



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

FY2023 Social Enterprise Capital Grant Program

Request for Proposals (RFP) Program Guidelines and Application Template

Open Date: **Wednesday, March 23, 2022**

Information Session: **Wednesday, March 30, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.**

Application Deadline: **Wednesday, April 20, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.**

Questions: eoheadgrants@mass.gov

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A. INTRODUCTION

The Baker-Polito Administration is pleased to announce the availability of funds through the Social Enterprise Capital Grant Program, which was created to invest in employment social enterprises that contribute to economic growth in low-income communities throughout the Commonwealth. Specifically, the program seeks to make capital grants to non-profit organizations to develop eligible facilities for social enterprises that target individuals facing significant barriers to employment.

The program is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED), in consultation with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. Grant funds can be used for various expenses related to the development of eligible facilities, such as acquisition and/or renovation costs for a property owned by the nonprofit and utilized for the social enterprise, as well as equipment purchase costs.

For the purposes of this program, an employment social enterprise is defined as a discrete or embedded business venture operated by a mission-driven nonprofit organization with programming focused on hiring and assisting people who face barriers to employment. The organization must offer paid employment opportunities to low-income individuals, with priority to socially and economically disadvantaged populations who experience complex needs and barriers to employment that require intensive interventions. Specifically, this grant is designed to support employment social enterprises that sell goods and services while providing supportive services for individuals who face significant barriers to employment.

The budget line item calls for grants to be awarded in a manner that promotes geographic, social, racial, and economic equity. The state'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 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. ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for funding, the applicant organization must meet the following requirements:

- be a Massachusetts non-profit corporation in good standing, and
- successfully operating an employment social enterprise for at least 12 continuous months prior to the time of application, and
- offering paid employment opportunities to low-income individuals, with priority to socially and economically disadvantaged populations who experience complex needs and barriers to employment that require intensive interventions, and
- paying participants in the social enterprise no less than the Massachusetts minimum hourly wage for their employment, and
- be the current or imminent owner of the real estate, if requesting funds to repair, rehabilitate, and/or renovate a social enterprise facility.

Applicant will also be required to affirm and demonstrate that it currently provides the following services to social enterprise participants, and plans to provide them to future participants:

- Outreach to targeted populations.
- On-the-job training and skill development, including worksite supervision and performance coaching.
- Comprehensive supportive services for at least 1 year (including, but not limited to, case management, aimed at helping to overcome barriers to employment).
- Assistance to obtain external employment.
- Job retention services, which include follow up with beneficiaries for at least 1 year and employers to support job retention and advancement.

C. RFP SCOPE AND DETAILS

Total Grant Funds Available	\$2,000,000
Grant Request Amount	Up to \$1,000,000
Number of Awards	Multiple (Estimate: 2 - 8 grant awards)
Contract Payment Terms	At the time of award, grantee will work with EOHED to develop a final budget for the grant. All grant funds will be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis.
Grant use	Reimbursement of costs related to the development of eligible facilities owned (or to be owned) by non-profit social enterprise organizations, in the following categories: Acquire real estate to be owned and operated for the social enterprise Repair, rehabilitate, and/or renovate real estate owned and operated for the social enterprise Purchase equipment to be used for the operations of the social enterprise
Performance Period	Grants will be awarded to support a project to be completed between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

D. ANTICIPATED PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

RFP Open

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Information Session

Wednesday, March 30, 2022 10:00 AM (Virtual)
Conference Call # and details to be posted on the HED
program webpage at www.mass.gov/hed.

Application deadline

Wednesday, April 20, 2022, 5:00pm

Notification of Award Decisions
and Contracting

June 2022

Anticipated Contract Start

July 2022

E. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Only organizations that meet the eligibility requirements, as listed above, will be considered. Applications will be reviewed and scored (110 points max.) based on the following criteria:

Target Population (20 points)

- Clear description of how initiative and goals fits in the broader community context.
- Clear description of the specific target population(s) served by the social enterprise, and applicant provides data demonstrating that the target population faces significant barriers to employment.
- Well-developed, culturally competent outreach plan to reach target population(s).
- Demonstration that members of target population are meaningfully engaged in program planning and outreach.

Organization Capacity and Purpose (up to 30 points)

- Organization targets low-income communities, serves a high-risk population, and can demonstrate a significant social return on investment.
- Organization provides the required training, skill development and supportive services to facilitate participant success both at and after the social enterprise;
- Organization staff are representative of the community they serve and there is sufficient staffing to provide the services.

Programmatic Impact (30 points)

- Organization demonstrates a positive community or environmental impact created through its goods and services.
- Applicant provides data regarding number of annual participants, their average length of engagement, and the type of employment opportunities available.
- Organization targets low-income communities, specifically aimed at reducing social and economic inequities, including, but not limited to, inequities affecting individuals who have faced racial or ethnic prejudice.

Track Record & Capacity to Succeed (20 points)

- Evidence of the applicant's experience in running a nonprofit employment social enterprise and that a significant portion of applicant's organizational time and budget is devoted to social enterprise operations.
- Applicant demonstrates that grant funding would enable the social enterprise to increase the number of people served annually and/or the increase the type of employment activities.
- Clear and appropriate project timeline outlining key activities and benchmarks.
- Detailed budget, including total project budget, allocation of the requested grant funds, and match funds from other sources, if any. (While match funds are not required, proposals that include other funding will be more competitive.)

Advancing Equitable Opportunities (BONUS 10 points)

- Clearly articulates how project will advance equity 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.

F. APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

1. Program materials, including a copy of the RFP and the online application are available online on the program's webpage 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 online platform provided on the EOHED 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 Wednesday, March 30, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.** EOHED will post event details on its webpage. Participation is not required and no registration needed.
6. **Proposals are due by 5:00 PM on Wednesday April 20, 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.
9. 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. All documents must be submitted through the online application form at one time:

- **Eligibility Screen**
- **Cover Page**
- **Proposal Narrative**
- **Budget Form**
- **Required Attachments**

Other/Optional Attachments, such as program materials and/or support letters from community partners that will be actively involved in the project, may be submitted. These must be in a separate document (as one PDF). Please note that while these additional attachments may be viewed and filed with the application, they will not be scored or otherwise counted as part of the evaluation of the proposal.

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.

Once contracted, Grantee shall prepare and submit to EOHED, on a quarterly basis and in a format provided by EOHED, a progress and financial report outlining the status of the Project. Such report shall include, at minimum: Project milestones and goals achieved to date. Grantee shall supplement each report with additional information as may be requested by EOHED. As part of the final report, Grantee shall furnish in a template provided by EOHED, a memo certifying Project completion.

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.

APPENDIX 1: Application Outline

ELIGIBILITY SCREEN

- ☐ Is the applicant a Massachusetts non-profit organization in good standing?
Verification of nonprofit status (federal EIN required).
- ☐ Has applicant been operating an employment social enterprise for at least 12 continuous months prior to the time of application?
- ☐ Is the social enterprise offering paid employment opportunities to the target population?
- ☐ Is the social enterprise paying participants at least the Mass. minimum hourly wage?
- ☐ Applicant affirms that its employment social enterprise includes comprehensive support services to all participants, as outlined in the RFP and line item?
- ☐ Will the applicant be seeking funds for renovations to a facility?
 - ☐ If yes, is the applicant the current, or imminent, owner of the facility?

COVER PAGE

- Project City/Town. Neighborhood, if applicable.
- Applicant Information
- Organization Information
- Grant Proposal Summary

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

- Project Category
 - ☐ Acquire real estate to be owned and operated for the social enterprise.
 - ☐ Repair, rehabilitate, and/or renovate real estate owned and operated for the social enterprise.
 - ☐ Purchase equipment to be used for the operations of the social enterprise
- Social Enterprise Facility Address (upload required for applicants seeking to repair, rehabilitate and/or renovate real estate)
- Target Population Questions
- Organizational Experience and Purpose Questions
- Programmatic Impact Questions
- Track Record and Capacity to Succeed Questions
- BONUS: Advancement of Equitable Opportunities Questions

GRANT BUDGET FORM

CERTIFICATION OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

OTHER/OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

APPENDIX 2: Funding Source

The Social Enterprise Grant Program is authorized in the Mass. Capital Investment Plan as Plan Item D042, and was created to make grants to projects that meet the goals described by line item 7002-8033 in Chapter 358 of the Acts of 2020, as highlighted below:

“For an employment social enterprise capital grant program... for the development of eligible facilities for non-profit employment social enterprises that sell goods and services and enhance economic development; provided, that eligible applicants shall be non-profit organizations operating employment social enterprises targeting individuals facing significant barriers to employment; provided further, that grants to non-profits shall support costs associated with the acquisition of real property, the design, construction, repair, rehabilitation or renovation of an eligible facility and soft costs directly related to the development of an eligible facility; provided further, that eligible employment social enterprises shall offer paid employment opportunities to low-income individuals, with priority to socially and economically disadvantaged populations who experience complex needs and barriers to employment that require intensive interventions;...”

The line item states that *“...eligible organizations shall provide the following services for targeted individuals as an integrated part of their paid employment in a social enterprise:*

- (i) outreach to targeted populations;*
- (ii) on-the-job training and skill development, including worksite supervision and performance coaching;*
- (iii) comprehensive supportive services for at least 1 year, including, but not limited to, case management, aimed at helping to overcome barriers to employment;*
- (iv) assistance to obtain external employment; and*
- (v) job retention services which includes follow up with beneficiaries for at least 1 year and employers to support job retention and advancement...”*

And that *“...prioritization for grant awards shall be given to organizations:*

- (a) targeting low-income communities specifically aimed at reducing social and economic inequities, including, but not limited to, inequities affecting individuals who have faced racial or ethnic prejudice;*
- (b) serving high-risk populations that can demonstrate a significant social return on investment; and*
- (c) providing goods and services that can demonstrate a positive community or environmental impact...”*

The line item further states that *“...grants shall be awarded in a manner that promotes geographic, social, racial, and economic equity...”*.