



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: MICROFUND

ABOUT THE MICROFUND

St. Petersburg is a diverse, vibrant city that is committed to intentional inclusivity to create opportunity for all. The South St. Petersburg CRA Microfund Program was specifically created to address the concerns of many small businesses that are unable to meet the upfront capital and scheduling requirements of the other City of St. Petersburg programs. Through this funding package, the city aims to provide opportunities for businesses within the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) to take advantage of the capital access initiative, a hallmark of South St. Petersburg.

The South St. Petersburg CRA Microfund Program offers personalized capacity building through increased education, mentoring, and networking in exchange for CRA funding so business owners can make targeted and planful improvements without having to provide upfront capital.

Please note that awardees will be publicly listed as part of our commitment to transparency.

An eligible business may only apply for one grant during the pilot launch of this program. It will be first come, first served based on complete and eligible application, until 45 businesses are reached.

WHAT TYPE OF BUSINESSES CAN APPLY?

Existing Brick and Mortar - \$10,000 each

Applicants who are primary occupants of commercial brick & mortar business locations are eligible to apply for one \$10,000 grant under this program. Applicants must also meet the applicable eligibility criteria for their specific business type.

Existing Family Childcare - \$10,000 each

Applicants who are existing licensed family day care home providers or existing brick and mortar childcare center owners within the South St. Petersburg CRA are eligible to apply for one \$10,000 grant under this program. Applicants must also meet the applicable eligibility criteria for their specific business type.

Existing Home-Based - \$5,000 each

Applicants with home-based businesses are eligible to apply for one \$5,000 grant under this program if they meet the applicable criteria for their specific business type.

Existing Shared Commercial Space (i.e., Food Truck) - \$5,000

Applicants who operate out of a shared commercial space such as co-working, shared commercial kitchen, salon, food truck, etc., are eligible to apply for one \$5,000 grant under this program if they meet the applicable criteria for their specific business type.

Early-Stage Startup - \$2,500 each

Early-stage startups who are past the ideation stage (i.e., actively under development, research, and initial market testing with their product or service) are eligible to apply for one \$2,500 grant under this program, if they meet the applicable criteria for their specific business type.



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MY BUSINESS IS A NATIONAL COMMERCIAL FRANCHISE, I AM A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER, OR I HAVE A NONPROFIT AGENCY. WILL MY BUSINESS BE ELIGIBLE?

The City recognizes that national commercial franchises, healthcare providers, and nonprofit agencies provide essential services and often employ CRA residents, all of which assist with the economic uplift of South St. Petersburg. Therefore, national commercial franchises, healthcare providers, and nonprofit agencies are eligible to apply if they fall into one of the five above business categories and meet the applicable eligibility criteria identified herein.

WHAT MAKES A BUSINESS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

The applicant must be an entrepreneur who is the leading executive (i.e., founder and/or President, CEO, CFO, COO, or any other similar title) of a company that meets the below criteria:

- All businesses (except early-stage startups) must be independently owned and operated.
- All businesses must have proof of eligible costs that meet or exceed the grant funding amount.
- All businesses (except early-stage startups) must be based within the boundaries of the South St. Petersburg Commercial Redevelopment Area.
 - a. For early-stage startups: Early-stage startup applicants must live in the South St. Petersburg CRA.
 - b. For subsidiary businesses: A subsidiary operating under a parent company is not eligible to apply on its own behalf, but the parent company is eligible to submit just one application on behalf of the subsidiary company, provided that the subsidiary company for which the application is submitted (i) is independently owned and operated, (ii) is based within the boundaries of the South St. Petersburg CRA (iii) meets the small business eligibility criteria identified in items 1-12 of this Section VI., and (iv) does not meet any of the disqualifying criteria identified in Section
 - c. VII. Please note that only a parent company with subsidiaries that are located solely within the Tampa Bay Economic Regional boundary, which includes the following counties may apply on behalf of one of its subsidiaries: Pinellas, Hillsborough, Polk, Hernando, Pasco, Citrus, Manatee, and Sarasota.
 - d. For franchise businesses: If one individual owns multiple franchises in the South St. Petersburg CRA, the business owner is eligible to submit just one application on behalf of the franchises.
- All businesses (except early-stage startups) must be currently viable i.e., currently in operation, generating revenue, and expected to remain in operation.
- Early-stage startups must provide at least three supporting documents that demonstrate the business is past the ideation stage i.e., a business idea stage that has not yet met conception.
- All businesses (except early-stage startups) have been in formal operation within the South St. Petersburg CRA boundary for six (6) months or longer at the time of



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application.

- All businesses (except early-stage startups) must have a business tax receipt from the City of St. Petersburg Business Tax Division. If not in compliance with this requirement (i.e., Chapter 17, Article IV of the St. Petersburg City Code) at the time of application, such non-compliance will not render an applicant ineligible under the program if the applicant registers with the City of St. Petersburg Business Tax Division within 10 business of application submission.
- All businesses must have no more than 50 full-time and part-time employees at the time of application.
- Additional Criteria for Franchise Businesses: At least 50% of the employees of the business must be residents of the South St. Petersburg CRA, and these employees must have been active on the payroll for at least six months and working at least 20 hours per week.
- Additional Criteria for Nonprofit Agencies: Nonprofit agencies, including charitable organizations (501(c)(3)), must be tax- exempt organizations under the requirements of the 26 U.S. Code 501.
- Additional Criteria for Healthcare Providers: Healthcare providers must have at least one healthcare provider on staff that has a current unencumbered license through the State of Florida. In addition, facility types that are licensed and/or certified or regulated by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) must have an active/licensed/registered ACHA license status to apply for the grant.
- Additional Criteria for Independent Contractors: Independent contractors' primary income must be derived from their business. This program is not intended for hobbyists.
 - a. The independent contractor must either (i) have an occupational license for the business, (ii) have insurance for the business, or (iii) pay lease costs for the business.
 - b. The independent contractor must receive no more than 25 percent of their revenue from a single "Large Company," defined as a company generating an annual revenue at or above \$50 million as reflected in the most recent annual income statement on the company's website or the company's annual report to shareholders.

WHAT MAKES A BUSINESS INELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Each applicant meeting the applicable criteria above must not meet any of the following disqualifying criteria described below:

Existing Businesses

1. The business has mortgage or lease payments that are 6 months in arrears or more.
2. The business has current unpaid code enforcement liens.
3. The business has current unpaid special assessment liens.





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4. An owner, officer, partner, or principal actor of the business who received a felony conviction for financial mismanagement within the last five years is still serving a sentence (including prison, parole, and probation).
5. The business is a party to a pending foreclosure.
6. The business has received funding under this program within the last two years.
 - a. A subsidiary of the same parent company has received funding under this program within the last two years.
 - b. Another franchise owned by the same business owner has received funding under this program within the last two years.

MY BUSINESS DOES NOT MEET THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS THEREFORE I CANNOT APPLY. WHAT OTHER ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO ME?

If you are found to be ineligible for this program, you may still qualify for other existing funding programs; please visit www.stpetegreenhouse.com/assistance or www.stpete.org/residents/ for more information on City and CRA-related programs.

You may also schedule, at no cost to you, a meeting with a Small Business Navigator that can discuss options available to you. You may do this by calling The Greenhouse at 727-893-7146 or visit www.stpetegreenhouse.com/about/navigation/.

WHAT ARE ELIGIBLE BUSINESS EXPENSES THAT MAY BE APPLIED TO THE GRANT FUNDS?

An approved spending plan will be developed alongside the Accepted Applicant's assigned Mentor. The use of this funding must be approved before the funds are spent. Eligible use of funds includes future expenses for projects that must be completed within 12 months of the Grant Agreement execution date unless otherwise specified in the Grant Agreement.

Failure to comply with the requirements of the Grant Agreement may result in consequences for noncompliance that will be set forth in the Grant Agreement, which may include but is not limited to rendering the Awarded Applicant ineligible to apply for future funding from the City for a period of up to five years.

Some examples of eligible uses may include but are not limited to the following:

- Physical improvement capital investments that require necessary building permits such as:
 - Interior or exterior construction
 - Parking lot improvements no less than resurfacing
 - Permanently installed capital equipment
 - Patio/structure of a permanent nature
 - Façade improvements/restoration improvements
 - Awning installation
 - Signage - exterior
 - Building - exterior repair, restoration improvements



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- Lighting - exterior
- Plumbing, electrical, filtration, and HVAC improvements
- Accessibility improvements
- Carryout/Curbside pickup reconfigurations, including permanent signage
- Other similar improvements
- Business growth and resiliency costs such as:
 - Licensing/Permits and other required startup costs (*Early- Stage Startups only)
 - Continuity planning and/or business model pivots including the purchase of technology for the digital transition of the business model
 - Marketing support areas such as:
 - Paid digital media (e.g., website, graphic design, photography, etc.)
 - Offline marketing activities and events
 - PR and communications support
 - In-app incentives, such as new customer bonuses, referrals, etc.
 - External resources, such as marketing agencies, tools, and services
 - Other similar marketing support endeavors
 - Necessary equipment upgrades
 - Creative solutions for workforce attraction and retention such as:
 - Job fairs
 - Industry-related training that leads to a certificate or license according to your business (Registration/tuition only)
 - Other similar workforce attraction and retention solutions
 - Relocation costs related to unexpected lease termination (The relocation must remain within the South St. Petersburg CRA)
 - Lease renewal increased costs for this annual term
 - Governmental compliance with codes, laws, and requirements

HOW IS THE 50-EMPLOYEE COUNT DETERMINED?

The 50-employee count is determined by the total number of employees – which includes full-time and part-time employees (including employees managed through PEO) for each separate business entity.

ARE THERE INELIGIBLE USES OF THE FUNDS?

Yes. Grants awarded under the program may not be used for the following purposes:

- Re-pay or pay down any portion of a loan obtained through a federal COVID-19 relief package or any other business or personal-related loan for business assistance.
- Personal use.
- Travel expenses.
- Recurring operational costs that include salaries, benefits or other employee



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- costs, rental or mortgage payments, insurance, property, business taxes, etc.
- Retroactive expenses that were incurred before the development of the approved spending plan.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS THAT A BUSINESS MUST PROVIDE?

Application packages must include all documentation listed below. Failure to provide all the required information – in a legible form - will result in the application being denied.

Existing Businesses

1. Copy of “active” state business registration from Florida Division of Corporations
(*Required for existing businesses)
 - a. Search by “Entity Name” [here](#) (use full legal business name), select the listing with “Active” Status, and attach the most recent filing as a screenshot. Failure to provide the screenshot will not result in an automatic rejection of the application but may delay a decision on the application, and awards are contingent on the availability of funds at the time of the review of a complete application.
 - b. If not required to register with the Florida Division of Corporations, attach documentation showing the business meets all regulatory requirements from Pinellas County or the State of Florida.
2. Business Financials
 - a. Sole Proprietors and Individual LLCs
 - i. 2022 Schedule C (Form 1040)
 - ii. If a 2022 return is unavailable due to establishing the business on January 1, 2022, or later, attach the most recent quarterly income statement/profit and loss statement.
 - b. C-Corps, S-Corps, corporate Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs)
 - i. 2022 Corporation Income Tax Return (Form 1120 or 1120S)
 - ii. If a 2022 return is unavailable due to establishing the business on January 1, 2022, or later, attach the most recent quarterly income statement/profit and loss statement.
 - c. Partnerships
 - i. 2022 Return of Partnership Income (Form 1065)
 - ii. If a 2022 return is unavailable due to establishing the business on January 1, 2022, or later, attach the most recent quarterly income statement/profit and loss statement.
3. Updated and Current St. Petersburg Business Tax Receipt
 - a. An active business tax receipt or exemption letter from the City of St. Petersburg is required to receive funding through the Microfund Program. If approved, this certificate must remain active. If you need to apply for or renew your certificate, please visit www.stpete.org/business-tax. The city will hold your application for 10 business days until the receipt is secured and verified by City Staff.
 - b. If the business is not required to have a business tax certificate, attach a copy of



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- your occupational license from Pinellas County.
4. Copy of the Business Owner's Driver's License or State ID
 5. Full employee listing at the business location where eligible uses will be applied. The listing must include the hire date, salary, and address of employees.
 6. Attach Quarterly Wage & Withholding Reports (Form 941) for 1st Quarter 2022, redacted payroll documents, or other payroll information such as the 2022 W-3 form showing the total number of employees for the specified business location.
 7. Copy of the most recent St. Petersburg Commercial Utility Bill Statement.
 - a. If the applicant does not pay a Utility Bill, provide a Certification of Liability Insurance (COI), Accord form, or another acceptable form showing the current General Liability Insurance Policy for the business at the commercial location.

Some business types may require additional attachments. Please see below:

1. For Applicants Leasing a Shared Space or Commercial Kitchen
 - a. Copy of current Commercial Lease Agreement.
2. For Healthcare Providers
 - a. Attach a copy of the healthcare provider's unencumbered license through the State of Florida.
3. For Nonprofit Organizations
 - a. Business Financials (501c3 only)
 - I. 2022 Return of Organization Free from Income Tax (Form 990)
 - II. If a 2022 return is unavailable due to establishing the business on January 1, 2022, or later, attach the most recent quarterly income statement/profit and loss statement.
 - b. Tax-exempt certificate;
 - c. Copy of Licenses or certifications required to provide services.
4. For Early-Stage Startups
 - a. Early-stage startups must demonstrate they are actively developing and launching their business. If the early-stage startup has licenses or state registration with the Division of Corporations, please provide that documentation.

Additionally, you must attach supporting documents that demonstrate the business is past the ideation stage. This must include at least three of the following:

1. The completion of an entrepreneurial training program within the last 12 months (see examples);
2. The completion of business training/mentoring/consulting;
3. Establishment of a brand;
4. Proof of investments made in a business launch;
5. Business planning and cash flow analysis materials;
6. Startup cost analysis and proof of funding plan;
7. Profit and loss statement/proof of revenue since launch.



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I RENT SPACE IN A SHARED FACILITY OCCUPIED BY OTHER TENANTS, FOR EXAMPLE, SHARED CO-WORKING SPACE, SUBLEASE, COMMISSARY KITCHEN, ETC. WILL I BE ABLE TO APPLY AS A BUSINESS?

Yes, if your business meets all eligibility requirements. Provide a copy of your current Commercial Lease Agreement. (only for a business leasing shared space or commissary kitchen)

ARE FOOD TRUCKS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Yes. Provide a copy of your current Commercial Lease Agreement through commissary kitchen or a commercial storage facility agreement within the bounds of the South St. Petersburg CRA.

A SCANNER IS INACCESSIBLE DURING THIS TIME. HOW WILL I SUBMIT MY DOCUMENTS TO YOU?

Clearly legible photos of the required documents will be accepted.

Mobile applications that perform scanning from your mobile camera are highly recommended. Examples of mobile applications include: Google Drive or CamScanner.

CAN I APPLY IF I HAVE PARTICIPATED IN OTHER CITY FUNDING AND INCENTIVE PROGRAMS?

Yes. The Microfund Program is stackable with other City incentive programs. If your business meets the eligibility requirements, you may apply – even if you have received funds from another incentive or grant program.

CAN NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS APPLY?

Yes. Non-profit organizations who meet eligibility criteria are eligible to apply.

ARE HOME-BASED BUSINESSES ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Yes. Home-based businesses who meet eligibility criteria are eligible to apply.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT INCLUDE ALL OF THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AT THE TIME I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?

Do not submit your application unless you are able to provide the required documents; it will not be eligible. Please collect ALL required documents and submit the application and all documents in their entirety.

If an incomplete application is submitted, your application will not be reviewed in the order it was received. You will have a ten (10) business day cure period to submit the missing documentation. However, please note, your application will only be reviewed when it is complete. The application will be rejected if not completed within the ten (10) business day cure period.



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WHERE CAN I ASK A SPECIFIC QUESTION ABOUT MY SITUATION?

Please email: microfund@stpetegreenhouse.com. A team of staff members will be working to assist potential applicants with information and assistance.

WILL I NEED TO REPORT THIS GRANT?

These grants may be considered taxable income, please contact your financial advisor for guidance.