

Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Innovating to Improve Access and Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities

*Release Date: December 10, 2015
(Revised January 19, 2016)*

Letter of Intent Response Date: January 20, 2016

Application Due Date: February 17, 2016

Anticipated Project Start Date: March 16, 2016

Project End Date: March 31, 2017

Grantor: Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey

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Background and Overview

Utilizing \$250,000 that the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO) received through a [settlement](#) with ATM owner and operator Cardtronics, Inc., the AGO is pleased to announce this Innovating to Improve Access and Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities ("Access and Opportunity Grant") grant opportunity.

The Access and Opportunity Grant is designed to support and promote new projects that utilize technology and/or innovative design to improve access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities throughout the Commonwealth. The grant will support projects that can be used as models to improve access and opportunity in one or more of the following fields: (1) education, (2) transportation, (3) employment, and/or (4) health care.

Applicants are asked to describe how a project funded by an Access and Opportunity Grant would utilize advances in technology and/or innovative design to improve access and opportunity in these fields, the anticipated results, and how results will be measured.

Special consideration will be given to applicants who can demonstrate that the grant will be used to improve access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities who are also part of other underrepresented or underserved groups, including, for example, rural, LGBTQ, veterans, and racial/ethnic minority communities.

Grant recipients will be required to report the results and lessons learned from their projects.

Eligibility and Responsibilities

Eligible Grant Applicants

The following types of organizations within Massachusetts are eligible to apply:

- Municipalities;
- Public Schools;
- Non-Profit organizations;

- Post-secondary student organizations (with the educational entity acting as Grant Administrator, which includes serving as the fiscal agent and primary contact); and
- Small for-profit businesses.

Non-profit organizations must be in full compliance with all annual reporting requirements of both the AGO and the Internal Revenue Service, as applicable, in order to be eligible for funding. For-profit businesses that have been the subject of any administrative charge of discrimination for which there was a finding of probable cause, or have been the subject of an enforcement action by any local, state, or federal authority, are not eligible for funding. Only one Statement of Intent may be submitted per organization.

Responsibilities of Grant Administrators

All Grant Administrators will be required to maintain careful financial controls over, and account for the expenditure of, grant funds, including:

- Compiling all data relative to funded programming;
- Ongoing communications and quality control; and
- Provision of program and fiscal reports to the AGO. Reports will include an update on activities or services delivered, evaluation activities and/or findings, assessment of progress towards goals and objectives, a description of challenges encountered, key successes, and consumer feedback.

Funding

Amount

The AGO anticipates total funding of up to \$250,000 to support grant programs for no longer than one year. The AGO expects to issue grants in varying amounts, to multiple applicants. We anticipate that the maximum grant amount to any one applicant would be \$75,000, but encourage applicants seeking funding for smaller scale projects to submit budgets which are commensurate with the proposed scale of the respective programs.

The total number of grants awarded is contingent upon multiple factors, including (but not limited to) the number of applications received, amount of funding available, and amounts requested. Grants may be awarded in varying funding amounts and applicant budgets may not necessarily be funded in their entirety.

All funding decisions and amounts will be made at the discretion of the AGO.

Grant Funding Categories

Grants will be awarded in one of two funding ranges. Applicants should select one category under which they are applying.

Category (1): Grants. One or more grants of up to \$75,000 will be given to municipalities, school districts, and/or non-profit organizations.

Category (2): Micro-Grants. One or more grants of up to \$10,000 will be given to non-profit organizations, student organizations, and/or for-profit businesses.

Statement of Intent to Apply

All interested applicants are required to submit a written or video statement expressing their intent to apply for this grant. Both must be submitted through the Attorney General's grant software, Foundant.

The AGO will consider all statements of intent received by the deadline and invite selected applicants to submit a full proposal.

Instructions

Applicants may access Foundant via the following link and will either log-in through a pre-existing account or create a new profile:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Common/LogOn.aspx?eqs=y0IvNTomAgXIFgllj2kpdQ2>

- **Written statement of intent:** Please complete the form in Foundant and please note that each field has character limits.
- **Video statement of intent:** Please upload the video into Foundant. Videos must be no longer than 2 minutes and no more than 25 GBs. Videos over 2 minutes will not be accepted.
- To request reasonable accommodations for this process please see instructions on page 9.

Content

Both video and written statements of intent to apply should include:

- The problem being addressed;
- The concept for the technology and/or design;
- If known, the amount of money being requested;

- The extent to which the project will incorporate input from individuals with disabilities;
- If applicable, whether the applicant anticipates that any software developed will be proprietary or open-source; and
- How receipt of the grant will increase access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities, and the field(s) in which it will do so (education, transportation, employment, and/or health care).

Small for-profit businesses (only) must also provide the following:

- Year founded;
- Number of employees (please average over a 12 month look-back period) and break it down as follows:
 - Number of full-time employees (including temporary employees);
 - Number of part-time employees (including temporary employees);
- Number of interns/volunteers;
- Financial information (current assets, current liabilities, working capital and a statement attesting to the financial solvency of the business); and
- Governance structure.

Full Grant Proposal

Only organizations that have submitted a statement of intent as set forth above, and who have been invited to submit a full proposal, will need to reference the information below. The full grant proposal will be submitted via the online grant application portal which can be accessed at www.mass.gov/ago/grants.

The full grant proposal must include providing the following information:

1. Grant Narrative

- Applicant Information:** Provide a brief description of the organization, the organization's mission statement and service area, and a description of any prior work done in the program area for which you are seeking AGO grant funding, including any outcomes achieved from previous programs and/or lessons learned.
- Identified Need:** Provide a *qualitative* description of the identified need for access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities in the specific service

area being addressed (increased access to education, transportation, employment, and/or healthcare). Provide information about how this need came to be identified and defined. Also, provide any *quantitative* information on evidence of need that is available.

- c. **Project Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes:** State the Category under which this grant should be considered (see page 3) and then provide a detailed description of the grant project, including the specific activities, services, use of technology and the timeline anticipated to complete the project.

Include the following information in this section:

- A description of the proposed solution, why it was selected (or will be developed), and the evidence available to demonstrate the likelihood that it will increase access and opportunity.
- If applicable, provide example(s) of successful implementation of the model by the applicant or by another entity (including any specific outcomes achieved).
- A plan to incorporate user feedback and testing throughout the project, especially detailing if those users will be included as co-creators of the technology and/or design.
- Operational goals, objectives, and outcomes. Goals should be specific, measureable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. The following questions should be answered in this section:
 - What will you do?
 - What will change as a result?
 - How will you know (measure) that you have achieved each outcome?
 - How will you obtain feedback from users or consumers?
 - What do you predict to be effects or outcome of the activities funded by this grant?
- A timeline (applicants should demonstrate the institutional capacity to begin activities funded by this grant expeditiously). Include an estimated timeframe for delivery of project iterations, as well as the plan for ongoing review, testing and evaluation of the user experience.
- If applicable, provide a description of measures that you will take to protect the rights and privacy of consumers/patients participating in the evaluation of services. If you anticipate requiring Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, indicate which IRB you will use and who will be

responsible for the protocol. If you do not anticipate requiring IRB approval, provide a brief overview of how you will protect consumer/patient privacy.

- d. **Supplementation statement:** Provide a statement affirming that this grant funding will supplement (and/or expand) and not simply supplant existing funding for current efforts.
- e. **Privacy statement:** To the extent applicable, provide a statement confirming that your organization has security policies in place regarding the safeguarding of personal data and personal and medical information.
- f. **Sustainability/Replication:** A description of opportunities to scale/disseminate/replicate the project (if applicable) and/or a clearly articulated and realistic sustainability plan to continue program efforts once this grant ends (if applicable).

2. Budget Details

- a. **Line Item Budget:** A detailed budget proposal must be included.
- b. **Budget Narrative:** A budget narrative providing a detailed description of how grant funds will be utilized and a description of any financial and/or in kind resources leveraged (if applicable) must be provided. Please note, although in-kind resources are not required, applicants which are cost-effective and which have stronger cost-benefit ratios are more likely to be evaluated favorably.

How Grants Are Selected

All funding decisions and amounts of funding will be made at the sole discretion of the AGO and all grant funding decisions are final. Applicants may receive no funding or less funding than requested. Some of the criteria utilized in the selection process may include:

- Ability of applicants to incorporate new technology and/or innovative design to measurably improve access to and opportunity to education, transportation, employment, or healthcare for individuals with disabilities;
- Extent to which applicants' projects and anticipated results are cost effective and can be documented and disseminated and/or replicated;
- Extent of applicants' past experience developing technology and/or innovative design for individuals with disabilities;

- Extent to which applicants take into account user experience and include intended users of the technology and/or design (e.g., individuals with disabilities) throughout each iteration of the project (evidencing a desire to build *with* the intended users, not only *for* them);
- Ability of the applicants to set an expeditious timeline, including anticipated development of an initial working prototype of the new technology and/or design;
- Applicants' plans to serve individuals with disabilities who are also members of other underrepresented or underserved communities; and/or
- Diversity as to the nature of the disabilities affected by applicants' projects.

Grants May Not Be Used To Pay Certain Costs

Grants may not be used to pay routine business costs, including, for example:

- Legal work (legal advice, litigation, etc.);
- Food;
- Transportation and/or lodging that is not directly connected to the grant project;
- Ongoing business expenses (e.g. renting office space, long-term equipment rental, etc.), however up to 10% of award may be used for administrative expenses;
- Payments to other organizations in the form of donations or contributions; and
- Lobbying efforts of any kind.

Application Information

- Interested applicants may access the application here: www.mass.gov/ago/grants.
- New applicants will be asked to create a free online account. Any applicant that has applied for any grant using the online grant management system Foundant may log into an existing account.
- Once applicants have started an application, it may be saved and returned to later.
- Statements of intent must be submitted electronically through the AGO's online grant application by **4 p.m. on January 20, 2016**.

- Full proposals for selected applicants must be delivered electronically through the AGO's online grant application by **4:00 p.m. on February 17, 2016**. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.
- There will be no applications accepted in any other format. (The only exception is if the applicant has previously made arrangements with the AGO pursuant to a request for reasonable accommodation to submit via an alternative format.)
- Confirmation of Receipt: Applicants typically receive an email confirmation within 24 business hours; if one is not received please call 617-963-2024 or 617-963-2217 for further instructions and assistance.

Do not include any attachments other than those requested. Any additional attachments sent will not be provided to the reviewers.

Questions

Questions regarding your statement of intent may be submitted to AGOgrants@state.ma.us until **4:00 p.m. on January 19, 2016**. Questions regarding your full grant proposal may be submitted to AGOgrants@state.ma.us until **4:00 p.m. on February 16, 2016**.

When submitting your question(s), please include "Access and Opportunity Grant" in your email subject line. Questions received and answers provided regarding this RFP will be posted on the AGO's website here: www.mass.gov/ago/grants.

Reasonable Accommodation

Applicants with disabilities who seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of the RFP information in an alternative format and answers to questions about the RFP, statement of intent and full grant proposal should communicate such requests in writing to AGOgrants@state.ma.us or by telephone at (617) 963-2024 or TTY at (617) 727-4765 no later than **January 6, 2016**.

Expectations and Requirements for Successful Applicants

- Awards are contingent upon organization satisfactorily completing all necessary documents (see below) by the deadlines established during the contract period.
- Any proposed changes to grant program or budget, at any time during the grant period, must be requested in writing and must be approved, in advance, by the AGO.
- In the event that the primary contact person for the grant changes, the AGO must be notified as soon as possible.

- Grantees will fulfill all reporting requirements (see below) including completion of a satisfactory financial and programmatic summary at the conclusion of the grant (Final Report) by the deadline established and in a format to be provided by the AGO.
- It is the duty of all grant funded programs to immediately notify the AGO if the organization is or becomes the subject of any investigation, complaint, or lawsuit by any federal, state, or local law enforcement or regulatory agency.
- As a condition of grant award, each awardee agrees that representatives of the AGO at any time may review its financials, print and electronic records (as they relate to the grant) to ensure compliance with the terms of the grant award. Such inspection, review and/or audit by representatives of the AGO may occur at any time, with or without notice to the Program.
- Failure to comply with any portion of the grant requirements may result in:
 - Forfeiture of grant monies not yet disbursed and/or reimbursement of previous monies awarded; or
 - Suspension or termination of grant program.
- The awardee agrees to identify the AGO as a funding source for any print, electronic or media materials produced with grant resources.
- At the end of the grant period, any unexpended grant funds must be returned.

Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients are required under the terms of the grant to provide budgetary and program reports, as well as a final summary report to AGO. Grantees will submit these reports every three months. Reporting forms will be provided shortly after the grant notification period. Participating programs must adhere to all mandatory fiscal and program administration guidelines and disbursement of funds will be dependent upon timely submission of all required reports.

Required Commonwealth Contract Documents for Successful Grantees

These documents are listed for informational purposes and should not be submitted with the grant application. Successful grantees will be required to complete these documents within the deadline established at the time of the notification of grant award.

- Standard Contract Form and Instructions
- Commonwealth Terms and Conditions
- Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing
- Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (W-9)

- Electronic Funds Transfer Sign Up Form
- Scope of Services

Disbursement of Grant Funds

Direct payments will be made by Electronic Funds Transfers.

- Grant funds will be disbursed in 4 installments. The schedule of these disbursements will be tied to reports, which are to be submitted correctly and on-time. One-quarter (1/4) of funding will be disbursed after submission of each quarterly report which will occur every three months.

Disbursements are contingent upon the timely submission and approval of all required program and financial reports; unexpended funds must be returned to the AGO.

Public Records

All responses and information submitted in response to this call for applications are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, § 10, and to M.G.L. c. 4, § 7, cl. 26. Applicants should not submit personal patient medical information. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes shall be disregarded.

Updates to this RFP

Any changes/corrections to any part to this RFP will be posted on www.mass.gov/ago/grants.

It is the applicant's responsibility to check this web page frequently for any updates.