# FY 2022

# Virginia Statewide Business District Resurgence Grant Fund

The Virginia Statewide Business District Resurgence Grant fund seeks to advance and accelerate the post-pandemic recovery of Virginia's business and commercial districts. Specifically, these funds will support historically economically disadvantaged communities and other business districts that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Through expanding organizational and business support grants, funding is envisioned to provide a more inclusive framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization and vitality.

Times of economic crisis spur entrepreneurism and small business creation as those who lose jobs and are unable to find new ones begin to create their own. Small businesses are more resilient when they are able to develop/grow their e-commerce capacity and small-scale production/manufacturing. Local economies are more resilient with investments in small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The objectives of the Virginia Statewide Business District Resurgence Grant will be to:

- Provide grants to organizations that serve historically economically disadvantaged communities, such as small, women-owned, minority-owned, and immigrant-owned businesses within a targeted business district.
- Provide grants for consultant services, technical assistance and training opportunities for entrepreneurs and small business owners.
- Provide grants for consultant services, technical assistance and training opportunities for commercial and mixed-use building owners, including small-scale real estate developers.
- Offer capacity building technical services to create and strengthen local networks and organizations supporting community and economic development in targeted business districts.
- Expand e-commerce opportunities for micro, small, and sole proprietorship businesses that are producing, creating, and making products in Virginia.

## Available Funds

The total funding for FY22 is $1,000,000. Applicants can qualify for up to $50,000 for organizational capacity building and technical assistance and up to $100,000 for business support and technical assistance. Applicants are eligible to apply for both categories within one application as long as the project provides a combination of organizational capacity and business support activities. At no point will any one organization be awarded more than $150,000.

## Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply for grant funding:

- Local governments or economic development organizations
- Regional economic development organizations, including planning district commissions
- Non-profit and local organizations with a focus on small businesses within a commercial district
- Local Chambers of Commerce

Applicants must demonstrate adequate capacity to be eligible for funds. To show adequate capacity, an applicant should have full-time staff, a positive track record with managing comparable projects, along with demonstrated timely completion of projects that have been implemented. Organizations must demonstrate proven capacity to implement the project within budget and within contract deadlines.

## Leverage Requirement

All projects require a 5:1 match. For every $5 of grant funding applied for, there must be $1 in match funding committed. Leverage can be cash or in-kind services provided by any other public or private source.

Other complementary resources that can be leveraged include the American Rescue Plan Act, CARES Act, Community Development Block Grant, Community Business Launch, GO Virginia, and funding from the Small Business Administration.

Time contributed solely to the implementation of the project by volunteers from the organization's partners may be included as in-kind.  Volunteer hours are calculated at $28.54 per hour (https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time).

## Eligible Activities

The program will allow for two primary project focuses: Organization Capacity Building and Business Support. Proposed projects should draw from a comprehensive approach that considers Design/Placemaking, Economic Vitality/Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, Organization/Resources, and Promotions. The following are examples of eligible grant activities under each category. While these lists are not exhaustive, they are the types of activities the program is seeking to support with this funding.

1. **Organizational Capacity Building and Technical Assistance (up to $50,000):**
    - Strategic planning for the organization or master planning for the community to include economic vitality recommendations and implementation phases.

- Other innovative organizational capacity building or technical assistance projects, as needed by the community or organization.
- Local municipal matching grant program with business support outcomes
- Planning for Community Initiated Development
- Entrepreneurial Ecosystems
- Market studies and prospectus development

2. **Business Support and Technical Assistance Grants (Up to $100,000):**
    - Direct Small Business and Entrepreneurial Support and Training
    - Other innovative SWAM business support projects, as needed by the community
    - Business retention and expansion strategies
    - Professional and non-professional services to help set a business up for long-term success, i.e. legal, financial, accounting, marketing, social media, e-commerce, etc.
    - Support building and real estate improvement programs
    - Building feasibility studies
    - Development of marketing and promotional campaigns in support of local businesses.
    - Façade renderings and floor plan development
    - Placemaking in support of local businesses
    - Small scale production / manufacturing business support
    - Creation of a local or regional E-commerce platform
    - Up to 10% of the grant award may be used for administration of the grant.

## Anticipated Outcomes

Each application should demonstrate one or more quantifiable outcomes for the Capacity Building and Business Support grants. Expected outcomes for this program may include:

- Businesses created
- Businesses served
- Businesses improved
- Jobs created
- Jobs retained
- Leveraged private investment (LPI)
- Programs implemented
- Communities served
- Communities improved
- Organizations served
- Organizations improved
- Participants served
- Participants improved
- Buildings improved
- E-commerce platforms created
- Plans developed
- Plans implemented
- Others, as appropriate for the specific activities of the proposed project

## Grant Selection

Grant applicants are scored on a 0-100 point scale. Grant funds are limited and only those proposals exceeding the minimum 70-point threshold will be considered for funding. Funds will be allocated from top scoring until all funds are exhausted.

The project scoring methodology is as follows:

| Scoring Criteria | Points |
|---|---|
| Project targets fund program objectives | 40 |
| Project impact/outcomes | 30 |
| Organizational capacity/readiness | 20 |
| Leverage Funding | 10 |
| Total | 100 |

## Funds Access

Once successful projects are notified of award, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DHCD and the grantee outlining deliverables, conditions, fund disbursement, and termination must be executed before any funds are disbursed. Funds may only be used for expenses incurred after the signing of the contract. Leverage must be documented with each program grant remittance and reported as part of the final report.

## Grant Fund Timeline

DHCD will offer a virtual How-to-Apply Workshop on June 15, 2021, which will be recorded and saved. Prospective applicants are also encouraged to reach out to DHCD staff as soon as possible to discuss any projects in development.

| | |
|---|---|
| Register your Organization in CAMS (**see below) | ASAP |
| Application Submittal Deadline | July 30, 2021 |
| Application Review | Aug 2021 |
| Anticipated Award Announcement | September 2021 |
| Successful Projects Under Contract | October 2021 |
| Project Completion and outcomes achieved | May 31, 2022 |

All disbursements must be completed by May 31, 2022. Quarterly reporting through CAMS is required. All projects must be underway no later than October 31, 2021. A final report on all project activities and outcomes will be required by June 30, 2022.

## Submission Requirements

Applications for funding must be submitted through DHCD's Centralized Application Management System (CAMS). You can access CAMS using the following link: https://dmz1.dhcd.virginia.gov/camsportal/Login.aspx

All grant applications and supporting documentation must be submitted on CAMS by 11:59 p.m. on **July 30, 2021**. Applications not submitted accordingly may be disqualified.

Technical support with CAMS is available weekdays Monday-Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Applicants must submit completed responses to all appropriate questions and include all required attachments.

| **Google Chrome is the recommended browser for CAMS. Remember to SAVE often.** |
| --- |

In order to access CAMS and complete an application for funding, a locality must establish a CAMS profile. A profile request can be made by going to the CAMS site and selecting the **"Registration"** option. In order to register your organization, you will need your organizations DUNS number and FEIN number. Please allow up to five business days for DHCD to process and approve your registration request.

Once your organization has been registered, you may log in with your username and password and select the **"Applications and Programs"** option. From this page, select the **"Apply"** option and select the program from the dropdown menu. A description of the program will appear. Click the **"Apply"** button next to the pencil icon to begin an application.

As you complete the application, be sure to save each page. You have the option to close out of CAMS and return to the application at any time until the application is submitted or the deadline has passed.

If you need assistance with the registration or completion of the application in CAMS, please send an email request to the CAMS help team through the **"Contact Us"** link at the bottom of every page in CAMS**.** Someone will contact you as soon as possible to provide needed assistance.

## Audit Requirements

DHCD has instituted an agency-wide audit policy. All grantees that receive funding during a specific program year are required to submit financial documents or audits in accordance with the agency policy.

The full DHCD Audit Policy, including an explanation of the specific document requirements, can be found online at: http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/images/DHCD/DHCD_Audit_Policy.pdf

## Instructions for Application Submission

The application in CAMS will require the organization to complete each tab:

1. **Project Information:** Include the primary point of contact, primary location/geography of the project and service area.

2. **Project Budget:** Complete budget information, including requested funding and other leverage. Within the budget narrative space, describe how the budget was derived and sources of leverage funding.

3. **Narrative Information:** Answer narrative questions related to the project, timeline, budget and outcomes (see the questions below).

4. **Attachments:** Upload multiple supporting documents as attachments (see required and optional attachments below).

5. **Additional Information:** This is not necessary to complete, but if you have additional information to describe or share that was not asked in the application, please include it here.

## Project Description

Enter the following information into the relevant text box within the Narrative Information tab on CAMS. Please limit responses to no more than 500 words per text box (about one written page).

1. Provide a detailed description of the proposed project. What specific activities will be undertaken with this funding?

2. Describe how the proposed project furthers the Fund's objectives of supporting historically economically disadvantaged communities and other business districts that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

3. Where will this project take place (describe the business/commercial district)? Why is this district targeted for the project?  If the project is capacity building, describe how the activities will support the organization's work in a specific district(s).

4. How and when will the proposed project be accomplished? Include a fully completed action plan with detailed timeline. Use the template, or similar format, in Appendix A.

5. Who will be working on this project? List any/all organizational staff, community partners and/or volunteers that will be working to implement this project. What role(s) will they play and how will they contribute? Describe how the organization and/or staff have completed past projects in a timely manner within deadline, budget and achieving project outcomes.

6. Describe outcomes that are expected from this project, both quantitative and qualitative. Examples of outcomes are provided in the "Anticipated Outcomes" section of this document. Describe how these outcomes will be tracked and reported.

## Attachments - Required Supporting Documents

1. **Project Team:** Include list of staff, community partners and/or volunteers that will work on this project. Identify any needed consultants and whether the role is filled or not.

2. **Project Work Plan:** Provide an effective and appropriate work plan for the project that includes tasks, responsible individuals, timeline, and budget. Please use a format similar to the one included in Appendix A.

3. **Budget/Cost Estimates/Match Documentation:**

   a. Project Budget – Provide a project budget that includes all project related line items for expenditures and all project related line items for funding sources.

   b. Explanation of Cost Estimates – Provide detailed information on the source of the cost estimates and the date the estimates were received.

   c. Leverage Verification – Provide verification of leverage funds including contracts, memorandums of understanding/agreements, award letters, and other documentation that confirms the commitment of other resources for the project. Include documentation and calculations for in-kind contributions and volunteer hours.

4. **Maps/Photographs:** Provide a map with outlines of target business/commercial district along with photographs that show current conditions.

5. **Other Attachments:** Provide documents and information that would be helpful to evaluate the proposed project. This might include program designs or program outlines, studies, plans, or master plans.

For more information on the Fund please contact:
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
600 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 371-7171
mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.gov

# Appendix A

Project Work Plan

The project work plan includes what you will do from the contract start date to the project completion date. The more clearly you understand where you want to go, the more clearly you can see your next steps.

| Who | What Will Be Done | Deliverable | By When |
|-----|-------------------|-------------|---------|
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |
|     |                   |             |         |