

# VENTURE PORTLAND DESTINATION INVESTMENT GRANT GUIDELINES

2020

Venture Portland's Destination Investment Grants, distributed once a year, provide strategic financial support for significant physical improvements in business districts that enhance the customer/visitor experience, reinforce the district's identity and promote the district as a destination. Districts can apply for one-time-only funding in each of six key Categories of medium-scale, publicly accessible physical improvements. Once a Destination Investment project has been completed, business districts are eligible to apply for a project in a different Destination Investment Category. Eligible projects must fall within the parameters of the criteria described below and districts are responsible for securing the required insurance, property-owner permission and permits. City staff have agreed to provide additional assistance to Destination Investment Grant applicants whose projects may require a permit. Download the Destination Investment Grant application and other resources at [ventureportland.org/grants](https://ventureportland.org/grants).

## Destination Investment Grants Frequently Asked Questions:

### **Q: Which Destination Investment Category should my district apply for?**

A: That depends. Every district has different priorities, needs and public right-of-way capacity. Districts are encouraged to survey their district/members to identify which type of physical improvement would most enhance the customer/visitor experience, reinforce the district's identity and promote the district as a destination.

### **Q: Can I apply for multiple projects under the same Destination Investment Category?**

A: No. Districts should focus on one project per Category. Districts are only eligible to receive funding once for each Category.

### **Q: Can I work on multiple physical improvement projects at the same time?**

A: Maybe. While a district can only work on one Destination Investment project at a time, smaller scale physical improvement projects could also potentially be funded with a Benchmark grant during a different grant cycle.

### **Q: Can I use a Destination Investment Grant to fund a district event, collateral or marketing campaign?**

A: No. Destination Investment Grants can only be used for the design, purchase, installation and year-1 maintenance costs of semi-permanent and permanent fixtures that enhance the customer/visitor experience, reinforce the district's identity and promote the district as a destination.

### **Q: Can I use a Destination Investment Grant to repair or upgrade existing district infrastructure?**

A: Yes. As long as your district's infrastructure falls within one of the six eligible Destination Investment Categories and you will be adding to and enhancing or improving the existing infrastructure.

### **Q: Can I use a Destination Investment Grant to fund storefront improvements or equipment purchases for businesses in my district?**

A: No. But your district could apply for an Economic Development grant during the Spring/Summer grant cycle for that purpose.

### **Q: Can I use a Destination Investment Grant to fund ongoing security or clean-up services in my district?**

A: No. But your district could apply for an Economic Development grant during the Spring/Summer grant cycle to fund the creation of an Enhanced Services District (ESD) to cover those ongoing services.

## 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
- One district representative participated in the [2019-2020 Grant Certification Training](#) on 9/5/19
- Submit a complete grant application by noon (12pm) on Friday, 2/28/20; late or incomplete applications will not be accepted

## II. Use of Funds

Applicants may apply\* for **\$5,000-\$10,000\*\*** for a project that fits into one of the six Destination Investment Categories. All projects must be publicly accessible (in the public right-of-way or on private property). The business district is responsible for long term maintenance of all physical improvements and should have a plan for self-sustainability before applying.

- **Accessibility** – Benches, bike racks, pocket parks, plazas, cross walks, stop signs, traffic lights, rapid flash beacons
- **Greenery** – Street trees, planters, flower baskets, green walls, pocket parks
- **Public Art** – Sculptures, murals, cultural/historical markers
- **Seasonal Decorations** – Holiday, Halloween, winter lighting, flower baskets
- **Signage** – Banners (semi-permanent only; temporary cross-street banners are ineligible), wayfinding, kiosks, point-of-entry, cultural/historical markers
- **Trash Cans** – District is responsible for funding frequent, long term garbage collection

**\*In this grant cycle, applicants may apply for up to two grants in the following combinations: Destination Investment and Catalytic, Economic Development and Catalytic, Benchmark and Catalytic or two Catalytic. Applicants may also apply for only a Destination Investment, 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 4/1/20 and 2/15/21.** Because Venture Portland Destination Investment Grants are one-time funds for specific physical improvements and not ongoing activities, **grant funds may not be used to pay for ongoing staff members.** Applicants may still count cash expenses for ongoing staff toward their match.

**Grant must be matched at least 1-to-1 with cash.** 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. In general, project budgets with confirmed cash contributions in place at the time of application are more competitive. Contact Jacob at [jacob@ventureportland.org](mailto:jacob@ventureportland.org) or 503.477.9648 for more information.

**Cash** refers to cash-on-hand and the donations, grants and revenues that are expected or already received for this project. Be sure to identify the sources on the application budget page.

**Venture Portland must be properly recognized as a sponsor on any grant-funded materials and/or activities. Failure to do so will impact future grant funding. Venture Portland logo usage must be approved by staff.**

**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 or late 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
- Annual Budget and current Balance Sheet
- Benchmark Achievement Form(s) (if applicable)
- Optional Supporting Documents (permit applications, traffic control plans, diagrams, etc)

### **IV. Training, Office Hours and Technical Assistance**

**Training:** Participation by one business district representative was mandatory at the [2019-2020 Grant Certification Training](#) on 9/5/19 to apply for a Spring/Summer 2020 grant. The training will address: generating great ideas/project planning, application writing, budgeting, evaluation and any changes to the Grants Program. Participating business districts will receive a one-year grant writing 'certification' upon completion of the training, making them eligible for Fall/Winter 2019-2020 and Spring/Summer 2020 grants.

**Office Hours:** Venture Portland staff is 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 2/24/20). **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](mailto:Jacob@ventureportland.org) or call 503.477.9648.**

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

staff is available for year-round technical assistance during each stage of the project. Additionally, the City Staff have agreed to provide assistance to Destination Investment Grant applicants whose projects may require a permit. Contact Jacob at [jacob@ventureportland.org](mailto:jacob@ventureportland.org) or 503.477.9648 for more information.

**Due Date:** Applications received by noon (12pm) on 2/28/20 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 2/28/20. No application will be accepted after noon (12pm) on 2/28/20. This policy has been reaffirmed by the Grants Committee nine times since 2010.

#### **V. 2020 Destination Investment Grants Timeline**

**1/31/20** – Application Released/Info Session (9:30am-5pm)  
**2/6** – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)  
**2/12** – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)  
**2/20** – Grants Office Hours (9:30am-5pm)  
**2/25-2/27** – Grants Office Hours: Final Draft Review (9:30am-5pm)  
**2/28 – Grant Applications Due at Noon (12pm)**  
**4/1** – Grant Awards Announced  
**4/1-2/15/21** – Destination Investment Grant Activities

**\*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](mailto:jacob@ventureportland.org)) with a Venture Portland receipt time of no later than noon (12pm) on 2/28/20. Contact Venture Portland if you need assistance with email submission.

#### **Location for 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](mailto:jacob@ventureportland.org)

**Questions? Contact Jacob at 503.477.9648 or [jacob@ventureportland.org](mailto:jacob@ventureportland.org). Download grant applications and other resources at [ventureportland.org/grants](https://ventureportland.org/grants).**