforce Development, Small Business Development, Housing Stabilization, Community Health Improvement, and High School Dropout Prevention
Eligible Communities	Any Massachusetts city or town (or neighborhood) that: is disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system, has a high percentage of individuals with an income below 250% of the federal poverty level, and Has a large population of socially and economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented groups.
Eligible Lead Applicant	Non-profit community-based organization, or municipal government, applying on behalf of a local partnership or coalition
Eligible Project Partners	Municipality, Community-Based Organizations, Schools, Local Businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Private Sector Partners, Neighborhood Associations, etc.
Review criteria	Community Profile and Goals Strength of Partnerships Defined Target Population and Need Demonstrated Significance of Impact of Project Proven Track Record Capacity to Execute and Succeed BONUS: Advancement of Equitable Opportunities

D. ANTICIPATED PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

RFP Open	August 1, 2022
Information Session	August 9, 2022 10:00 AM (Virtual) Register below for webinar and/or call-in information https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_s3sIDP_RQWCBLBTv3TDqCw

Application deadline	September 14, 2022, 5:00pm
Notification of Award Decisions	November 2022
Anticipated Contract Start	January 2023 – <i>Exact timeline and project scope to be negotiated during contracting phase.</i>

E. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The program will consider applications from communities that have established partnerships, coalitions and/or collaborations that have a track record of working together on addressing community challenges. Organizations within the same community or neighborhood are encouraged to work together to collaborate on submitting a singular application.

Grant applications will be reviewed and scored (110 points max.) on the following criteria:

Community Profile and Goals (10 points)

- Description of the neighborhood, economic, and social context in which proposed programs will operate, placing the work within a broader community framework.
- Clear articulation of the vision and goals of the project in communities affected by high rates of incarceration and poverty. Goals outline a direct impact on individuals that are at risk of justice system involvement, were formerly incarcerated, and/or their families.

Collaboration and Partnerships (10 points)

- Description of existing community coalition or collaboration with thoughtful assembling of partners; strong partnerships include residents, community leaders, non-profits, businesses, and/or partners.
- Innovation of the collaboration: leveraging existing strengths and developing new local capacity and leadership.
- Demonstration of direct community, municipal and institutional support.

Target Population (30 points)

- Clear description of the specific target population (or neighborhood) that the project is designed to benefit.
- Clear and specific evidence that the community:
 - Is disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system,
 - Has a high percentage of individuals whose incomes fall below 250% of the federal poverty level based on US Census data, and
 - Has a large population of socially and economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented groups.
- Prison admission rates in project community (based on Massachusetts DOC data)
- Percentage of people living in poverty in project community (per US Census data)

Anticipated Impact – Project Plan (30 points)

- Outcomes are directly related to the needs of the identified target population(s), and to the overall community goals, particularly in supporting successful re-entry support, prevention of justice system involvement, and/or other relevant program objectives.
- Demonstration of how members of target population, such as community residents and/or those that have been formerly incarcerated have been engaged in the project.

- Specific project activities and anticipated outcomes seem reasonable and relevant to the project goals. Proposed services will directly benefit the target population.

Track Record (10 points)

- Evidence of the applicant's experience in completing projects for the target population.
- Evidence of the partnership's history, experience, and past successes.

Capacity to Succeed (10 points)

- Clear and feasible project timeline.
- Detailed budget, including total project budget, allocation of the requested grant funds, reasonable overhead costs, and inclusion of funds from other sources.
- Match funds, if any.

Advancing Equitable Opportunities (BONUS 10 points)

- Clearly articulates how project will advance equitable opportunities in the community and/or describes how the project aligns with one or more of the recommendations from the Black and/or Latino Advisory Commissions' reports.

Verifications for Applications Exceeding \$500,000

- Lead applicant organization provides most recent audited financial statement or independent certified public account's review report or equivalent document
- Applicant provides a specific and reasonable fund drawdown schedule that demonstrates that funds can be used before July 2023
- Lead applicant organization has experience successfully managing grants over \$500,000 within the last 10 years
- Lead applicant organization has sufficient staffing and/or contracted professional to handle grant management, finance and reporting for a 6-month grant over \$500,000

F. APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

1. Program materials, including a copy of the RFP and the application template are available online at www.mass.gov/hed.
2. The application template is provided for reference purposes only. The template may be used to make notes and prepare draft responses.
3. However, the formal application must be completed, and submitted by the deadline, through the Submittable link on the website. Email or fax submissions will not be accepted.
4. EOHED staff will be unable to answer any individual questions while the application period is open. Questions must be emailed to ehedgrants@mass.gov. They will be aggregated and responses will be posted on the EOHED webpage.
5. EOHED will host one information session for prospective applicants. **The virtual event will take place on Tuesday August 9, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.** Webinar and/or call in information is available [by registering here](#). Participation is not required. The session will be recorded and posted on the EOHED page.
6. **Proposals are due by 5:00 PM on September 14, 2022.**

7. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is received on time by EOHED. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as public record. Late submissions will not be considered.
8. EOHED reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review. In addition, EOHED reserves the right to make partial awards as deemed necessary and appropriate to ensure equitable distribution of these resources.

A complete proposal packet includes the following components:

- **Cover Page**
- **Proposal Narrative**
- **Budget Form**
- **Verifications for Applications Exceeding \$500,000** (if applicable)

Other Attachments may be submitted to support the application. These must be in a separate document (as one PDF). Additional attachments could include support letters from community partners that will be actively involved in the project, such as agencies, businesses, and/or elected officials. In all cases, the letters should reference the role that the writer will be playing in the project.

G. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development complies with all Commonwealth of Massachusetts' procurement laws and regulations set forth and overseen by the Commonwealth's Operational Services Division when awarding contracts as well as the state's award requirements as mandated and overseen by the Office of the State Comptroller when dispersing these funds. All responses and information submitted in response to this RFP are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c.66, s.1-, and to c.4, s.7, ss.26.

Successful applicants, upon notification of award, will be required to enroll in EFT as a contract requirement by completing and submitting the Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form for review, approval and forwarding to the Office of the Comptroller. If the applicant is already enrolled in the program, it may so indicate in its response. Because the Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form contains banking information, this form, and all information contained on this form, shall not be considered a public record and shall not be subject to public disclosure through a public records request.

During the term of a contract agreement and for a period up to seven years thereafter, if the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development is audited, the grantee will be required to make all records relating to this grant available.

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