MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Legacy Business Grant Handbook

1 Public Square, Suite 100 | Nashville, TN | 37201

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The Legacy Business Grant supports Nashville businesses that have been in operation a minimum of ten years and have contributed to their community's culture, history, or identity. This grant aims to help small businesses be more resilient and competitive with investments in resources to modernize and improve business practices, equipment, and tools.

For questions regarding this grant reach out to:

Jamari Brown
Senior Director
Economic and Community Development
Jamari.Brown@Nashville.gov

Lilibeth Leon
Manager
Entrepreneurship and ECD
Lilibeth.Leon@Nashville.gov

nashville.gov/smallbusiness

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Eligibility Criteria



In order to qualify for this incentive, applicant must be a:

- For-profit business with less than 100 employees
- Independently-owned and locally-owned
- Physical location and not a home-based business
- Business with ten or more years of continuous operation within the Nashville and Davidson County Metropolitan area
- Business that can prove it has contributed to Nashville's history, culture, or identity.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Grant Details

a. What is the goal of the Legacy Business Grant?
The goal of the grant is to help longstanding small businesses be more competitive and resilient to economic downturn by assisting financially with investments in equipment modernization, marketing, improved security, and other reasonable expenses in relation to helping the business remain viable and further economic development goals.

b. Who oversees and administers the grant?
The grant is overseen and administered by the Nashville Industrial Development Board (IDB) in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development. The IDB must vote to approve the grant. Once approved, the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development will oversee the administrative process including contracting, funding, and reporting.

c. How much funding does the grant provide?
The grant provides up to $10,000 in financial assistance.

d. How is the grant awarded?
The grant award will be an up-front payment of funds.

e. Can a business apply for the grant multiple times?
A business may apply for the legacy business grant multiple times but can only be awarded once.

2. Eligibility

a. What are the eligibility requirements for the grant?
Applicants must:

1. Be a for-profit business with less than 100 employees
2. Be independently-owned and locally-owned
3. Have a physical location and not be a home-business
4. Have 10+ years of continuous operation in Davidson County
5. Contribute to the neighborhood's culture, history, and identity

b. What business types are inelgible for the grant?
Please see the Terms and Conditions for more details on ineligible businesses.

3. Use of Funds

a. How can grant funds be used?
Eligible uses of grant funds include the purchase of tools, equipment, software, technology, professional services, programs, and technical assistance that support business modernization, improve operational efficiency, streamline processes, reduce costs, and enhance overall competitiveness.

b. When must the grant funds be spent?
All grant funds must be spent within the designated grant period outlined in the grant agreement. The grant period will typically begin on the date the grant agreement is executed and end on June 30.

4. Application Process and Requirement

a. What supporting documents must be submitted with the application?
Applicants must provide:

- A copy of the business license.
- Certificate of Existence or Good Standing.
- A 12-Month Cash Flow Statement or Profit and Loss Statement

b. How do I obtain a Certificate of Existence/Good Standing?
Certificates of Good Standing can be obtained by visiting the Tennessee Secretary of State's website.

c. Why is a Cash Flow or Profit & Loss Statement required?
A cash flow statement and profit & loss statement demonstrates the business's financial health, solvency, and responsible use of funds, ensuring the grant promotes sustainable growth. Because the grant is a reimbursement rather than an up-front award, it is important to verify that the investment can be supported throughout the timeline of the project.

e. How do I apply for the grant?
- Submit an electronic copy of the grant application in PDF format to the ECD staff listed below.
- Include attachments of all required supporting documents.

ECD Staff Contacts:
- Jamari.Brown@Nashville.gov
- Lilibeth.Leon@Nashville.gov

f. Is there a deadline to apply?
The application deadline is **December 4, 2026**.

g. What is the process for reviewing the application?
Applications will be reviewed by a panel using a scoring and assessment tool that will evaluate the business and the intended use for the grant. The top thirty scored applications will be awarded.

5. Reporting Requirements

a. What reporting is required for this grant?
All grant recepients will be required to submit an annual expense report. This report will include a list of all expenses paid for with the

grant funds and all invoices and proofs of payment associated with those expenses. All invoices must be dated, contain the vendor name, address, and phone number, and be itemized.

b. When is the annual expense report due?
The report is due no later than 45 days after the last day of the grant period.

c. Who completes the annual expense report?
The report must be completed by the business's Chief Financial Officer.

d. What happens to unused funds?
Any funds that are not used or are considered ineligible costs must be paid back to Metro Nashville Government.

Approval Timeline

This timeline outlines the approval process for grant applications, along with estimated durations related to each step. Please note that these are approximations, and the timeline for each application may differ depending on required documentation and complexity of project.

Application Review
MOECD will review the submitted application, business license, financial statement, and Certificate of Good Standing to make sure all documents are in order. Applicants will be notified whether or not they qualify.

December 2026

Application Scoring
A panel will review applications and score each by evaluating the business's years of operation, community significance, intended investment, and impact.

January 2027

Award Announcement
The top scored thirty (30) businesses will be announced

February 2027

IDB Approval
Due to the nature of the grant, all awards must first be approved by the Industrial Development Board.

Contract Execution
Following the IDB approval, Metro Legal Department will execute a contract with the Legacy Business.

Award
Grants will be paid to legacy businesses.

March 2027

Submission of Documents for Payment
Following the contract execution, the grantee will need to submit A W-9 tax form, Short Vendor Application, and an ACH form for electronic payment to Metro Finance before receiving grant payment.

Terms and Conditions

These terms and conditions apply to the Legacy Business Program and are listed here for your review. A signed acknowledgement of these terms and conditions must be submitted as part of the application.

A. All applications and supporting documents submitted are subject to TN Code § 10-7-503 regarding the Tennessee Public Records Act.

B. The following businesses are ineligible for the Legacy Business Grant:

- Businesses not located fully within the boundaries of Davidson County
- Businesses with property tax delinquency
- Businesses whose majority owner(s) do not have permanent residence within the Nashville MSA
- National franchises or businesses operating under substantially the same name in three or more states, regardless of ownership structure regarding the individual entities

C. The following business types are prohibited:
Automobile sales, automobile service, automobile repair businesses, and/or automobile parking businesses; body piercing shops; cash advance, cash checking, and/or title loan businesses; hotels/motels; landfills; nightclubs; pawnshops; shop primarily selling products containing or used for consuming nicotine, CBD, THC, or other similar substances; tattoo parlors; wrecker services; or businesses operating from residential property.

D. Previous recipients of Legacy Business grants are not eligible to receive the Legacy Business Grant more than once, but are allowed to receive other Metro grants in nonconsecutive years.

E. Eligible uses of grant funds include the purchase of tools, equipment, software, technology, professional services, programs, and technical assistance that support business modernization, improve operational efficiency, streamline processes, reduce costs, and enhance overall competitiveness.

F. Grant recipients will be required to submit an Annual Expense Report within forty-five (45) days of the grant period ending. The report will include all expenses paid for with the grant funds including dated and itemized invoices and proofs of payment.

G. Professionals requiring special licenses must be licensed in the State of Tennessee and shall be responsible for those portions of the work as may be required by law.

H. All invoices submitted for must also show receipt of payment. Check, card, or electronic payments are allowed. No cash payments will be accepted.

Legacy Grant Program Scoring Guide

Comprehensive Scoring Criteria: Max 100 Points

1. Community Presence (0-45 points)

The applicant demonstrates that the business contributes to the community's history, culture, or identity by helping shape its character, reflecting shared values, and becoming a meaningful part of their community's story.

1. Preservation of Culture (0-15 points)
2. Local Impact (0-15 points)
3. Community Anchor or Local Landmark (0-15 points)

2. Business Eligibility & Stability (0-25 points)

Evaluate whether the applicant is a longstanding, viable small business.

Years in continuous operation within Davidson County (0-15 points)

1. 36+ years (15 points)
   26 to 35 years (11 points)
   16 to 25 years (9 points)
   10 to 15 years (3 points)
2. Financial Health Indicators (0-5 points)
3. Local Economic Contribution (0-5 points)

3. Improvement/Modernization Need & Justification (0-15 points)

Assess and evaluate the feasibility of the proposed modernization activities and how those will improve or close gaps.

1. Description and Documentation of Current Challenges (0-5 points)
2. Implementation Plan Strength (0-5 points)
3. What is the budget and funds source for the planned Improvement? (0-5 points)

4. Impact & Outcomes (0-10 points)

Measures expected benefits for the business.

1. What are Operational Efficiency Gains? (0-5 points)
2. What is the Workforce Impact? (0-5 points)

5. Organizational Capacity & Readiness (0-5 points)

Evaluates whether the business can successfully execute the improvement plan.

1. Leadership & Management Capability for Project Execution (0-2.5 points)
2. Operational Readiness for Project Execution (0-2.5 points)