Clackamas County Office of Economic Development

Business Development Grant Program

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1. What is the purpose of the county grant funding program?

The county grant funding program is designed to provide funding for capital, capacity or workforce development projects to various sized traded sector businesses looking to relocate, expand or retain their operations in Clackamas County.

2. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply, a business must:

- Be a traded sector business – a business trading goods and services outside of Clackamas County and its surrounding regions
- Have been in existence for at least two years
- Provide proof of at least 100% match for their funding request

For full details on eligibility and requirements, refer to the [Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)](#).

3. What types of projects or activities can be funded?

The applications must be for programs or services that will support economic development, and must:

- Increase production of locally-manufactured goods or delivery of locally-based services;
- Fund either a capital purchase or a workforce development project;
- Support business improvement, relocation, retention and/or expansion efforts, and
- Contribute to the Clackamas County's economic development.

Eligible business costs include only costs to carry out a project as determined in the application process

- o   Project shall meet the criteria of the grant program and be achievable
- o   Businesses may only apply once and may only receive one-time funding
- o   All funding agreements approved by the Board

For full details on project and application requirements, including Project Types and Project Categories refer to the [Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)](#).

4. How do I apply for a grant?

To apply:

1. Review the grant guidelines and eligibility requirements outlined in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)](#) to ensure your business and project are eligible for funding.
2. Download the [application questions](#) and prepare your application (including gathering required documents) before submitting.
3. Submit your complete application via the [official web form](#) by 5pm on October 31, 2024, along with any required supporting documents. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. Application materials sent by post, email, or any means other than the official application web form will not be considered for funding.

For questions or general assistance, contact us at 503-742-4329 or at 4Biz@clacakamascounty.us

5. What is the application deadline?

Complete applications (including required documents) must be submitted via the official web form by 5pm on October 31, 2024.

It is highly recommended that you plan ahead and submit your application with enough time before the deadline to troubleshoot any technology, internet, and/or file issues – **late and/or incomplete applications will not be accepted for any reason**.

6. What is the timeline for this program?

Applications open on Monday, September 23, 2024 at 9:00 am Pacific Time.

Applications close at 5:00 pm Pacific Time on Thursday, October 31, 2024.

Final award decisions are subject to the schedule of the Board of County Commissioners, and are anticipated to be announced by February 2025.

Funding agreements will be finalized in Spring 2025.

Funding will be deployed no later than June 30, 2025.

Program Period of Performance will begin at the execution of the grant funding agreement (Spring 2025) and run for approximately 6-18 months, depending on the unique project. Some projects may run longer.

7. How much funding can I apply for?

You may request up to $100,000 of funding through this program.

You will be required to provide proof of at least 100% matching funds from another source in order for your funding request to be considered. Refer to NOFO (Section H) for more details on matching funds.

You will be required to provide both a primary project budget AND a scaled down project budget. In the event that the County must provide you with less funding than you requested in your primary project budget, your scaled down project budget will be used to evaluate your application.

8. How will grant applications be reviewed?

Eligible grant applications will be reviewed by a review committee comprised of Clackamas County staff. Eligible applications will be evaluated based on criteria such as:

- Alignment with program goals
- Project viability
- Potential for contribution to county economic growth
- Compliance with County codes and tax laws
- Overall project risk

After evaluating eligible applications, the Clackamas County staff review committee will recommend projects to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for final funding decisions. **The BCC has sole authority to determine funded projects.**

For more information on the evaluation criteria and process, refer to the [NOFO](#).

9. When will I be notified of the decision?

Final award decisions are subject to the schedule of the Board of County Commissioners, and are anticipated to be announced by February 2025.

10. What happens next if my application is approved?

Awardees will be notified by email once the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) has finalized their funding decisions.

After County staff have notified awardees, staff and awardees will negotiate a Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement is a contract between the County and the awardee, and includes elements such as a final scope of work for the project, timelines, and reporting requirements for the grant period specific to each project. County Finance, County Counsel, and the BCC will approve final funding agreements.

11. What are the reporting requirements for grant recipients?

Grant recipients will be required to submit progress reports and a final report at the end of the grant period. Supporting documentation to prove how the funds were used and the outcomes achieved will be required. Depending on the unique nature of the project, other requirements will be discussed and stated in the grant funding agreement.

Specific reporting requirements for each awardee will be outlined in the awardee grant funding agreement based on project type, project category, and the anticipated outcomes detailed in project applications.

13. Where can I find more information about the grant program?

The **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)** can be found on the Clackamas County Procurement page for Open Grant Opportunities:
https://www.clackamas.us/procurement-process#opengrantopportunities

The **list of application questions** can be found on the Clackamas County Procurement page for Open Grant Opportunities:
https://dochub.clackamas.us/documents/drupal/c2427354-8d5f-42e0-9c09-35e0224b86e7

The **application budget template** can be found on the Clackamas County Procurement page for Open Grant Opportunities:
https://dochub.clackamas.us/documents/drupal/2eb7242d-08d7-4d30-ba9b-b8c19ded27f2

The **official application web form** can be found at:
https://apps.clackamas.us/businessdevelopmentgrants/

For more information, visit our website or contact The Office of Economic Development directly at 503-742-4biz or 4Biz@clacakamascounty.us. We provide resources such as grant guidelines, application forms, and contact information for assistance.

14. Whom should I contact if I have more questions?

If you have additional questions or need further assistance, please contact us at 503-742-4biz or 4Biz@clacakamascounty.us. We are available to answer clarifying questions and/or resolve technical issues with the application form.

15. Can software count as a capital asset under the capital asset project type?

Yes, purchases of non-physical capital assets such as software can qualify under the capital asset project type.

Qualifying capital asset projects involve capital purchases that meet a business need by contributing to business expansion, projected growth strategies, etc. (as stated in **NOFO Section C**). Capital projects will need to meet at least one of the expected outcomes listed in **NOFO Section J**. You may also refer to **NOFO Section E** for a description of the information that capital project applicants will need to provide in their narrative summary and budget.

16. Is the matching funds commitment the same as a business collateral requirement?

No, matching funds are not the same as collateral. The 100% match commitment requires that an applicant contribute at least as many of their own dollars as they are requesting for the proposed project.

In rare cases, a business may repurpose an existing business asset for the proposed project as an 'in-kind contribution.' As stated in **NOFO Section 5,** this match option will only be considered in the event that repurposing the asset allows the applicant to maintain a line of business which would otherwise relocate outside of the County, OR if repurposing the asset will allow the applicant to establish a new line of business to contribute to economic growth. In either case, you will need to provide fair market valuation with your application as proof of in-kind match. The onus is on the applicant to clearly explain why the in-kind contribution meets these criteria.

For further clarity, please refer to the budget instructions in **NOFO Section G** and the [application budget template](#).

17. Can I apply for a capital asset project if I am purchasing multiple pieces of equipment?

Yes, if you are purchasing multiple pieces of equipment for a specific project you may include costs related to that equipment in your grant request and/or project match. It is up to the applicant to clearly explain why each equipment purchase is related to the project, and ensure that the project narrative, expected outcomes, and budget all support this.

18. Can I include money I've already spent on a project in my match commitment?

No. Project budgets may only include expenses that have not yet been incurred, regardless of whether the expenses are attributed to the grant request or project match columns. If your application is for a phase or portion of a larger ongoing project, you *may* include information about the full project in your project narrative, expected outcomes, and other narrative sections of the application – in this case, it is still up to the applicant to describe the need and impact of the portion of the project that is reflected in the budget.

19. Can I include money in my match commitment that I *plan* to spend on a project before the funding agreements are finalized (estimated June 2025)?

Yes. You may include in your **project match commitment** money that you plan to spend on the described project, so long as that spending is clearly detailed in the project budget and timeline, and so long as the spending occurs after the grant application deadline on 10/31/24. You may not include in your **grant request** any money that will be spent before the funding agreements are finalized.

For more information on how to fill out your project budget, please refer to the budget instructions in **NOFO Section G** and the application budget template.

20. Can home-based businesses apply for funds to make property improvements or building expansions?

Property improvements and/or construction projects on privately owned residential properties (i.e. homes and properties which are zoned as residential) **do not** qualify for funding under this program.

21. Why isn't my application going through when I click 'Submit application'?

Before reaching out to County staff about an issue with the form, please do the following:

- Double-check that you have completed all required questions.
- Double-check that you have successfully uploaded all three required attachments (budget, scaled down budget, statement on match with proof of match) in PDF file format.
- Confirm that your question responses do not exceed 2,000 characters (including spaces). If any of your responses exceed 2,000 characters, the form will display an error message and will not submit.

To ensure that you do not lose your work in the event of a form error, please write your responses to the application questions in a separate, saved document prior to filling out the application form.