

VENTURE PORTLAND CATALYTIC GRANT GUIDELINES

CORPORATE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Spring/Summer 2019

Volunteer-run organizations depend on stability to maintain programming and remain legal and sustainable. Venture Portland is offering Catalytic Grant funds to help districts implement corporate infrastructure improvements that protect board members and ensure that districts meet the requirements of state and federal governments. Key components of infrastructure include:

- **Non-profit Status (501(c)3, 501(c)6):** IRS tax exemption designation for business associations; especially important for districts with revenue of \$50,000 or more.
- **Insurance (Directors and Officers, Liability):** Directors and Officers insurance protects board members from legal action brought for alleged wrongful acts during their service to the organization. Liability insurance may be required for public events and/or related permits from the city.
- **Articles of Incorporation:** filed with the State of Oregon and cover mission, corporation type, dissolution and fiscal year.
- **Bylaws:** how your organization runs including members, directors, officers, elections, voting, meetings, committees, etc. These should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- **Policies:** day-to-day actions including anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, confidentiality, conflict of interest, whistleblower, etc.

Download the Catalytic Corporate Infrastructure Improvement 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 participated in the [2018-19 Grant Certification Training](#) on 9/6/18
- Submit a complete grant application by noon (12pm) on Friday, 3/1/19; late or incomplete applications will not be accepted

II. Use of Funds

Applicants may apply* for **up to \$1,000**** to update and/or implement any of the following critical infrastructure improvements: Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, policies, non-profit status and investing in initial insurance. Grant funds can be used to pay for non-profit consulting, filing fees, legal counsel, initial insurance and other approved expenses related to district infrastructure improvement. To help prioritize improvements, applicants must submit a completed 2019 Annual Check-up with their grant application. Venture Portland staff are available to review your Annual Check-up, existing Articles of Incorporation, bylaws and policies, and make recommendations. Venture Portland also has legally-approved templates and best practices you can use for Articles of Incorporation, bylaws and policies.

***In this grant cycle, applicants may apply for up to two grants in the following combinations: Economic Development and Catalytic, Benchmark and Catalytic or two Catalytic. Applicants may also apply for only an Economic Development, Benchmark 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 4/1/19 and 2/15/20. Because Venture Portland Catalytic grants are meant to fund specific, short-term projects to build business district capacity and not ongoing activities, **grant funds may not be used to pay for ongoing staff members.** Applicants may still count in-kind or cash expenses for ongoing staff toward their match.

Grant must be matched at least 1-to-1 with cash or in-kind contributions. This match must be reflected on the application budget page and, if funded, on the grant evaluation. While volunteer hours are critical to the success of projects and should be quantifiably measured and reported, they do not count towards the in-kind match. In general, project budgets with confirmed cash or in-kind contributions in place at the time of application are more competitive.

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

In-kind refers to the donated space, supplies/materials, goods and professional services donated by individuals or organizations. To qualify as matching resources, these same items must also be listed as expenses in the project budget and invoices/receipts must be provided with the grant evaluation. The dollar value of these no-cash donations should be calculated at their verifiable fair-market value. Be sure to identify the sources on the application budget page. Volunteer hours do not count towards the in-kind match.

Unspent and/or unmatched grant funds (including unverifiable in-kind or 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
- 2019 Annual Check-up – signed by two district representatives
- Supporting Documents* (if applicable)

*Business districts that provide an Annual Budget and current Balance Sheet are more competitive.

IV. Training, Office Hours and Technical Assistance

Training: Participation by two business district representatives was mandatory at the [2018-19 Grant Certification Training](#) on 9/6/18 to apply for a Spring/Summer 2019 grant. The training addressed: generating great ideas/project planning, application writing, budgeting, evaluation and any changes to the Grants Program. Participating business districts received a one-year grant writing ‘certification’ upon completion of the training, making them eligible for Fall/Winter 2018-2019 and Spring/Summer 2019 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 is available the week grants are due to review final drafts (applications not yet in final draft form will not be reviewed after 2/25/19). **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 3/1/19 will be reviewed to ensure completion, and if complete, 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 3/1/19. No application will be accepted after noon (12pm) on 3/1/19. This policy has been reaffirmed by the Grants Committee nine times since 2010.

V. Spring/Summer 2019 Catalytic Grant Timeline

- 2/1/19** – Application Released/Info Session (9:30am-5pm)
- 2/7** – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)
- 2/14** – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)
- 2/19** – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)
- 2/26-2/28** – Grants Office Hours: Final Draft Review (9:30am-5pm)
- 3/1** – **Grant Applications Due at Noon (12pm)**
- 4/1** – Grant Awards Announced
- 4/1/19-2/15/20** – Spring/Summer Catalytic Grant Activities
- Grant Evaluations due no later than 15 days after project completion**

***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 3/1/19. Contact Venture Portland if you need assistance with email submission.

Location 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 Corporate Infrastructure Improvement grant application at ventureportland.org/grants.