ACCESS GRANTED
Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What businesses are eligible to apply for ACCESS GRANTED?**

Any business that meets the eligibility requirements is encouraged to apply for ACCESS GRANTED:

  - Be a registered for-profit business.

  - Be in good standing in the state of Maryland.

  - Have no more than 25 full-time equivalent employees.

- **For the purposes of this grant, what is the definition of a "minority owned business"?**

 For the purposes of this grant program, utilize the following definition for "Minority or Women Owned" Enterprise:

Minority or Woman Business Enterprise (MWBE) - *is defined as a business that is at least 51% owned and controlled by one or more socially-and economically-disadvantaged individuals. Under current State law, an individual is presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged if that individual belongs to one of the following groups: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Women.*

- **What can ACCESS GRANTED funds be used for? Here are a few examples of how the grant funds may be utilized.***
    - ✓ Professional services
    - ✓ Website design
    - ✓ Marketing
    - ✓ Equipment
    - ✓ Vehicles
    - ✓ Building improvements (HVAC, plumbing, electric, space remodeling).
    - ✓ Office furniture and Supplies
    - ✓ Permit fees
    - ✓ Inventory

*You will have to illustrate how this investment will support the scalability or growth of your business.

- **I'm not sure if my business obtained the required Certificate of Occupancy prior to operating in its established address in The City of Frederick. How can I check?**

For city based businesses, you can search your address through this open portal regarding past permits submitted prior to 12/11/2023. : Citizen Access (cityoffrederick.com) . Select "Public Access", then "Building Permit", then enter the applicable address to view all permits associated with the location selected.

For all permits submitted after 12/11/2023 use the following portal: https://frederickmd.portal.opengov.com/search.   Enter the address in the search filed and select applicable permit. Certificate of Occupancy can be obtained through a Zoning, Alteration, or New Building permit only.

- **What if my business did NOT obtain a Certificate of Occupancy prior to beginning operations within the City of Frederick?**

For homebased businesses:
The City of Frederick does regulate the operation of home-based businesses.
- o Details on these regulations can be found online under the Land Management Code Article 8, Section 829 "Home Occupation".
- o Potential home-based businesses should Apply Online to determine the approval process required to establish a specific home-based business. Zoning - Planning Department - Zoning Board of Appeals Application - ViewPoint Cloud (opengov.com)

Please also notify the review committee at accessgranted@cityoffrederickmd.gov that you are working to obtain the necessary approvals.

For businesses with a physical location (non-homebased):
If you do not have a certificate of occupancy for your space, please reach out to the Permitting Department at 301.600.3808 or visit https://www.cityoffrederickmd.gov/214/Building-Permits. The City Permitting Department can assist you with the process to obtain a certificate of occupancy for your location.

Please also notify the review committee at accessgranted@cityoffrederickmd.gov that you are working to obtain the necessary approvals.

- **What if I am unable to complete the process to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy by the August 12ᵗʰ application deadline?**

To be eligible for review, applicants with a City address must prove they have initiated the process to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy through the City of Frederick, if they do not have one already.

Documentation – either as a screenshot or confirmation email indicating the permitting is in progress --- may be uploaded as part of the 'Supporting Documentation' section of the application OR emailed as a follow-up attachment to accessgranted@cityoffrederickdmd.gov.

In progress applications will then be conditionally submitted to the review process. Grant award will ultimately be contingent upon receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy.

- **Is a non-profit organization eligible to apply?**

No, this program only applies grant awards to "for-profit businesses."

- **Does my business have to be located in The City of Frederick to be eligible?**

Preference will be given to businesses located within the City of Frederick, but a city address is not an eligibility requirement for application.

To be eligible, businesses must be registered and in good standing with the State of Maryland.

Eligible businesses located outside of City limits will be asked to provide an additional narrative describing their impact on The City of Frederick's community and/or residents.

- **If I have already submitted my application, how can I submit a correction?**

Please contact our team at accessgranted@cityoffrederickmd.gov to amend your submission.

- **Given the limited program funding and the volume of interest to date, will partial funding be considered?**

Applicants are prompted to request funding based on their specific project budget and need. The application will also require applicants to provide an overview of their plan to move forward if funding is not approved. Partial funding may be awarded depending on program demand and the information provided.

- **How can I check if my business is in good standing with the State of Maryland? Do I need to request a formal document from the state to prove this?**

Businesses are encouraged to check their status with the state of Maryland through the following tool: https://egov.maryland.gov/businessexpress/entitysearch

The review committee will confirm this standing directly and the application does NOT require formal documentation to be uploaded regarding the business' status.

We do encourage you to double-check your business status prior to application, however, as businesses not in good standing will be ineligible for funding.

- **Can this grant award be used for revenue replacement or emergency funds?**

No, ACCESS GRANTED is not intended to replace revenue shortages. Rather, Access Granted is to be used for projects that result in increased sales and increased profitability and expanded opportunities for business growth.

- **What are the company's reporting requirements to the city after the grant award has been dispersed?**

The city will follow-up with grant recipients to gage how this investment supported future business growth. If your business is awarded a grant through ACCESS GRANTED, your company will be required to provide follow-up reporting on January 31, 2025 and January 31, 2026 that includes receipts illustrating how grant funds were deployed, and a small narrative about how this grant fund helped your company to grow and/or expand. Companies will also be asked to provide the number of FTE's (full time equivalent employees) post grant award and annual gross revenue for 2024 and 2025.

- **If I am awarded a grant, what is the process?**

Once you have been notified that your company was selected to receive a grant, the company will be required to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the city. The business will need to submit a completed W-9 form and show that it is in Good Standing with the state of Maryland.   The business will be required to report in January 2025 about how the funds were utilized and how the grant impacted business operations and revenue. City Economic Development staff will reach out to your company in early January to capture this information to include gross annual revenue 2024, additions to number of employees (Full Time Equivalent Employees) and added square footage for the company's physical space.

- **How quickly will I receive my grant award?**

Allow two to three weeks after you have completed the necessary paperwork (MOU, W-9) to receive your check. All checks will be mailed, and checks are typically mailed on Fridays.

- **What does a project budget look like?** Here are a few examples.

Company A – Sample budget – Marketing project:

Implementation of eCommerce options to current website	$3,500.00
Updated Marketing design for website	$5,000.00
Project Total:	$8,500.00

Project to be completed on or before December 31, 2024

Company B – Sample Budget – Equipment purchase

Commercial Mixer (food)	$725.00
Installation	$150.00
Project Total:	$875.00

Project to be completed on or before December 31, 2024

Company C – Sample Budget

Store lighting (3 fixtures @ $129.00 each)	$ 387.00
Outdoor Commercial Security Cameras	$ 399.99
PVC Slat wall	$ 179.00
Installation (electrician)	$ 750.00
Project Total:	$1,715.99

Project to be completed on or before December 31, 2024