

“PONTIAC’S BIG IDEA” GRANT GUIDELINES

REWARDING BIG IDEAS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Sponsored by



THE BIG IDEA

Pontiac’s Big Idea grant program (PBIGP) will provide several awards to businesses in Pontiac that have ideas to grow or businesses to expand. Several awards of \$1,000 - \$10,000 will be granted to businesses that gross less than \$1,000,000 annually, and one award annually of \$50,000 to \$100,000 to a manufacturing business that promises to produce significant jobs in Pontiac.

These guidelines and grant application are for those who are seeking a grant only. **If you’d like to pursue a low interest loan to accompany a grant, please download the CEED Lending Loan Application. The loan application is the only application you will need if you are seeking both a grant and a loan. CEED will evaluate your loan request, and if approved, will make a recommendation to the PBIGP Advisory Council for the amount of grant to accompany the loan. Your advantage to seeking both is that the grant will serve as additional collateral and security to your loan requests, enabling a greater likelihood of loan approvals and allowing you to potentially access more money, with lower monthly repayments, than you would without the grants. Example: Should you request \$20,000 for your business to expand or grow, CEED may determine (based on your financials and business plan) they will lend you \$15,000 and PBIGP will grant you \$5000. You will then only be required to pay back \$15,000.**

SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

There are two ways to apply to PBIGP:

1. Apply Online at www.greatlakeswbc.org/programs/ceed-lending
2. Email your completed application to grants@mainstreetpontiac.org

INQUIRIES

You may email questions to grants@mainstreetpontiac.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM VISION AND DESCRIPTION	03
ELIGIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION	03
BUILDING A STRONG APPLICATION	04
APPLICATION PROCESS	05
EXPECTATIONS OF WINNERS	05
USE OF APPLICANT DATA	05
DISCLAIMER	06
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	06

PROGRAM VISION AND DESCRIPTION

We believe that a great idea can help a good business grow. Pontiac's Big Idea grant program (PBIGP) celebrates doing business in the city of Pontiac – rewarding those with the best ideas for growth. In 2017, PBIGP will provide a total of \$500,000 in cash awards annually, for 5 years, in addition to business support.

THE BIG IDEA

PBIGP will provide several grant awards to businesses in Pontiac that have ideas to grow or businesses to expand. Several awards of \$1,000 - \$10,000 will be granted to businesses that gross less than \$1,000,000 annually, and \$50,000 to \$100,000 in grants annually to a manufacturing business that promises to produce significant jobs in Pontiac

PBIGP is about more than just the money. This program is intended to help all applicants – those that receive grants and those that do not. All businesses that apply are welcomed into the PBIGP network, where they may access further opportunities in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- PBIGP is for new and existing for-profit businesses physically located and operating in the city of Pontiac.
- Majority owners must be legal residents of the United States who are 18 years of age or older.
- Businesses must be in good standing with the IRS.
- Home-based businesses are eligible to apply.
- Independently owned businesses that participate in retailers' cooperatives are eligible to apply.
- Regional businesses that are based in Southeast Michigan are eligible to apply; however, award funds must be directed to their Pontiac-based operations.
- PBIGP is for new and existing businesses that gross, or are expected to gross, less than \$1,000,000 annually that have ideas to grow. Businesses may be Sole Proprietorships, General Partnerships, Corporations (Inc., Corp.), Limited Liability Companies (LLC)*, or Limited Liability Partnerships (LP, LLP).

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY:

- Franchises are not eligible to apply.
- Not-for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply.

Business owners who are:

1. Employees of Flagstar Bank and PBIGP Advisory Council members past and present;
2. Current contractors affiliated with Flagstar Bank;
3. Spouses and dependents of:

- (a) employees of Flagstar Bank and PBIGP Advisory Council members;
 - (b) current contractors affiliated with the PBIGP; and
 - (c) current PBIGP Advisory Council;
4. Employees of PBIGP grantee organizations;
 5. Flagstar Bank Trustees; and
 6. Past PBIGP grantees are not eligible.

Please note the following:

On a PBIGP Application, the “Business Street Address” should reflect where a business is physically located and operating. This may be different from where a business is registered or incorporated.

On a PBIGP Application, businesses should consider the number of years operating when listing “Date Business Founded.” This may be different from the number of years registered or incorporated.

On a PBIGP Application, businesses may “Designate a Contact Person” who is not a business owner. In cases where an individual has assisted on an application or applied on behalf of a business owner, PBIGP recommends that they are listed as the designated contact person.

Businesses are limited to one application. If a business submits multiple applications, they will be removed from award consideration.

BUILDING A STRONG APPLICATION

PBIGP is not interested in just giving out cash. PBIGP is interested in inspiring and enabling your ideas. Applications must consider the purpose of the program: to sustain businesses, strengthen neighborhoods, grow ideas, diversify economies, and grow jobs for residents of Pontiac. The best applications will have ideas for growth, consistent with this purpose, that are:

IMPACTFUL

Tell us how your idea will - first and foremost - grow your business. Then tell us how that growth can impact where you are located and who you are serving. The idea that increases your business’s bottom line may also be one that positively effects your customers, clients, or community; and/or one that can positively change your building, block, neighborhood, or city.

COURAGEOUS

Tell us how your idea reinforces the passion for what you do. It may be one that allows your business to take a little more risk; one that challenges your vision for growth; or one that encourages innovation. Don’t be afraid to be practical. Practical ideas are courageous too.

UNIQUE

Consider your competition. There are likely many applicants that have the same type of business. Show us a unique idea that sets you apart from the others and you are more likely to get our attention.

ACHIEVABLE

You only have a certain amount of time and money to turn idea into reality. Choose your ideas wisely. If they are grand or complex, pick apart the most manageable parts and make your pitch. Show us the research behind your business idea and let us know any other resources or supports you may seek to help your idea succeed.

MEASURABLE

Most good ideas and businesses are measured to ensure you are meeting your objectives and goals. This may be the number of customers you serve, or target goals within your budget, or specific accomplishments you set. Show us your plan for measuring your business to meet your business goals.

CLEAR

The PBIGP Advisory Council who reviews your idea is made of a diverse group of individuals who may or may not be familiar with your industry or your request. Describe your idea for growth clearly so that anyone can understand it.

HERE IS SOME BASIC ADVICE: We do not know your business like you do, so, whatever the idea, it's up to you to tell us. Follow the directions and make sure your application is complete. Be concise, specific, and honest.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

PBIGP application process is catered to the busy business owner. Whether a business owner has participated in a challenge before or not, this is a chance to practice pitching an idea for growth through a very simple application process.

FREE RESOURCES TO HELP YOUR APPLICATION OR BUSINESS SUCCEED

Oakland County's One Stop Shop (www.oakgov.com/edca/business/OneStopShop)

SCORE (www.detroit.score.org)

One Million Cups (www.1millioncups.com)

ALL APPLICANTS

There are two ways to apply to PBIGP:

1. Apply Online at www.greatlakeswbc.org/programs/ceed-lending
2. Email your completed application to grants@mainstreetpontiac.org

INQUIRIES

You may email questions to grants@mainstreetpontiac.org

EXPECTATION OF WINNERS

Grant recipients will be expected to attend events where they will be connected to other grantees and resources. They will also be asked to share their story through a variety of media opportunities. These types of opportunities will be determined after grantees are announced. PBIGP recipients are expected to use their award within 1-year of payment and provide a final report on the use of the award. All awards are taxable income.

USE OF APPLICANT DATA

Individual applicant data will not be shared beyond the purposes of review during the award selection process and providing business support. Applicant data will not be sold. Aggregated applicant data may be reported for evaluation and knowledge-sharing purposes. Whether Applicants receive grants or not, PBIGP wants to help businesses grow through connections to business support.

DISCLAIMER

The information contained herein is subject to the actual grant-award documents and the written terms and conditions of the PBIGP which may be amended from time to time. The PBIGP Advisory Council also reserves the right to make the final determination of any person's or organization's eligibility and/or qualifications for program benefits, and to make allocation of program benefits as it may, in sole discretion deem appropriate.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Pontiac's Big Idea Grant Program?

We believe that a great idea can help a good business grow. PBIGP is a program that celebrates new and existing businesses in the city of Pontiac – rewarding those with the best ideas for growth. There will be a total of \$500,000 in cash awards, in addition to business support, per year. **PBIGP** will provide several awards of \$1,000 - \$10,000 to businesses that gross less than \$1,000,000 annually, and one award annually of \$50,000 to \$100,000 to a manufacturing business that promises to produce significant jobs in Pontiac

2. Is applying for a grant a lot of work?

The PBIGP application process is catered to the busy business owner. Whether a business owner has participated in a challenge before or not, this is a chance to practice pitching an idea for growth through a very simple application process.

3. What is there to gain from PBIGP, aside from a cash award?

PBIGP is about more than just the money. The program is intended to help all applicants – those that receive grants and those that do not. All businesses that apply are welcomed into the PBIGP network, where they may access further opportunities in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

4. What types of businesses are eligible to apply?

Businesses across all industries are encouraged to apply if they are a new or existing for-profit business physically located in the city of Pontiac. Some exceptions include:

- nonprofit/not for profit
- adult entertainment
- firearm sales
- alcohol retail not associated with a restaurant
- anything not allowed by the Small Business Administration rules
- no financing of anything of puritan interests
- no financing of anything related to the medical marijuana industry

5. Can a not-for-profit organization apply?

No. Not-for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply.

6. Can a Low-Profit Limited Liability Company (L3C) apply?

No. Low-Profit Limited Liability Companies are not eligible to apply.

7. I applied to PBIGP in the past and did not receive a grant. Am I eligible to apply in 2017?

Yes. Previous applicants that did not win are encouraged to apply.

8. I am a past grant recipient of the PBIGP, am I eligible to win?

No. Past winners will not be considered eligible to win more than once.

9. Are there any tips for applying?

PBIGP is not interested in just giving out cash. PBIGP is interested in inspiring and enabling your ideas. The best applications will consider the purpose of the program and have ideas for growth that are Impactful, Courageous, Unique, Achievable, and Clear. We do not know your business like you do, so whatever the idea, it's up to you to tell us. Follow the directions and make sure your application is complete. Be concise, specific, and honest. For help or support in developing a strong application see Oakland County's One Stop Shop for free resources and counseling at www.oakgov.com/edca/business/OneStopShop or (248) 858-0783

10. What happens after submitting an application?

It may take several weeks to process applications. Please note that an email address is necessary in order to receive confirmation that an application has been received. PBIGP and its impartial Advisory Council will determine grant winners. PBIGP Advisory Council or CEED Lending will officially notify all Applicants.

11. What is expected of Grant Recipients?

Grant recipients will be expected to attend events where they will be connected to other grantees and resources. They will also be asked to share their story through a variety of media opportunities. These types of opportunities will be determined after grant recipients are notified of their awards. PBIGP grantees are expected to use their award within 1-year of

payment and provide a final report on the use of the award.

12. Are PBIGP awards taxable income?

Yes. All awards are taxable income.