



Small Business Recovery Program

Application Instructions & Guidelines
January, 2024

City Manager's Office
Economic Development Division
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Purpose

The program's purpose is to protect our small business economy and preserve Evanston's economic and cultural fabric. Small, independently owned businesses define Evanston's economic and cultural identity. The Small Business Recovery Program will help existing small businesses, particularly minority, disadvantaged, and veteran-owned businesses, recover from the sustained negative economic impacts of the pandemic.

Eligibility Criteria

- 1) Brick and mortar businesses who were open and operating on or before March 13, 2020. The business must have a physical location in Evanston which is also properly registered and/or licensed with the City of Evanston.
- 2) The business has 50 or fewer employees.
- 3) Completed applications must include three quotes for each service or expense for which funding assistance is requested, including at least one quote from an Evanston-based provider whenever possible.
- 4) The business must demonstrate they were negatively impacted by the pandemic and how the requested expenses will aid recovery.
- 5) In the event applications exceed available funding, priority will be given to M/W/D/EBE businesses or those located in qualified census tracts.

Ineligible applicants include:

- Businesses that are part of a franchise operation.
- Churches or other religious organizations.
- Government offices or agencies.

Eligible Services

Eligible applicants may request any of the following services:

- Facade improvements
- Rehabilitation or renovation of a commercial property
- signage, including blade signs
- Professional Services (accounting, tax, insurance, legal)
- Marketing / communications technical assistance (including social media and paid advertising expenditures)

- Capital expenditures, including tools and equipment (software, hardware, process-specific tools or equipment)
- Training and certifications
- Relocation and expansion within Evanston (if located in qualified census tracts)
- Hiring and training of new employees
- Other expenses may be considered on a case by case basis

Award Amounts

- **The maximum grant amount per applicant is \$25,000**
- Projects that include physical improvements, including exterior facade improvements, rehabilitation or renovation of a commercial property, and interior leasehold improvements (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, etc.), and relocation or expansion, are eligible for up to \$25,000.
- All other expenses are eligible for up to \$10,000.

Program Administration & Application Process

Step 1: Submit an online application. All grant applications must be completed online: https://arts.formstack.com/forms/entrepreneurship_support_program_grant.

Applications are considered on a rolling basis throughout the year and must be reviewed by the Economic Development staff.

Complete applications must include:

- Proof of residency or business location in Evanston.
- Copy of your Evanston business registration or license, or provide your registration/license number.
- Three estimates for each service or purchase to be funded, including one estimate from an Evanston provider whenever possible (is applicable).
- Documentation demonstrating a negative economic impact as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Acceptable documentation includes tax forms (1040 Form or Schedule E) or Profit and Loss Statements. Please include statements from 2019 (if open), 2020, 2021.

Step 2: Administrative Review & Approval Process (10 business days). Staff will review applications for compliance with eligibility guidelines and scope of work to be funded.

Step 3: Execute a program agreement. Following approval, successful applicants must sign a program agreement acknowledging the terms and obligations of their participation.