



STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary-designee
Jana Steinmetz, Administrator

Award Process

ARPA Diverse Business Assistance Grant Program August 29, 2023

Background

Governor Tony Evers has directed \$73,470,707.65 for the Diverse Business Assistance grant program to assist chambers and non-profit organizations providing assistance to small businesses owned by individuals that have experienced barriers to capital, a group of business owners that has been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding for this assistance is provided to Wisconsin by the Federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. For more information regarding the Diverse Business Assistance grant program, including the grant applications, please visit the Program website: [DOA Diverse Business Assistance Grant Program](#).

The purpose of this document is to provide interested parties information on the award processes for the Program as defined in the Grant Announcement, issued November 29, 2021. The Grant Announcement provided the following Method of Award governing allocation of funds:

3.5 Method of Award. DOA will determine final evaluations for each application (see section 3.3). The State intends to award multiple grant agreements. Awards will be based upon DOA's determination of the most qualified and responsive application(s). Applications will be rated on responses to the following questions:

1. Please describe the mission of the applicant organization and how it specifically relates to providing technical assistance and other services to Diverse Businesses (5 Points).
2. Describe the organization's experience implementing culturally competent services and programs to Diverse Businesses. Note that having individuals in organizational leadership roles who are representative of the communities they seek to serve will be an important aspect of evaluating an applicant's capacity to provide culturally competent services (5 Points).
3. Provide a detailed narrative of services and/or programming to be provided to Diverse Businesses using grant funds during the grant period and how the services and/or programming will increase equity and eliminate disparities (5 Points).
4. Describe the intended community of current or potential Diverse Business owners for the activities, along with a description of the existing barriers experienced by such individuals and how these barriers will be addressed by the services and/or programming provided (5 Points).
5. Detail how will this funding be used to create long-term contributions for the advancement of Diverse Businesses, leverage additional funding for these business owners, and how the organization will create and/or grow partnerships with key

stakeholders such as CDFIs and traditional lenders (5 Points).

Process-Diverse Business Assistance Grant Program

Eligibility.

1. The program received 154 proposals requesting \$127,137,323.35 prior to the application deadline of January 21, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. CST, each of which were reviewed for compliance with the grant announcement.
2. Ninety-seven (97) applications were disqualified due to applicant ineligibility because they were not from Diverse Business Assistance Organizations as defined in Section 1.3 of the Grant Announcement: A chamber or non-profit organization operating in a specific geographic region that supports business development needs for Diverse Businesses.

Budget Adjustment and Awards.

1. There were 57 eligible applications received.
2. After additional review, it was determined that six applications were deemed ineligible because they proposed ineligible projects (2), the applicant organization is based out of state (3), or the organization did not perform the activities or have the partnerships identified in the application (1).
3. Two proposals were removed from consideration because the applicants previously received funding from the Equitable Recovery grant program.
4. The Program limited award amounts to a maximum of \$5 million. The Program determined to fund 38 applicants that received the highest scores and were determined to best fit the program objectives.