

VENTURE PORTLAND CATALYTIC GRANT GUIDELINES

DISTRICT STAFFING KICKSTARTER

Fall/Winter 2017-2018

Ongoing professional staff is the single most catalytic way for districts to improve programming and increase membership, business benefits and revenue. To help Venture Portland achieve its strategic goal of all districts having at least 10 weekly hours of staffing by 2020, Venture Portland is offering Catalytic grant funds to invest in first-time, ongoing, professional staff, or permanently increase the hours of a current staffer working less than 10 hours per week.

Download the Catalytic District Staffing Kickstarter grant application and other grant resources at ventureportland.org/grants.

I. Business District Eligibility

To apply for a Venture Portland grant, business districts must meet the following:

- Venture Portland member
- Up-to-date filings with all non-profit regulating government entities
- Complete all previous Venture Portland grants and submit all required grant paperwork
- Two district representatives must participate in the [2017-2018 Grant Certification Training](#) on 9/7/17
- No current or prior ongoing staff working 10 or more hours per week
- Submit a complete grant application by noon (12pm) on Friday, 10/6/17; late or incomplete applications will not be accepted

II. Use of Funds

Applicants may apply* for **up to \$2,000**** for seed funding to invest in first-time, professional staff working a minimum of 10 hours per week or increasing the hours of a current staffer working less than 10 hours per week. Grant funds CANNOT be used for seasonal staffing, additional staffing or administrative staffing. Grant funds can be used for hiring expenses (writing a job description/scope of work, posting and advertising the position, application review and facilitation of the interview process and reference checks) and up to 2 months of compensation for a staffer. Districts are responsible for completing a workplan to set priorities for work, setting qualifications, providing at least 6 months of additional matching compensation in cash (\$4,500-\$6,500, based on an hourly rate of \$18-\$25/hr), providing a timeline and project coordinator, participating in application review and/or interviews, making the final hiring decision and compensation negotiation and, unless other arrangements are made, acting as employer/contractor of record. District staffers should spend at least 30% of their time on the streets in the district they serve. Potential projects for the district staffer could include creating a business database, facilitating a membership campaign, member communication (door to door business outreach, newsletters, email, etc), implementing events and marketing/promotion activities.

***In this grant cycle, applicants may apply for up to two grants in the following combinations: Benchmark and Catalytic, Economic Development and Catalytic or two Catalytic. Applicants may also apply for only a Benchmark, Economic Development or Catalytic grant.**

****Please note: the maximum amount that can be awarded each grant cycle varies based on Venture Portland's available funding.
Grant activities must occur between 11/1/17 and 9/15/18.**

Grant must be matched with at least 6 months of compensation in cash for a staffer working at least 10 hours per week (\$4,500-\$6,500, based on an hourly rate of \$18-\$25/hr). This match must be reflected on the application budget page and, if funded, on the grant evaluation. While in-kind contributions and volunteer hours are critical to the success of projects and should be quantifiably measured and reported, they do not count towards the cash match. Applicants with more than a 6-month match will be more competitive.

Cash refers to cash-on-hand and the donations, grants and revenues that are expected or already received for this project.

Unspent and/or unmatched grant funds (including unverifiable cash expenses) must be returned to Venture Portland with the grant evaluation.

Past Performance

Although each eligible grant application is evaluated according to its own merit, the Grants Committee receives grant evaluation information from each applicant's recent grant evaluation(s) including variance information, whether or not the district met its goals and timeline and sponsorship acknowledgement requirements to help assess if the business district has the ability to effectively implement the project.

Americans with Disabilities Act Certification/Statement of Non-Discrimination

By submitting an application, the applicant agrees to comply in every way with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC Sec. 12101, et seq. and agrees not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, (creed), gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, national or ethnic origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, genetic information, income, political affiliation, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law in any of its activities or operations.

Statement of Equity

Venture Portland's Capacity Building Grants Program funds the smart, strategic growth of Portland's unique neighborhood business districts and helps business districts city wide best meet the needs of their diverse communities. Our corporate values, including transparency, accountability, equity and collaboration define all of our programs. By offering an accessible and extensive funding portfolio, Venture Portland grant funds support every stage of a business district's lifecycle and help business districts succeed at every level and skill set. Our long-term, innovative, relationship-driven approach as a funder provides support as business districts emerge, incorporate and evolve. By consistently bringing new perspectives to our decision-making table, forming new relationships and alliances, and finding new ways to support creativity, Venture Portland is a strong, equitable and relevant organization.

III. Grant Checklist

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. The following items must be submitted:

- Grant checklist
- Cover letter introducing and briefly explaining purpose of the grant request
- Grant application – three sections including signatures, narrative and project budget
- 2017-2018 Workplan – sets priorities for staffer's work

- Current Balance Sheet – Must show at least a 6-month cash reserve for staffer compensation (\$4,500-\$6,500, based on an hourly rate of \$18-\$25/hr)
- Supporting Documents* (if applicable)

*Business districts that provide an Annual Budget are more competitive.

IV. Training, Office Hours and Technical Assistance

Training: Participation by two business district representatives is mandatory at the [2017-2018 Grant Certification Training](#) on 9/7/17 to apply for a Fall/Winter 2017-2018 or Spring/Summer 2018 grant. The training will address: generating great ideas/project planning, application writing, budgeting, evaluation and any changes to the Grants Program. Participating business districts receive a one-year grant writing ‘certification’ upon completion of the training, making them eligible for Fall/Winter 2017-2018 and Spring/Summer 2018 grants.

Office Hours: Venture Portland staff are available for appointments and drop-ins at Venture Portland’s office during the dates and times listed below to assess business district readiness and to provide support and assistance during the early stages of your grant application. Staff are available the week grants are due to review final drafts (applications not yet in final draft form will not be reviewed after 10/2/17). **Venture Portland strongly recommends taking advantage of Grants Office Hours and Final Draft Review. To schedule an appointment, ask a question or send a draft, email Jacob@ventureportland.org or call 503.477.9648.**

Technical Assistance: Venture Portland is available to provide significant technical assistance during planning, application writing, budgeting and, if funded, implementation and evaluation.

Due Date: Applications received by noon (12pm) on 10/6/17 will be reviewed to ensure completion and accepted by staff. Applications may be submitted electronically via email or fax or in-person. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. Staff will not offer any assistance beyond accepting complete applications on 10/6/17. No application will be accepted after noon (12pm) on 10/6/17. This policy has been reaffirmed by the Grants Committee nine times since 2010.

V. Fall/Winter 2017-2018 Catalytic Grant Timeline

8/31/17 – Applications Released/Info Session (9:30am-5pm)

9/7 – Grants Certification Training (5:30-8pm)

9/13 – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)

9/20 – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)

9/28 – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)

10/3-10/5 – Grants Office Hours: Final Draft Review (9:30am-5pm)

10/6 – **Grant Applications Due at Noon (12pm)**

11/1 – Grant Awards Announced

11/1/17-9/15/18 – Catalytic Grant Activities

9/28/18 – **Grant Evaluation Due**

***Early submission is encouraged.** While staff make every effort to offer assistance, each applicant has the final responsibility of submitting a complete application on time to Venture Portland. Applications, including signatures, may be submitted in-person, by fax or by email (jacob@ventureportland.org) with a Venture Portland receipt time of no later than noon (12pm) on 10/6/17. Contact Venture Portland if you need assistance with email submission.

Locations for Info Session, Office Hours, Final Draft Review and Application Submission:

Venture Portland
1125 SE Madison St, Suite 112
Portland, OR 97214

Fax: 503.477.9641

Email: jacob@ventureportland.org

Questions? Contact Jacob at 503.477.9648 or jacob@ventureportland.org. Download the District Staffing Kickstarter grant application at ventureportland.org/grants.