



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Executive Office of the Mayor  
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

**FY24 Downtown Recovery Grant (DTRG)**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**

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**Release Date of RFA:** Friday, January 26, 2024

**RFA ID #:** DMPED –FY24 – DTRG

**Information Session:** In-person information session at DMPED’s Retail Grant and Grow Expo on February 5, 2024. Virtual information session on February 13, 2024. Please refer to <https://dmped.dc.gov/service/grant-opportunities>

**Submission Deadline:** Friday, March 15, 2024 at 5:00 pm (ET).

**All applications must be submitted electronically. Hand delivered or mailed applications will not be accepted.**

**Submission Summary:** Online submissions only. Please submit your complete application (including attachments) through the GrantVantage portal on the website for the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development: [dmped.dc.gov](https://dmped.dc.gov).

**DMPED Point of Contact:** (202) 727-8111  
**E-mail:** [dmped.grants@dc.gov](mailto:dmped.grants@dc.gov)

**Availability:** Download the application from the following websites:

- Office of Partnership and Grants - [opgs.dc.gov](https://opgs.dc.gov)
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development - [dmped.dc.gov](https://dmped.dc.gov)

## SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1.1 Introduction and Purpose of Grant

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (“**DMPED**”) invites the submission of applications (“**Applications**”) from qualified organizations for the FY24 Downtown Recovery Grant Program (“**Downtown Recovery Grant Program**” or “**Program**”). The purpose of the Program is to support businesses opening or expanding in commercial spaces in the Downtown DC Business Improvement District (“**Downtown BID**”) and the Golden Triangle Business Improvement District (“**Golden Triangle BID**”).

The purpose of the Program is to provide grants to support the construction and operation of business enterprises that are locating or expanding in commercial spaces in the Downtown BID and in the Golden Triangle BID that have been vacant for at least six months (“**Project**”). The Program will incentivize businesses to locate and expand in these neighborhoods that are experiencing high commercial vacancy and reduced foot traffic. The Program will provide grants to cover the costs of building out a new space and operating a business in the space. For the purposes of the Program, a space is considered vacant if it existed and was available for occupancy but was not occupied as of July 26, 2023, which is six months prior to the release date of this RFA (“**Vacancy Date**”).

### 1.2 Source of Funds; Grant Funding

The Program will be funded pursuant to the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development Limited Grant-Making Authority Act of 2012, effective September 12, 2012 (D.C. Law 19-168; D.C. Official Code § 1-328.04(hh)).

The total amount of funding available is \$3,000,000.00. An applicant can request up to \$3,000,000. DMPED anticipates making 1-5 awards under this Program.

### 1.3 Competition for a Grant Award

This RFA is competitive. Each applicant must demonstrate its ability to carry out the activities for the grant for which it applies. A technical review panel will evaluate the Applications for each grant according to the stated list of criteria in the proposal description.

Specifically, grant awards will be made based on eligibility set forth in [Section 3.2](#), the extent to which the proposed proposal fits within the scope and available funding of the grant, strength of the application, and the organization’s capacity to achieve the grant’s goals.

### 1.4 Conflicts between RFA and Applicable Law

If any requirement of this RFA conflicts with a provision of any applicable law, including a District or federal law or regulation, the applicable legal provision shall control.

### 1.5 Period of Performance and Disbursement of Grant Funds

Successful applicants must expend all grant funds from the effective date of the grant agreement through September 30, 2025. **The District's financial obligation runs from the date of execution of the grant agreement through September 30, 2024.**

Grant funding will be disbursed to the successful applicant based on award amount following execution of a grant agreement. It is anticipated that funds will be disbursed in tranches.

## **1.6 Grant Monitoring**

In its sole discretion, DMPED may use several methods to monitor the grant, including monthly reviews of progress, review of performance planning, engagement efforts, site visits, data collection, or other methods set forth in a grant agreement. At any point, the grant is subject to a performance or financial audit.

## **1.7 Invoice Submission**

Invoices must be submitted electronically through the vendor portal: <https://vendorportal.dc.gov>. Successful applicants are required to register on the vendor portal prior to submitting an invoice.

# **SECTION 2. ELIGIBILITY**

## **2.1 General Eligibility Requirements**

Eligible applicants must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for a grant:

- Licensed business in good standing with the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP) (formerly DCRA), the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR), the Department of Employment Services (DOES), and Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Applicants must maintain their good standing status with the aforementioned entities throughout the pre-award process and the grant's period of performance.
- Provide proof of property and liability insurance compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 6.1 of this RFA.
- Applicants shall provide a statement regarding any debarments, suspensions, bankruptcy, or loan defaults on real estate development projects and/or government contracts of any of the applicant teams' entities (see Section 5.2 of this RFA).

## **2.2 Eligible Applicants and Program Requirements**

Eligible applicants and Program proposals must meet the following requirements to be considered eligible for a grant:

- Applicants must be a for-profit business that intends to lease space in the Downtown BID or Golden Triangle BID that has been vacant since at least the Vacancy Date.
- Project location must be designated for commercial use, including retail or office.
- Businesses must be an eligible type, including the following<sup>1</sup>:
  - Businesses occupying commercial office space and operating in one of the following industries:
    - Communications and Design
    - Consulting Services
    - Education and Research
    - Hospitality, Tourism, and Entertainment
    - Life Sciences and Health Technology
    - Technology (including innovation and entrepreneurship)
  - Childcare centers
  - Educational institutions
  - Entertainment (arts, museum, music, sports, theater)
  - Grocery stores
  - Restaurants
  - Retail stores and retail services
  - Urgent care centers
- Projects must be complete by September 30, 2025.
- Selected applicants must ensure that Projects abide by all District laws and regulations.
- Applications should demonstrate how Projects will drive foot traffic to the Downtown BID or Golden Triangle BID and how Projects will generate economic activity in these neighborhoods. (See [Section 3.2](#))
- Applications should demonstrate the feasibility of the business model and the likelihood that the business will be successful in the Project location. (See [Section 3.2](#))
- Applicants should demonstrate site control or have a Letter of Intent for a qualified leased space. (See [Section 3.2](#))
- Preference will be given to businesses that occupy or will occupy at least 4,000 square feet of space in the Project for a minimum of three years from completion of the Project.

Projects must be located in the eligible geography (“**Eligible Geography**”) as defined by the boundaries of the DowntownDC BID and the Golden Triangle BID, illustrated on the map below and the online mapping tool. To check if a proposed Project falls within the Eligible Geography, enter the address on the online mapping tool available here: <https://dcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=46e89b6f0a334f5da1e212bdd8b2b2fb>.

### 2.3 Ineligible Applicants

The following applicants are not eligible to receive a grant under the Program:

- Adult entertainment
- Auto body repair

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<sup>1</sup> Note: DMPED shall endeavor to award at least one grant to an eligible child care center, supermarket, or urgent care center.

- Bank (retail)
- Cannabis or entheogenic plants and fungus businesses
- E-commerce business without a brick-and-mortar location
- Home-based business
- Insurance office
- Liquor store
- Medical office provider (except urgent care center)
- Nightclub (CX/DX license from ABCA)
- Phone store
- Realtor office
- Seasonal businesses (only open part of the year)
- An electronic equipment facility that is primarily occupied by electronic and computer equipment that provides electronic data switching, transmission, or telecommunication functions between computer, both inside and outside the facility
- Tenants occupying commercial office space and operating in an industry other than one of the eligible industries

## **2.4 Eligible Funding Uses**

Grant funds may be used to support the following Program costs:

- Hard costs related to the build-out of the Project space:
  - Construction materials
  - Construction labor
  - Purchase and installation of heavy equipment, fixtures, or furniture that is permanently attached to a wall, floor, or ceiling;
- Soft costs related to the build-out of a vacant space, including architectural and engineering services and project management services; or
- Rent incurred by the applicant for the Project location, beginning on or after the date of execution of a lease, and not earlier than October 1, 2023.

## **2.5 Ineligible Use of Funds**

Grant funds can only be used for the eligible uses set forth in Section 2.4. Examples of ineligible uses are as follows:

- Personnel costs not related to the build-out of the Project location
- Inventory
- Organizational overhead
- General operating expenses or developers' fees
- Acquisition/purchase of vehicles
- Federal and District taxes and fees
- Any costs to satisfy liens and related penalties
- Government impositions
- Food and beverage

- Organizational capacity building
- Debt service
- Executive salaries or bonuses
- Expenses associated with preparing the application
- Legal fees
- Travel costs

## SECTION 3. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

### 3.1 Submission Guidelines

- A. All Applications must be submitted via the online application system. All attachments must be submitted in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. Any other formats will deem the submission incomplete.
- B. Applicants must submit a completed online Application to DMPED via the GrantVantage portal no later than the Submission Deadline. All Applications will be recorded upon receipt. Any incomplete Applications or Applications received after the Submission Deadline will not be accepted. Unless requested by DMPED, any additions or deletions to an Application will not be accepted after the Submission Deadline. DMPED is not responsible for unreadable, incomplete, and/or out-of-order Application submissions.
- C. Due to the variance of applicant internet speeds, Applications with many attached documents will take time to process. Applicants are encouraged to submit Applications no later than **one hour** before the Submission Deadline. If an Application is submitted minutes before the Submission Deadline, the announcement may close in the middle of processing the Application. If this occurs, DMPED will not receive the Application submission.
- D. **DMPED is not responsible for malfunctions of the online platform.** DMPED advises prospective applicants not to upload any documents using Dropbox or similar applications due to access issues. In addition, please utilize read-only, non-modifiable format .PDF files only for any attachments to the Application. Applicants must submit individual .PDF files only when attaching files to their Application. DMPED will not accept any attachments that contain files within a file, such as PDF Portfolio files, or an interactive or fillable .PDF file. **Any attachments uploaded that are not .PDF files (unless otherwise requested) or are password protected files will not be read.** Applications that encounter technical system errors must be reported to the GrantVantage Support desk using this email: [Support@grantvantage.com](mailto:Support@grantvantage.com).
- E. Applications that encounter technical system errors must be reported to the GrantVantage Support desk using this email: [Support@grantvantage.com](mailto:Support@grantvantage.com).

Examples of events that would NOT be considered ‘technical system errors’:

- Failure to follow funding opportunity instructions.
- Failure to follow Application instructions.

- Local internet problem at the time of submission on deadline day.
- Unable to see final application “Submit” button.
- Forgot username or password credentials.
- Security locked out of system resulting from forgetting password – too many wrong attempts.
- Failure to notify the GrantVantage Support Desk (Support@grantvantage.com) prior to 1- hour of Submission Deadline.
- Closing Application during the submission process while the “Processing” indicator is still active.

### **3.2 Contents of Application**

Applications must include the elements for each section outlined below to be eligible for the maximum consideration. Applications that fail to include all the necessary elements may not be reviewed or considered and may be disqualified. Applications must provide sufficient information for DMPED to make a determination of merit of the applicant’s Program proposal.

#### **A. Program Proposal Description**

Applications should describe and fully explain the Project being proposed in a Project summary which includes the following items:

- Location of the proposed Project indicating it is within the Eligible Geography.
- Demonstration that the Project location is designated for retail or commercial use.
- Description of the applicant’s business and the services or products that will be offered at the Project location.
- The applicant’s headquarters location and whether the applicant operates any other locations in the District or elsewhere.
- Applicant must exhibit site control of the Project property through one of the following forms:
  - Contract of Sale;
  - Executed Letter of Intent;
  - Deed; or
  - Executed contract or lease with the property owner of the Project site
- Anticipated timeline for the Project, including construction timeline and anticipated date of opening. Projects must be complete and open by September 30, 2025, unless otherwise agreed to by DMPED in writing.

#### **B. Capacity of Applicant Team**

##### **1. Organization**

Describe the applicant organization’s history, mission, and current or past projects that demonstrate the organization’s capacity to achieve the Program goals. To provide further information, the applicant can reference its website or attach an organizational brochure or

resumes.

## 2. Key personnel

Identify all the team members for the Program proposal and provide brief biographies or their resumes outlining relevant experience and an organizational chart showing key personnel who will be working on the Program, if awarded grant funds. The team members can be staff, volunteers, or contractors. Applications should also provide information that explains the relationship among team members, their respective roles and contributions to the Program proposal, and the overall management of the team. Include information about the primary applicant entity and, if applicable, other relevant entities (financial partners, operation/maintenance partners, tenants, contractors, etc. as applicable). Applications should include a brief history of each organization and its principals.

## 3. Past performance on District Grants/Contracts

Identify District agencies from which the applicant has received funding as a contractor, grantee, or partner in the past five years and provide specific information including:

- The grant(s) or contract(s) title;
- The District agency/agencies;
- The grant number(s), contract number(s), or other identifier(s);
- The amount(s) paid; and
- What was accomplished as a result of the funding(s).

## C. Vacancy Impact

Applications shall include a description of the Project location the applicant will occupy and the terms of the occupancy. Preference will be given to applicants leasing at least 4,000 square feet for a minimum of three (3) years. Include the following:

- Whether the Project location will be owned by applicant or leased;
- If leased, the length of the lease term and any options to extend;
- The amount of space that will be occupied for the Project;
- The location of the space in the building, including whether the Project is located on the ground floor, lower level, or an upper floor (upper floor number to be identified); and
- The amount of street frontage, in linear feet, of the Project.

Applications shall also include a description of the anticipated impact to reducing commercial vacancy, including the following:

- The date that the Project location became vacant and the amount of time the space has been vacant. Spaces must have been vacant since the Vacancy Date.
- A description of whether the Project is located on a corner or is an in-line location.

## D. Financial Viability and Schedule of Performance



Applications shall include a detailed information about the Project's financials and a schedule of performance that shows that the Project is financially viable and that the applicant has the capacity to complete the Project and successfully operate in the Project location within the timeframe required by this RFA. Include the following:

- Total construction budget at the Project location;
- Project budget for the use of all grant funds;
- All sources and uses of funding to complete the build-out of the Project location;
- Anticipated annual operating expenses;
- Projected annual revenue for the Project location;
- Demonstration that the applicant will be able to continue paying occupancy costs for the term of its occupancy at the Project location; and
- Schedule of performance for construction of the Project, with a final completion date no later than September 30, 2025.

#### **E. Estimated Economic Impact**

Applications shall discuss and quantify, as best as possible, the economic impacts of the proposed Project, including the following:

- Projected annual revenue generated by the applicant at the Project location;
- Projected number of jobs created by the applicant at the Project location, delineated by the following:
  - Number of new permanent full-time jobs created by the applicant and average annual wages of these jobs;
  - Number of temporary construction jobs estimated to be created as a result of the Project;
  - The extent to which any new full-time jobs created by the applicant will provide opportunities for training and advancement;
- Any new amenities provided as a result of the Project and the primary customers or populations that will benefit from the Project;
- The extent of the applicant's impact on the growth of its industry in the District, including whether the business represents an innovative or new product or service;
- Estimated number of regular visitors to the Project location; and
- Operating days and hours of the business at the Project location. If a commercial office tenant, the number of days per week employees work in-person at the Project location.

#### **F. Market Feasibility**

Applications shall include an explanation of the market feasibility of the business opening at the Project location and the likelihood that the business will be successful operating in the Project location. Applicants should include evidence of the demand for the products or services offered by the applicant, examples of similarly successful businesses operating in Downtown locations in the District or elsewhere, and projections for the growth of the business.

#### **G. Supporting Documentation**

In addition to any documentation required by subsections A-F of this Section, Applications

must include each of the following required attachments for the applicant. Any Applications submitted without the below attachments will not be considered for award:

- Attachment A: Basic Business License (DLCP, formerly DCRA)
- Attachment B: Certificate of Clean Hands from the District Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR)
- Attachment C: Copy of most recent audited financials (2022 or later)
- Attachment D: Certificate of Good Standing (DLCP, formerly DCRA)
- Attachment E: OTR Tax Certification Affidavit
- Attachment F: Articles of Incorporation
- Attachment G: Signed By-laws
- Attachment H: Evidence of Site Control
- Attachment I: Organization Chart of Applicant Team
- Attachment J: Sources and Uses
- Attachment K: ANC Letter of Support
- Attachment L: Statement of Financial Position (last 3 years: 2023, 2022, 2021)
- Attachment M: Landlord Affidavit
- Attachment N: Debarment Affidavit
- Attachment O: Arrest and Convictions Statement
- Attachment P: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Statement
- Attachment Q: Ethics and Accountability Statement
- Attachment R: Statement of Certification
- Attachment S: Form W9

## **SECTION 4. SCORING CRITERIA AND APPLICATION REVIEW**

### **4.1 Scoring Criteria**

Applications will be evaluated based on the scoring criteria outlined below. Applications should include the elements for each section to be eligible for the maximum consideration. Applications that fail to include all the necessary elements may not be reviewed or considered and may be disqualified. Applications must provide sufficient information for DMPED to make a determination of merit on the Project proposal.

### **4.2 Scoring Criteria Points**

<b>Scoring Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Program Proposal Description</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Capacity of Applicant Team</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Vacancy Impact</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Financial Viability and Schedule of Performance</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Estimated Economic Impact</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Market Feasibility</b>	<b>15</b>

Total	100
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### 4.3 Application Review

#### A. Phase 1: Prequalification Period

During the prequalification period, applicants must successfully submit all the required Project information and documents listed in Section 3.2 of this RFA. Each application will receive an initial screening to ensure that all required forms, signatures, and documents are present, complete, and compliant with the requirements for each, and if so, the application will be qualified to move to the application review panel phase. An Application will not be evaluated by the review panel if:

1. The Application is received after the Submission Deadline;
2. The Application package is not complete;
3. The Application fails to address the Program priorities; or
4. The Application does not fall within the scope this RFA.

#### B. Phase 2: Application Review Panel

Applicants that are qualified in Phase 1 will receive written notice to present their Project proposals at an assigned date and time to a technical review committee comprising District government representatives. Presentations will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams and applicants will be provided document templates for their presentation. The technical review panel may ask questions of the applicant during the presentation. The technical review panel will provide comments and a score for each application using the Scoring Criteria defined in Section 4.2 and make a recommendation for award.

#### C. Final Review

Based on the recommendations from the technical review panel, the Mayor's budget priorities, the resources available, the goal of achieving a balance as to communities served, and the goals of the Program, DMPED will make the final funding decision. DMPED leadership will submit recommendations to the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development for final approval after taking into consideration the review panel's recommendations. **The final funding decision cannot be contested or appealed.**

## **SECTION 5: ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND CONDITIONAL AWARD REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1 Anticipated Announcement.**

Anticipated time for processing applications is forty-five (45) days after the Submission Deadline. DMPED will send a response letter to eligible applicants, informing them of their status in the review process.

### **5.2 Conditional Award**

Successful applicants will receive a conditional award letter from DMPED detailing the conditions of the award and requesting the following supplemental documentation, as applicable:

1. Proof of Insurance – See Section 6.1
2. Automated Clearing House (ACH) Form – Successful applicants will receive disbursements via an electronic transmission to the bank account designated for this grant. To establish this transfer, Successful applicants must fully complete and submit an ACH Form that includes the signature of an authorized representative from their financial institution.
3. Grant Agreement – Successful applicants are required to sign an agreement setting forth the terms and obligations that will serve as conditions for the Successful applicant's receipt of the applicable grant funds.
4. Assurance of Continued Truth and Accuracy – Prior to the award of grant funds, successful applicants shall notify DMPED of any changes that may have occurred to its organization since the time of submission of its original Application.
5. First Source Agreement – Successful applicants may be required to execute a First Source Agreement with the District Department of Employment Services.
6. Certified Business Enterprise – Successful applicants may be required to execute a subcontracting agreement with the District Department of Small and Local Business Development.

To remain eligible for this grant, all supplemental documentation must be submitted to DMPED within five (5) business days of the conditional award letter. An applicant that cannot provide these materials **WITHIN 5 BUSINESS DAYS** may be deemed ineligible to receive grant funds.

## **SECTION 6. ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **6.1 Insurance Requirements for Successful Applicants**

Prior to the award of grant funds, applicants must show proof of all insurance coverage required by law and by the Program, as determined by DMPED. Successful applicants shall procure and maintain, during the entire period of performance under the grant agreement, the types of insurance specified by DMPED in the grant agreement and any general liability and other insurance, consistent with District law. Successful applicants are responsible for adhering to the insurance requirements as set forth in the grant agreement.

Insurance documents required to be submitted to DMPED prior to the award of grant funds include:

1. A copy of the binder or cover sheet of each current policy that covers activities that might be undertaken in connection with the performance of the grant;
2. Endorsements for each of these policies - except for Worker's Compensation, Errors and Omissions, and Professional Liabilities – that name the Government of the District of Columbia and its officers, employees, agents and volunteers as additional named insured for liability arising out of performance of the award; and
3. A written waiver of subrogation against the Government of the District of Columbia and its officers, employees, agents, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors from each of the applicant's insurance carriers providing coverage for activities that might be undertaken in connection with the performance of the grant.

### **6.2 Taxability of Grant Funds**

Receipt of grant funds may be considered taxable income to the grantee. Grantees should consult their tax advisor regarding tax income and tax liability concerns.

### **6.3 Terms and Conditions**

Funding for this grant is contingent upon continued appropriations to DMPED. This RFA does not commit DMPED to make a grant award.

DMPED reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if it is determined to be in the best interest of DMPED to do so. DMPED shall notify the applicant if it rejects their application. DMPED reserves the right to suspend or terminate an RFA pursuant to its own grantmaking rules or any applicable federal regulation or requirement.

DMPED reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of this RFA, or to rescind this RFA. DMPED reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant.

DMPED shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to this RFA. Applicants agree that all costs incurred in developing the application for this grant Program are the applicant's sole responsibility.

DMPED may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in the application and to determine if an applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services intended.

DMPED may enter into negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revision of an applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations.

DMPED shall provide the citations to the statute and implementing regulations that authorize any grant or subgrant under the grant agreement; payment provisions identifying how the grantee will be paid for performing under the grant agreement (including requirements of The Nonprofit Fair Compensation Act of 2020 (NFCA), effective March 16, 2021 (D.C. Law 23-185; D.C. Official Code § 2-222.01)); reporting requirements, including programmatic, financial, and any special reports required by DMPED; and compliance conditions that must be met by the grantee.

If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of this RFA and any applicable federal or local laws or regulations, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable laws or regulations shall control, and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

DMPED reserves the right to withhold funds and/or withdraw a grant award to applicants who change vendors during the period of performance prior to submission and approval by DMPED.