

FY22 SMALL BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) is pleased to announce that it is accepting applications for participation in the Fiscal Year 2022 (July 2020-June 2021) grant program. MGCC is seeking proposals for technical assistance for underserved small businesses in Massachusetts. MGCC will accept applications from not-for-profit organizations that currently provide technical assistance and training programs to small businesses and start-ups. These grants are intended to supplement the organization's current and anticipated funding and not to be the primary funding support. If applying organization(s) currently receives, or will receive, funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for its small business assistance program, articulate how those funds are being used and how funding from the Small Business Assistance Grant Program will not be duplicative.

Grant proposals shall identify specific counseling and training programs that assist these small businesses to:

- Secure new or increased financing for growth.
- Secure Empower Digital Grants (MGCC Program).
- Kick-off crowdfunding campaigns through the Biz-M-Power grant (MGCC Program).
- Achieve stability and viability.
- Create/retain jobs.
- Increase the economic vitality of the neighborhood, community, or region.

Considerations will be given to proposals designed to support businesses located in Gateway cities, and other under-resourced and low-to-moderate-income communities in Massachusetts. *The Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program will aim to support businesses that are minority-owned, women-owned, LGBTQ-owned, low-moderate-income individuals, US Military Veterans, Cooperatives, and disable individuals. Multilingual Program offering are highly desirable.*

The program is designed to complement and enhance traditional public and private small business assistance networks by providing technical assistance or training programs for under-resourced and disadvantaged businesses with 20 or fewer employees. The program seeks to facilitate economic stability and viability for small businesses by helping to improve their ability to navigate business operations in a post COVID-19 era, including ability to secure private and public financing, business grants, and micro-loans.

Grant funds are not intended to provide services geared toward prospective ventures. Therefore, at least 85% of the clients served by the grantee organization with these funds shall be for clients who are already operating an existing business or who are within twelve months of opening a new business.

[Click here to download a PDF of the full RFP here.](#)

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program is to ensure that small businesses continue their path towards recovery in order to ensure future economic and entrepreneurial opportunity throughout the Commonwealth in a post COVID-19 era.

Proposed program counseling and training programs should be designed to aid small business owners in stabilizing and growing their businesses in measurable ways through intensive individual counseling/coaching, selective group training, loan packaging, and direct lending or loan guarantees. Proposals offering multilingual programming and targeting immigrant-owned businesses are highly desirable.

Grant proposals should define the communities they serve, the strategy and marketing plan to reach these communities, current and planned programs, and performance benchmarks and metrics. As these grant proceeds can only supplement budgets, the requesting organization must have additional funding sources. Organizations are encouraged to list existing partners and other public and/or private funding sources. If the proposed program currently receives public funding, please define how this additional funding will be differentiated from the current public funding and describe the incremental results this grant will produce.

Proposed programs shall include individual and/or group counseling, training programs, loan packaging services, or direct technical assistance that advance:

- New business startups;
- Business expansion;
- Business stabilization;
- Other measurable economic growth.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Ineligible for funding under the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program are projects or activities which:

- Are for the private profit or benefit of an individual or a select group of individuals.
- Involve the replication of services already provided under the auspices of a federal or state agency.
- Are primarily intended to serve prospective business ventures, defined as individuals who are more than twelve months from beginning to operate a business.
- Do not have the capacity to measure status outcomes relating to business stabilization and growth.

MGCC reserves the right to reject any and all submitted proposals and any or all parts of a proposed activity.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

For purposes of the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program and this Request for Proposal (RFP), only Massachusetts-based, not-for-profit corporations are eligible for program participation. For the purposes of this program, the entity shall:

1. Be duly organized under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 180 and incorporated as such by the Secretary of State for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, whose mission includes facilitating a community driven economic development process for small businesses.
2. Hold a tax-exempt status under the United States Internal Revenue Code.
3. If the applicant cannot meet the first two criteria, then it must have an established fiduciary relationship with an organization that is both incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and maintains a tax-exempt status under the United States Internal Revenue Code. Under those circumstances where a fiduciary relationship is in force, a memorandum of agreement signed and dated by the authorized representatives of the two cooperating agencies attesting to the fiduciary relationship, along with copies of the sponsoring organization's tax-exempt certificate and Certificate of Good Standing from the Massachusetts Secretary of State must be submitted with the applicant's proposal.
4. Demonstrate an ability to develop and manage programs as reflected in the effective functioning of the Board of Directors, operations managed by a fulltime and experienced management team, involvement of and responsiveness to community residents and constituents.
5. Provide evidence of fiscal stability, as documented in prepared financial statements.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Any materials submitted will become the property of MGCC and must be made available for reproduction and may not be copyrighted. Application submissions will be accepted via Submittable Platform accessible on www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org

An application will not be considered if it fails to meet the minimum requirements. The requirements are as follows:

6. Must be submitted via Submittable 11:59pm on July 30, 2021.
7. Completed all application components
8. Narrative questions (1-6)
9. Upload all documents identified (7-14)

AMOUNT OF FUNDING:

MGCC will endeavor to assure broad geographic diversity among grantees but will not limit the number of grants awarded per region.

- Funds available for this grant program in FY 2022 is subject to appropriation (\$4-7 Million)
- Organization proposals will not exceed \$85,000.
- Collaborative joint proposals will not exceed \$175,000.
- A collaborative is defined as two or more eligible non-profit organizations sharing costs and providing complementary services in coordination with each other.
- Collaborative joint proposals must demonstrate that the organizations propose a cohesive work plan and will work together to implement and achieve their proposed objectives.
- Collaborative joint proposals must have one lead organization and one person responsible for the application and administration of grant monies, as well as all reporting and communication.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

MGCC has established a competitive review process known as the Small Business Technical Assistance Review Committee. All awards are subject to the Small Business Technical Assistance Committee of the MGCC Board of Directors and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED). A Review Committee will evaluate proposals, seeking those that most completely meet the established criteria accompanied by credible, historic outcome metrics.

Proposals must demonstrate the ability to meet the following small business assistance priorities in order to receive funding:

- Provide a strategy for addressing the small business needs as they continue to recover from the circumstances related to COVID-19.
- Provide a minimum of 5 hours of direct services to small business clients from target populations.
- Implement coordinated services that magnify the delivery of services in efficient, economical, and effective ways. Preference will be given to agencies that can demonstrate strong collaborations with micro-lenders or whose funding will support micro-loan fund clients.
- Enhance and complement government service providers, such as the Small Business Development Centers.
- Collect and report on specific outcomes achieved that can be attributed to services provided in terms of business starts, financings made or facilitated, businesses stabilized, jobs created or retained, and/or revenue growth.

A Review Committee will evaluate proposals, seeking those that most completely meet the established criteria accompanied by credible, historic outcome metrics.

TIMELINE:

Due Date: July 30th

Noticed of Awards: August (Subject to change)

TECHNICAL SUPPORT ON SUBMITTABLE:

Visit the Help Center: <https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/>

OTHER QUESTIONS: CONTACT

- Email: sbta@massgcc.com

APPLICATION NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. Overview

Describe the mission of the applicant organization or partnership, the community it serves, and its outreach strategy. Describe activities and the steps taken by the applicant to demonstrate the applicant's ability to provide technical assistance, training or lending/loan packaging to the small business community, in particular businesses with 20 or fewer employees from the target populations.

2. Staff Qualifications

Describe the professional qualifications of the small business assistance professionals on staff and consultants regularly used for client referrals.

3. Business Community Challenges

Based on the applicant's client profile, describe the issues they face with business development, securing financing and achieving financial viability. Describe the organization's technical assistance role, training and counseling programs, or other initiatives with the small business community that create, maintain, and grow the business's financial viability, ability to obtain private or public financing and/or create jobs.

4. Partnerships and Collaboratives

Detail partnerships and collaborations that support the applicant's program, including but not limited to, how the applicant partners with their regional SBDC and other providers, including legal, accounting, tax professionals, marketing specialists, private and government lenders, and micro-lenders.

5. Specific Grant Program & Activities

Describe the proposed program and its related activities. The proposal must include a program description that is reflected in the work plan and explains clearly the proposed budget.

6. Program Budget

Cost Elements (1-4)	Lead Agency Annual Project Budget	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	MGCC Funding Request
1. List below Direct Personnel Costs						

Staff (% of staff time on project)						
Staff (total)						
2. List below Consultants (include pay rate)						
Consultants (total)						
3. List below Non- Personnel Direct Costs (<i>e.g. program related materials, supplies, food, travel</i>)						
Non-Personnel Direct Costs (total)						
Total Direct Costs (1+2+3)						

4. List below Administrative Overhead/ Indirect Costs (e.g. utilities, rent, audit, admin staff)						
TOTAL PROJECT COST (1+2+3+4) for each organization						
Total Project Cost (all organizations)	\$					
FUNDING SOURCES/REVENUE ELEMENTS	Lead Agency Amount (\$)	Partner 1 Amount (\$)	Partner 2 Amount (\$)	Partner 3&4 Amount (\$)	Status	Award Date
Identified Funding Sources						
Projected Fees						
Matching Funds						
Contributions						
Contracts/ Grants (list separately)						
Total Funding (all organizations)						

MGCC Request	\$					
Total Projected funding/revenue	\$					
Total Project Cost	\$					
Funding Gap or Revenue	\$					

Data Collection and Outcome Measures Plan

Outline how the applicant expects to define outcomes relating to business start-ups, stabilization and expansion, what indicators will be used to determine outcomes, and the methodology for collecting and reporting on performance, demographic, and outcome data.

Performance Data & Outcome	Proposed (July 1 2021-June 30, 2022)
Client Engagement	
What is the total # of businesses you anticipate will received services (a+b)?	
a. How many clients do you anticipate will first engage in 1:1 T.A./counseling as an initial engagement?	
b. How many clients do you anticipate will first engage in workshops/training as an initial engagement?	
Outcomes	
# of businesses (to be) stabilized (meaning clients whose businesses were experiencing losses or other problems who are now financially or legally stable)	
# of businesses that will grow/increase revenue as a result of services	
# of FTE jobs (to be) created as a result of services	

# FTE jobs (to be) preserved as a result of services	
Anticipated # of businesses that will receive financing (direct loans + indirect loans)	
Total value \$ of anticipated financing (direct loans+ indirect loans)	

APPLICATION REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (UPLOADS)

1. Proposed project budget
2. Resumes of key personnel delivering direct service
3. 2021 Certificate of Good Standing from the Secretary of the Commonwealth (one for each agency participating in the grant)
4. Current Board of Directors list
5. U.S. IRS Tax Exempt Certification/ Determination Letter
6. Most recent Audited Financial Statement or Review
7. Current year-to-date organizational Financial Statement: Income & Expense/Balance Sheet
8. Memorandum of Understanding from fiscal sponsorship agency (if applicable)

PROGRAM REPORTING

While MGCC recognizes that outreach, marketing, networking, and introductory sessions are a necessary part of a comprehensive small business assistance program, we do not wish to overburden grantees with data collection and reporting requirements not directly tied to the mission of the grant program. Thus, MGCC will not be requesting data on intake, assessment, or short-term assistance of less than 5 hours of direct contact with clients. Neither will we require reporting relating to hours of service, customer satisfaction, or learning outcomes.

MGCC will require a final report on performance, demographic, and outcome data. Reporting templates will be provided as a way to help gather data, but all reports and files must be submitted through Submittable. Deadlines for submitting these reports will be included with the Grant Agreement.

Mid-year and final reports will include the following elements (subject to modification):

- Narrative that references proposal Work Plan and answers: What worked well, what did you learn, and what were the challenges in providing assistance to your small business clients and achieving your goals?
- Description of methodology used for verifying outcome data, including which indicators were used to validate business start-up, stabilization, growth, job creation and retention, and how follow-up was conducted (phone, internet, face to face; survey, interview, document verification, etc.)
- Changes in key staff or organizational changes that impact the small business program during the grant period. (Resumes for key staff to be required)
- Indicate any partnerships developed with other organizations (i.e. other MGCC grantees, financial institutions, funders, peer-to peer, city programs, etc.) during the grant period.
- If your organization has received any media attention or organized any events related to this grant, must report on those promotional activities. Media refers to: print (newspaper, newsletter, flyers, etc.), TV, radio, social media (Facebook/twitter/LinkedIn).
- Report on professional development that the business technical assistance provider(s) attended during the grant period.
- Business success story that illustrates a business in start-up, stabilization or growth stage and the economic impact of the provision of technical assistance services. It should include a brief description and relevant history of the business and the business owner, challenge, technical assistance solution and the economic impact.

