Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Clackamas County Office of Economic Development

Business Development Grant Program

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1. What is the purpose of the county grant funding program?

The county grant funding program is designed to provide funding for capital, capacity or workforce development projects to various sized traded sector businesses looking to relocate, expand or retain their operations in Clackamas County.

2. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply, a business must:

- Be a traded sector business – a business producing or manufacturing goods in Clackamas County and selling those goods *outside* of Clackamas County and its immediate surroundings
- Have been a registered business for at least two years
- Be in good standing with the State
- Provide proof of at least 100% match for their funding request

For full details on eligibility and requirements, refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

3. What types of projects or activities can be funded?

Eligible projects must:

- Increase production of locally-manufactured goods;
- Fund either a capital project or a workforce development project;
- Support business improvement, relocation, retention and/or expansion efforts, and
- Contribute to the Clackamas County's economic development.

Eligible business costs include only those costs required to carry out a project as determined in the application process.

For full details on project and application requirements, including Project Types and Project Categories, refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

4. How do I apply for a grant?

To apply:

1. Review the grant guidelines and eligibility requirements outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to ensure your business and project are eligible for funding. The full list of application questions can be found at the end of the NOFO.
2. Prepare your application, including:
    a. Responses to the application questions (it's recommended that you prepare these in a separate document as the application form does not allow you to save a draft)
    b. Project budget using the required template in .xlsx format (located alongside other program documents here)
    c. Proof of matching funds, as detailed under *Match Requirements* on page 3 of the NOFO (please be prepared to upload in PDF format, with a maximum of 5 pages total)
3. Submit your complete application via the official web form by 5pm on October 13, 2025, along with any required supporting documents. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. Application materials sent by post, email, or any means other than the official application web form will not be considered for funding.

For questions or general assistance, contact us at 503-742-4329 or at 4Biz@clacakamascounty.us

5. What is the application deadline?

Complete applications (including required documents) must be submitted via the official web form by 5pm on October 13, 2025.

It is highly recommended that you plan ahead and submit your application with enough time before the deadline to troubleshoot any technology, internet, and/or file issues – **late and/or incomplete applications will not be accepted for any reason**.

6. What is the timeline for this program?

Applications open on Thursday, September 4, 2025 at 9:00 AM Pacific Time.

Applications close at 5:00 PM Pacific Time on Monday, October 13, 2025.

Final award decisions are subject to the schedule of the Board of County Commissioners, and are anticipated to be announced by February 2026.

Funding agreements will be finalized in Spring 2026.

Funding will be deployed no later than June 30, 2026.

Program Period of Performance will begin at the execution of the grant funding agreement (Spring 2026) and run for approximately 6-18 months, depending on the unique project. Some projects may run longer.

Final Outcome Reports will be due approximately 24 months after the execution of the grant funding agreement.

7. How much funding can I apply for?

You may request up to $100,000 of funding through this program.

You will be required to provide proof of at least 100% matching funds from another source in order for your funding request to be considered. This means that only half of the funding for your proposed project may come from this grant. Your business must pay the other half of your project costs.

The County reserves the right to award partial funding. You will be asked in the application to list the project activities and costs which you would prioritize in the event your project is awarded partial funding.

8. How will grant applications be reviewed?

Eligible grant applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of Clackamas County staff. Eligible applications will be evaluated based on criteria such as:

- Alignment with program goals
- Project viability
- Economic impact of project
- Need for funding

After evaluating eligible applications, the Clackamas County staff review committee will recommend projects to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for final funding decisions. **The BCC has sole authority to determine funded projects.**

For more information on the evaluation criteria and process, refer to the NOFO.

9. When will I be notified of the decision?

Final award decisions are subject to the schedule of the Board of County Commissioners, and are anticipated to be announced by February 2026.

10. What happens next if my application is approved?

Awardees will be notified by email once the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) has finalized their funding decisions.

After County staff have notified awardees, staff and awardees will negotiate a Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement is a contract between the County and the awardee, and includes elements such as a final scope of work for the project, approved project budget, timelines, and reporting requirements for the grant period specific to each project. County Finance, County Counsel, and the BCC will approve final funding agreements.

11. What are the reporting requirements for grant recipients?

Grant recipients will be required to submit progress reports and a final report at the end of the grant period. Receipts and other supporting documentation will be required to prove how the funds were used and the outcomes achieved. Depending on the unique nature of the project, other requirements will be discussed and stated in the grant funding agreement.

Specific reporting requirements for each awardee will be outlined in the awardee grant funding agreement based on project type, project categories, and the anticipated outcomes detailed in project applications.

13. Where can I find more information about the grant program?

The **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)** can be found on the Clackamas County Procurement page for Open Grant Opportunities: https://www.clackamas.us/procurement-process#opengrantopportunities

The **application questions** can be found at the end of the NOFO, which is located on the Clackamas County Procurement page for Open Grant Opportunities: https://www.clackamas.us/procurement-process#opengrantopportunities

The **application budget template** can be found on the Clackamas County Procurement page for Open Grant Opportunities: https://www.clackamas.us/procurement-process#opengrantopportunities

The **official application web form** can be found at: https://apps.clackamas.us/businessdevelopmentgrants/

For more information, visit our website or contact The Office of Economic Development directly at 503-742-4biz or 4Biz@clacakamascounty.us. We provide resources such as grant guidelines, application forms, and contact information for assistance.

14. Whom should I contact if I have more questions?

If you have additional questions or need further assistance, please contact us at 503-742-4biz or 4Biz@clacakamascounty.us. We are available to answer clarifying questions and/or resolve technical issues with the application form.

15. Can software count as a capital asset under the capital project type?

Yes, purchases of non-physical capital assets such as software can qualify under the capital project type.

Qualifying capital projects involve capital purchases that meet a business need by contributing to business expansion, projected growth strategies, etc. (as stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity).

16. Is the matching funds commitment the same as a business collateral requirement?

No, matching funds are not the same as collateral. The 100% match commitment requires that an applicant contribute their own dollars to pay for at least half of their project costs.

For example, if an applicant is proposing a project with a total cost of $50,000, the maximum amount of grant funding that they can request in their application is $25,000. The rest of the project costs must be covered by another source of funds which must already have been secured by the applicant.

Sources of matching funds may include existing cash on hand, pre-approved loans, already awarded grant funds, etc. Applicants must provide up to 5 pages of documentation to show the source and availability of their matching funds. Documentation must be submitted in PDF format, and should not include personal information that is not required to prove matching funds (i.e. applicants should redact any full account numbers, SSN, check numbers, etc.)

17. Can I use another grant as my source of matching funds?

You may use a separate, *already awarded* grant as a source of matching funds. You must explain in your application how your awarded grant funds are set to be used and any restrictions on those funds. You must clearly demonstrate how both the awarded grant funds and the funds you are applying for fit into one cohesive project.

Other grants which you have applied for but have not been awarded can not be used as a source of matching funds.

18. Can I apply for a capital project if I am purchasing multiple pieces of equipment?

Yes, if you are purchasing multiple pieces of equipment for a specific project you may include costs related to that equipment in your project budget. It is up to the applicant to clearly explain why each equipment purchase is related to the project, and ensure that the project narrative, expected outcomes, and budget all support this.

19. Can I include money I've already spent on a project in my match commitment?

No. Project budgets may only include expenses that have not yet been incurred.

If your application is for a phase or portion of a larger ongoing project, you *may* include information about the full project in your project narrative, expected outcomes, and other narrative sections of the application. In this case, it is still up to you to describe the need and impact of the portion of the project that is reflected in the budget.

20. Can I include money in my match commitment that I *plan* to spend on a project before the funding agreements are finalized (estimated May 2026)?

Yes. You may include in your **project match commitment** money that you plan to spend on the described project, so long as that spending is clearly detailed in the project budget and timeline, and so long as the spending occurs after the grant application deadline on 10/13/25. You will be required to submit financial documentation to show when project funds were spent.

Because grant funds can not be used for reimbursement or to pay off debt, you may not include in your **grant request** any money that will be spent before the funding agreements are finalized.

21. Can home-based businesses apply for funds to make property improvements or building expansions?

Property improvements and/or construction projects on privately owned residential properties (i.e. homes and properties which are zoned as residential) **do not** qualify for funding under this program.

22. Why isn't my application going through when I click 'Submit application'?

Before reaching out to County staff about an issue with the form, please do the following:

- Double-check that you have completed all required questions.

- Double-check that you have successfully uploaded your project budget in .xlsx format.
- Double-check that you have successfully uploaded your proof of matching funds in PDF file format.
- Confirm that your uploaded files do not exceed 10 MB in size.
- Confirm that your question responses do not exceed the stated character limit (including spaces).

To ensure that you do not lose your work in the event of a form error, please write your responses to the application questions in a separate, saved document prior to filling out the application form.

23. Does software count as a "good" under the traded-sector definition?

Yes, software that is produced in Clackamas County and sold outside of the county and its immediate surroundings would qualify as a traded-sector line of business.

24. Are services that are sold outside of Clackamas County considered traded-sector?

No, purely service-based businesses do not qualify as traded-sector under this program.