CITY OF PORTLAND
OFFICE FOR COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY
DIGITAL INCLUSION FUND

SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL NAVIGATOR PILOT PROGRAM
Deadline for Applications: 11:59pm, April 25, 2022

WELCOME

The City of Portland, through the Office for Community Technology (OCT), is launching a funding initiative in response to community identified solutions to addressing digital adoption barriers for small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs.

The Small Business Digital Navigator Pilot Program is designed to support a Digital Navigator position to help small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs assess their internet connectivity needs and to subscribe to affordable internet service, assess options for online applications, services, and tools to help run, market, and conduct business, and to find affordable technical support.

The Small Business Digital Navigator will also be tasked with developing a granting process to award Digital Toolbox Micro Grants (up to $5,000 each, not to exceed a total grant award of $20,000) as needed to small businesses or BIPOC entrepreneurs that receive digital navigation services.

The goal of the Pilot is four-fold:

Goal 1: To ensure small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs can confidently navigate the abundance of options of digital services, tools, and applications and can use the digital platform to be successful and competitive in the digital economy.

Goal 2: To ensure small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs have the digital tools (hardware and software) needed to develop their business.

Goal 3: To build capacity in the community to serve the digital adoption needs of small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs.

Goal 4: To learn from the Digital Navigator about persistent digital adoption barriers and to document the types of services and supports small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs need that could potentially be supported by the Digital Inclusion Fund.

OCT is pleased to issue notice of availability of grant funds for a Small Business Digital Navigator position to work with small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs and invites Portland-based community non-profits to apply.

OCT's Digital Inclusion Fund has $75,000 available in the 2021-2022 fiscal year and anticipates granting a total of <u>$75,000 in this funding round to a single entity. $55,000 of the grant shall be used to support the creation of a Small Business Digital Navigator program. $20,000 of the grant shall be used by the Small Business Digital Navigator to award Digital Toolbox Micro Grants to Subgrantees (up to $5,000 each, not to exceed a total grant spending of $20,000).</u>

OCT's Digital Inclusion Fund is expected to receive another $75,000 in the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget and these funds may or may not be used to continue funding under this pilot. OCT will continue to rely on community direction, through engagement with the Digital Inclusion Network, grantees, and others, to determine the funding programs supported by the Digital Inclusion Fund. Being awarded grant funds using FY2021-22 funding does not imply or guarantee future funding.

DIGITAL NAVIGATORS

> "Digital Navigators" are individuals who address the whole digital inclusion process—internet connectivity, devices, and digital skills—with community members through repeated interactions.

The Small Business Digital Navigator is a staff person at a community-based organization who helps small business leaders find an affordable, reliable internet connection, learn to use digital devices, access financial resources, use business applications and software, and more. They work with an individual or team at the small business to provide on-demand, customized support.

Digital Navigators need to be familiar with business-related technology, be willing to learn new tools, have up-to-date information about connectivity and equipment, be familiar with resources available to small businesses and need to be culturally competent.

Digital Navigators conduct outreach efforts in the community to identify small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs needing support. The Digital Navigator then takes the time to learn about their connectivity needs and goals and interacts with them repeatedly to provide a foundation for continued learning.

GRANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered, applicant organizations and the proposed project must fulfill all of the following minimum requirements:

- Applicant must be non-profit organization, or have a registered fiscal agent, located in the City of Portland, OR.
- Applicant must build or scale a Digital Navigator program that provides on-demand, one-to-one and/or small group dedicated support to small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs experiencing barriers to digital adoption via phone, email, text, video chat, in-person, and/or other communication methods.

- Applicant organization agrees to commit time (approx. 10-20 hours) to negotiate a grant agreement with City OCT staff in May.
- Applicant organization agrees to commit some of the digital navigator's time (approx. 1 hour/month) during the proposed project period for stakeholder engagement by presenting to Prosper Portland's Inclusive Business Resource Network Community of Practice and/or BIPOC in Tech Group, or City Bureau Partners.
- Application is signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant organization.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

This grant program is competitive. Applications that meet baseline eligibility requirements, will move forward in the process to be reviewed by a small selection committee using an evaluation matrix that includes the following criteria: community reach and intent to serve diverse populations, a well-presented plan for building the Small Business Digital Navigator project, demonstrated understanding of small business digital training/support needs, and demonstrated experience or plan to award micro-grants.

AWARD PROCESS

Timeline

April 11: Grant Application Opens
April 25: Grant Application Deadline, 11:59PM
April 26: Applications reviewed for baseline eligibility
April 27-30: Applications reviewed by Selection Committee
May 2: Selection Committee convenes to decide awards
May 4: Applications selected to receive award announced
May 5-31: Grant Agreement negotiations with selected Applicant
June 1-15: Grant Agreement executed for signature

Reporting Requirements

Periodic progress reports will be required to document project implementation milestones and project impacts/successes and challenges.

HOW TO APPLY

OCT is accepting applications through an online Google Form*. To access the Google Form, please visit https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oct/81765.

Completed applications must be submitted no later than 11:59pm on April 25, 2022.

*If submitting an online Google Form application poses an undue hardship on your organization, please contact us at connectingportland@portlandoregon.gov or 503-823-4188 to discuss alternate options.

The Google Form application includes the follow sections:

- General Information
- Applicant Organization Information
- Proposed Digital Navigator Project Information

For more information or to discuss an application, please contact Leina Gonzalez-Baird, Digital Equity Coordinator, at 503-823-4188 or send us an email at connectingportland@portlandoregon.gov.

Thank you for your time and interest.

SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL NAVIGATOR PILOT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND

The City's Digital Inclusion Fund—Small Business Digital Navigator Pilot Program is designed to help build capacity in community-based organizations that are already experimenting with providing Digital Navigator services to the small business community or looking to start training existing or new staff to be navigators.

The Digital Navigator model addresses multiple layers of becoming digitally included, which traditional classes and other services in the past might not have addressed completely.

The goal of the digital navigator is not only to provide accurate information about equipment, connectivity, or foundational education options but to offer support that addresses the needs and goals of the person receiving the service.

This is done by providing on-demand, one-to-one and small group dedicated support via phone, email, text, video chat, in-person, and/or other communication methods.

Digital Navigators support individuals or leadership teams within a small business to assess their internet connectivity needs and to subscribe to affordable internet service, assess options for online applications, services, and tools to help run, market, and conduct business, and to find affordable technical support.

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Please review this guide to ensure you submit all the required information in your application for grant funding.

The Google Form Grant Application includes the following information fields. All fields are required.

General Information

1. **Organization Name**

Applicant organization name

2. **Organization Address**

Applicant organization address

3. **Organization Web Address**

Please state "none" if your organization does not have an online presence.

4. Tax ID

IRS Federal EIN Tax-ID Number

If your organization operates using a fiscal sponsor, please include the fiscal sponsor's registered name, EIN number, and a contact name and email address in the field provided.

5. Does your organization (or your fiscal sponsor) carry insurance coverage?

Answer Yes/No. This question does not impact your eligibility or chances of being selected. If selected for a grant award, OCT staff will explain insurance requirements during agreement negotiation.

6. Contact Name

Enter first and last name. The Contact Name is the person responsible for completing the Grant Application and may or may not be the same person as the Duly Authorized Official that signs the Application. The Contact Name is the person to contact for all questions regarding Grant Application information and will be a primary contact to negotiate a grant agreement with City staff if selected to receive a grant award.

7. Contact Title

The above Contact person's title.

8. Contact Email Address

The Contact person's email address.

9. Contact Phone Number

The Contact person's phone number

10. Organization agrees to commit staff time (approx. 10-20 hours) to negotiate a grant agreement in May.

Answer Yes/No. If selected to receive a grant award, City staff will work with selected organization staff to complete a grant agreement that will include addition detail regarding project implementation and reporting requirements. Please see Appendix A for sample grant agreement and baseline scope of work.

11. Applicant organization agrees to commit some of the digital navigator's time (approx. 1 hour/month) during the proposed project period for stakeholder engagement by presenting to Prosper Portland's Inclusive [Business Resource Network Community of Practice](#) and/or BIPOC in Tech Group, or City Bureau Partners.

Answer Yes/No. If selected to receive a grant award, City staff will work with the Digital Navigator to create avenues for the Navigator to engage with small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs through the City's and Prosper Portland's networks.

Tell us about your organization:

12. How many year-round, full-time staff does your organization have?

Total number of year-round, full-time staff.

13. How many part-time and/or volunteer staff does your organization have?

Provide total number of part-time staff and total number of volunteer staff separately.

14. What % of your organizational Leadership identifies as Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color?

Include the total number of Leadership staff and the percent of that total that identifies BIPOC.

15. What % of your Board members identify as Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color?

Include the total number of Board members and the percent of that total that identifies BIPOC.

16. What is your organization's annual operating budget?

Include your organization's annual operating budget for the past 3 years.

17. What is your organizational mission?

Share your organization's stated mission.

18. What do you know about the digital inclusion service needs of small, emerging businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs?

Tell us what you know about the digital skills training needs of small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs.

19. How has your organization worked with and supported small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs in the past?

Tell us how you've engaged with the business sector and whether you've provided formal or informal digital inclusion training and support services to this sector in the past.

20. How do you know if this engagement was successful?

How do you measure and track success? What primary outcome metrics did you use to track assess engagement and support to the business sector?

Proposed Digital Navigator Project Information

Tells us how you would participate in the Small Business Digital Navigator Pilot Program:

21. **Describe the Digital Navigator project you plan to build or scale with the support of grant funds provided by the Digital Inclusion Fund Small Business Digital Navigator Pilot Program, including whether you will hire new staff or cross-train existing staff to provide digital navigator services, how you will market the service to small businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs, how you plan to deliver services (i.e. via phone, email, text, video chat, in-person, one-on-one or small group, etc.), and how you would measure impact.**

This is your opportunity to tell us how grant funds will help you build or scale Small Business Digital Navigator services specifically for small, emerging businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs and to explain in detail what digital navigator services your will offer.

Use this section to demonstrate the Organization's capacity to successfully develop and deliver Digital Navigator services, such as:

- What existing staff and resources do you have ready to dedicate to this project?
- What staffing and resources will you need to acquire before launching the service?
- How will you outreach to small, emerging businesses and BIPOC entrepreneurs that this service exists and how to access it?
- Do you have a system in place to track contact with the small businesses and entrepreneurs and how the digital navigator is supporting each business/leader over time?
- What do you expect to change for the small businesses, BIPOC entrepreneurs as a result of this project? And how do you plan to evaluate the impact, reach, and success of the project?

Consider describing what the whole process looks like from the small businesses or entrepreneur's point of view.

Provide a draft implementation plan that includes major tasks and milestones for developing and implementing the Small Business Digital Navigator service.

22. **Who do you anticipate serving through the digital navigator project?**

Estimate the number of businesses/individuals you anticipate serving and detail any defining demographic characteristics.

23. **Anticipating grant funds will be available as early as June of this year, when would you begin providing digital navigator services to the small business sector?**

Provide a proposed project Start Date (month/year).

24. **Proposed projects may include timelines of up to 18 months to complete the projects. What is the proposed project end date?**

Provide a proposed project End Date (month/year). A date by which you will have fulfilled the scope of work under the Grant Agreement and completed all reporting requirements.

25. In addition to grant funds, the Small Business Digital Navigator Pilot Program comes with $20,000 available for the Digital Navigator to award Digital Toolbox Micro grants (for hardware and software) to participating small businesses. Tell us how you anticipate designing and implementing this micro-grant opportunity.

Describer your experience designing and implementing grant opportunities. If no experience, explain why your organization is ready to take on such a project.

Provide details on how you anticipate designing and implementing this micro-grant opportunity. Consider providing a draft implementation plan that includes major tasks and milestones and the criteria you would use to select grant recipients.

26. Signature of Duly Authorized Representative

For your application to be complete, the form must be e-signed by a Duly Authorized Representative of the applicant organization. The Application should be signed by someone, such as a Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, President or Executive Director, who can commit the organization to undertake the project.

Date*

Name*

Title*

Phone*

E-mail*

*******END APPLICATION*******

OTHER INFORMATION

Important Public Records Law Notice. The City of Portland ("City") is subject to Oregon public records law. All documents and information submitted by applicant to City may be deemed public records subject to public disclosure pursuant to Oregon public records law.

Applicant acknowledges by its signature below that all documents and information submitted to City by applicant may be subject to public disclosure upon City's determination that applicant's documents or information are subject to disclosure under public records law, upon an order of the Multnomah County District Attorney, or upon an order of a court. Applicant is advised to consult applicant's legal counsel regarding the applicability of Oregon public records law.

Pre-Award Activities. Applicants are hereby notified that, notwithstanding any oral or written assurance that they may have received, there is no obligation on the part of the City to cover pre-award costs.

Final Grant Awards. Applicants are hereby notified that the City is under no obligation to award any grant funds to an applicant and grant awards are not final until grant agreements are authorized and signed by both parties. Being invited to apply for grant funds through the application process does not guarantee an award.

The city reserves the right to revise, suspend, or cancel this application solicitation process at any time at City's sole discretion.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information or to discuss an application, please contact Leina Gonzalez-Baird, Digital Equity Coordinator, at 503-823-4188 or send us an email at connectingportland@portlandoregon.gov.

APPENDIX A – SAMPLE GRANT AGREEMENT AND BASELINE SCOPE OF WORK

Sample Grant Agreement

Please take note of Article V - Section L Insurance Requirements

Baseline Scope of Work

Grant agreements are for a not-to-exceed lump sum amount of $75,000 for, at the very least, the identified baseline scope of work.