



**Request for FY 2024 Grant Proposals  
Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program**

**Address:** Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation  
529 Main Street, Schrafft’s Center, Suite 201  
Charlestown, MA 02129

**RFP File Name:** Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program

**Contact Person:** Ari Veloz, [aveloz@massgcc.com](mailto:aveloz@massgcc.com)

Please submit all questions and inquiries via email to the contact person listed above.

**Schedule:**

RFP Release Date:	<b>Monday, May 1st, 2023</b>
Deadline for Proposals:	<b>Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023</b>
Information Sessions:	<p><b>Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> @10am</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 891 1491 9700 <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89114919700">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89114919700</a></p> <p><b>Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> @2pm</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 831 9491 9954 <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83194919954">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83194919954</a></p>
Application via: Submittable Platform accessible on <a href="http://www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org">www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org</a>	
Grants will be awarded:	<b>October (subject to change)</b> Grant program contingent on funding allocation

Information about this RFP will be posted on [www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org](http://www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org).  
Notices will be sent via email to past and current program awardees, State Representatives, and MACDC’s members.

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Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation  
Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program**

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) is pleased to announce that it is accepting grant applications for participation in the Fiscal Year 2024 (July 2023-June 2024). MGCC is seeking proposals for technical assistance to assist underserved small businesses in Massachusetts. MGCC will accept applications from **not-for-profit organizations** that currently provide technical assistance and training programs to small businesses and start-ups. These grants are intended to supplement the organization's current and anticipated funding and not to be the primary funding support. If applying organization(s) currently receives, or will receive, funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for its small business assistance program, articulate how those funds are being used and how funding from the Small Business Assistance Grant Program will not be duplicative.

Grant proposals shall identify specific counseling and training programs that assist these small businesses to:

- Secure new or increased financing for growth;
- Kick-off crowdfunding campaigns on Biz-M-Power platform (MGCC Program)
- Achieve stability and viability;
- Create/retain jobs;
- Increase the economic vitality of the neighborhood, community, or region.

Considerations will be given to:

1. Proposals designed to support businesses *that are minority-owned, women-owned, LGBTQ-owned, businesses located in low-moderation communities, businesses located in gateway cities, low-moderate-income individuals, US Military Veterans, Cooperatives, and disable individuals.* small business clients from predominantly socially and economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented groups, including, minority-owned, woman-owned, veteran-owned, LGBTQ+-owned, low-moderate income-owners, non-native English speaking-owners, disabled owners, small businesses operating in gateway cities, rural communities, and those servicing underserved markets and operating as cooperatives.
  
2. ***Proposed programs that demonstrate direct high touch interactions*** which advance:
  - New business startups;
  - Business expansion;
  - Business stabilization;
  - Increased access to financing
  - Other measurable economic growth.

***Where high touch interactions are defined as one-on-one OR cohort based technical***

***assistance with supplementary training workshops.***

Proposed programs shall include individual and/or group counseling, training programs, loan packaging services, or direct technical assistance.

***3. Multilingual Program offerings are highly desirable, especially Spanish.***

Grant proposals should define the communities they serve, the strategy and marketing plan to reach these communities, current and planned programs, and performance benchmarks and metrics. As these grant proceeds can only supplement budgets, the requesting organization must have additional funding sources. Organizations are encouraged to list existing partners and other public and/or private funding sources. If the proposed program currently receives public funding, please define how this additional funding will be differentiated from the current public funding and describe the incremental results this grant will produce.

**PURPOSE OF GRANT**

The purpose of the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program is to ensure that start-ups and existing businesses continue their path towards recovery in order to ensure future economic and entrepreneurial opportunity throughout the Commonwealth. The program is designed to complement and enhance traditional public and private small business assistance networks by providing technical assistance or training programs for under-resourced and disadvantaged businesses with 20 or fewer employees. The program seeks to facilitate economic stability and viability for small businesses by helping to improve their ability to navigate business operations, including ability to secure private and public financing, business grants, and micro-loans.

Grant funds are not intended to provide services geared toward prospective ventures. Therefore, at least 85% of the clients served by the grantee organization with these funds shall be for clients who are already operating an existing business or who are within twelve months of opening a new business.

Counseling and training programs should be designed to aid small business owners in stabilizing and growing their businesses in measurable ways through intensive individual counseling/coaching, selective group training, loan packaging, and direct lending or loan guarantees. Proposals offering multilingual programming and targeting immigrant-owned businesses are highly desirable.

## APPLICATION

### REQUEST TYPE

#### **One-on-one technical assistance**

My organization will provide **one-on-one** advisory/counseling/coaching services to business owner(s) in order to address identified challenges. When appropriate, business owner(s) may be referred to partners to resolve and/or better position business to thrive. Must be at least 5hrs of total services provided per business owner.

Check one:

- In addition, we will provide stand-alone educational workshops meant to supplement our one-on-one technical assistance.
- We do not provide stand-alone educational workshop, only one-on-one technical assistance.

#### **Cohort-based technical assistance**

My organization will provide **group-based** advisory/counseling/coaching in a group setting to business owners. Topics include strategic and essential business topics identified by organization and/or as identified through a cohort needs assessment. When appropriate, business owner(s) may be referred to partners to resolve and/or better position business to thrive. Must be at least 5hrs of total services provided per business owner.

Check one:

- In addition, we will provide one-on-one Technical Assistance meant to provide individual guidance to our **group-based** advisory/counseling/coaching.
- We will not provide one-on-one Technical Assistance

### GRANT AMOUNTS AND DISTRIBUTION

MGCC will endeavor to assure broad geographic diversity among grantees but will not limit the number of grants awarded per region.

- Funds available for this grant program in FY2024 are contingent on funding allocation.
- Single organization proposals will not exceed \$100,000.
- Joint proposals (2+ non-profit organizations) will not exceed \$175,000.

### ELIGIBILITY

For purposes of the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program and this Request for

Proposal (RFP), only Massachusetts-based, not-for-profit corporations are eligible for program participation. For the purposes of this program, the entity shall:

- 1) Be duly organized under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 180 and incorporated as such by the Secretary of State for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, whose mission includes facilitating a community driven economic development process for small businesses.
- 2) Hold a tax-exempt status under the United States Internal Revenue Code.
- 3) If the applicant cannot meet the first two criteria, then it must have an established fiduciary relationship with an organization that is both incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and maintains a tax-exempt status under the United States Internal Revenue Code. Under those circumstances where a fiduciary relationship is in force, a memorandum of agreement signed and dated by the authorized representatives of the two cooperating agencies attesting to the fiduciary relationship, along with copies of the sponsoring organization's tax-exempt certificate and Certificate of Good Standing from the Massachusetts Secretary of State must be submitted with the applicant's proposal.
- 4) Demonstrate an ability to develop and manage programs as reflected in the effective functioning of the Board of Directors, operations managed by a fulltime and experienced management team, involvement of and responsiveness to community residents and constituents.
- 5) Provide evidence of fiscal stability, as documented in prepared financial statements.

### **INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

Ineligible for funding under the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program are projects or activities which:

- Industry and sector specific member service organizations, example associations
- Are for the private profit or benefit of an individual or a select group of individuals.
- Involve the replication of services already provided under the auspices of a federal or state agency.
- Are primarily intended to serve prospective business ventures, defined as individuals who are more than twelve months from beginning to operate a business.
- Do not have the capacity to measure status outcomes relating to business stabilization and growth.

MGCC reserves the right to reject any and all submitted proposals and any or all parts of a proposed activity.

### **EXTERNAL REVIEWERS**

Small Business Assistance Grants will be awarded by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. External Reviewers will review and recommend proposals for approval.

### **GRANT AGREEMENT**

Grants will be awarded on or before October 2023. Dates are subject to change. Upon receipt by

MGCC, all proposals become public documents, to the extent required under the public records law. If a proposal is approved for funding, the proposal and the attached work plan and budget shall become the basis for MGCC's grant award negotiations with the applicant organization to determine the precise project scope, budget and use of funds. All documents ultimately negotiated and incorporated into the Grant Agreement will be added as attachments, and references to all attachments will be written into the agreement form prior to the execution by the partner.

Grant Agreements will contain a requirement that grantee agencies release names and contact information of clients served under the grant to MGCC for the purposes of outcomes verification and other legitimate uses as defined by MGCC. Grantees also agree to cooperate with any third-party evaluation that MGCC may decide to undertake of this program.

Reporting requirements, including deadlines for submission, will also be contained in the Grant Agreement.

#### **USE OF FUNDS – LIMITATION OF ADMINISTRATION COSTS**

Administrative costs associated with the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program may not exceed 10% of the proposed budget.

#### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

MGCC has established a competitive review process known as the Small Business Technical Assistance Review Committee. All awards are subject to the Small Business Technical Assistance Committee of the MGCC Board of Directors and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED). A Review Committee will evaluate proposals, seeking those that most completely meet the established criteria accompanied by credible, historic outcome metrics.

Proposals must demonstrate the ability to meet the following small business assistance priorities in order to receive funding:

- 1) Provide a strategy for addressing small business needs in your target market.
- 2) Provide a minimum of 5 hours of direct services to small business clients from target populations.
- 3) Implement coordinated services that magnify the delivery of services in efficient, economical, and effective ways. Preference will be given to agencies that can demonstrate strong collaborations with micro-lenders or whose funding will support micro-loan fund clients.
- 4) Enhance and complement government service providers, such as the Small Business Development Centers.
- 5) Collect and report on specific outcomes achieved that can be attributed to services provided in terms of business starts, financing made or facilitated, businesses stabilized, jobs created or retained, and/or revenue growth.

A Review Committee will evaluate proposals, seeking those that most completely meet the established criteria accompanied by credible, historic outcome metrics.

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Any materials submitted will become the property of MGCC and must be made available for reproduction and may not be copyrighted. Application submissions will be accepted via Submittable Platform accessible on [www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org](http://www.empoweringsmallbusiness.org)

An application will not be considered if it fails to meet the minimum requirements. The requirements are as follows:

1. Must be submitted via Submittable mid-night by June 2, 2023.
2. Completed all application components:
  - a. Narrative questions (1-7)
  - b. Upload all documents identified (8-16)

## **APPLICATION NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

### Overview

1. Describe the mission of the applicant organization, the community it serves, and its outreach strategy. Describe the various ways by which the applicant organization first engages clients, triages the services they require, and refers them to other service providers if unable to assist them. Also describe how the applicant organization moves clients forward once they have received all available services.

### Business Community Challenges

2. Based on the applicant's client profile, describe the issues they face with business development, securing financing and achieving financial viability. Describe the organization's technical assistance role, training and counseling programs, or other initiatives with the small business community that create, maintain, and grow the business's financial viability, ability to obtain private or public financing and/or create jobs.

### Staff Qualifications

3. Describe the professional qualifications of the small business assistance professionals on staff and consultants regularly used for client referrals.

### Partnerships and Collaboratives

4. Detail partnerships and collaborations that support the applicant's program, including but not limited to, how the applicant partners with their regional SBDC and other providers, including legal, accounting, tax professionals, marketing specialists, private and government lenders, and micro-lenders. Please use the Partners Form to provide this information.

Partnering Organization Type	Name of Partnering Organization	Description of Collaboration
Regional Small Business Development Center		
Legal Aid		
Tax Professionals		
Marketing Specialists		
Private Government Lenders		
CDFI or CDCs Lenders		
Municipalities		

**Specific Grant Program & Activities**

- Describe the proposed program and its related activities. The proposal must include a program description that is reflected in the work plan, and which clearly explains the proposed budget.

Activity	Outcome	Staff involved in this activity from Lead Organization	Staff involved in this activity from Partner organization(s) (joint apps)	Consultant(s) involved in this activity (if applicable)

**Budget**

- Describe how Small Business Assistance Grant Program funding will be used to support the proposed program. SBTA funds are intended to supplement current and anticipated funding and not to be the primary funding support. If funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will support the proposed program, please articulate how SBTA funding will not be duplicative. *See Appendix A for Organizational Budget Form.*



## Data Collection and Outcome Measures Plan

7. Outline how the applicant expects to define outcomes relating to business start-ups, stabilization and expansion, what indicators will be used to determine outcomes, and the methodology for collecting and reporting on performance, demographic, and outcome data.
  - *See Appendix B for Performance Data & Outcomes Form.*

## **APPLICATION REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (UPLOADS)**

1. Proposed Organizational Budget Form (See Appendix A)
2. Performance Data & Outcomes Form (See Appendix B)
3. Resumes of key personnel delivering direct service
4. 2023 Certificate of Good Standing from the Secretary of the Commonwealth (one for each agency participating in the grant)
5. Current Board of Directors list
6. U.S. IRS Tax Exempt Certification/ Determination Letter
7. Most recent Audited Financial Statement or Review
8. Current year-to-date organizational Financial Statement: Income & Expense/Balance Sheet
9. Memorandum of Understanding from fiscal sponsorship agency (if applicable)

## **PROGRAM REPORTING**

While MGCC recognizes that outreach, marketing, networking, and introductory sessions are a necessary part of a comprehensive small business assistance program, we do not wish to overburden grantees with data collection and reporting requirements not directly tied to the mission of the grant program. Thus, MGCC will not be requesting data on intake, assessment, or short-term assistance of less than 5 hours of direct contact with clients. Neither will we require reporting relating to hours of service, customer satisfaction, or learning outcomes.

MGCC will require a final report on performance, demographic, and outcome data. Reporting templates will be provided as a way to help gather data, but all reports and files must be submitted through Submittable. Deadlines for submitting these reports will be included with the Grant Agreement.

Mid-year and final reports will include the following elements (subject to modification):

- Narrative that references proposal Workplan and answers: What worked well, what did you learn, and what were the challenges in providing assistance to your small business clients and achieving your goals?

- Description of methodology used for verifying outcome data, including which indicators were used to validate business start-up, stabilization, growth, job creation and retention, and how follow-up was conducted (phone, internet, face to face; survey, interview, document verification, etc.)
- Changes in key staff or organizational changes that impact the small business program during the grant period. (Resumes for key staff to be required)
- Description of partnerships developed with other organizations (i.e. other MGCC grantees, financial institutions, funders, peer-to-peer, city programs, etc.) during the grant period.
- List of media attention received or organized events related to this grant. Media refers to: print (newspaper, newsletter, flyers, etc.), TV, radio, social media (Facebook/twitter/LinkedIn).
- Professional development that the business technical assistance provider(s) attend during the grant period.
- Business success story that illustrates a business in start-up, stabilization or growth stage and the economic impact of the provision of technical assistance services. It should include a brief description and relevant history of the business and the business owner, challenge, technical assistance solution and the economic impact.

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Organizational Budget Form**

Cost Elements (1-4)	Lead Agency Annual Project Budget	MGCC Funding Request
1. List below Direct Personnel Costs Staff (% of staff time on project)		
Total Staff	\$ -	\$ -
2. List below Consultants (include pay rate)		
Total Consultants	\$ -	\$ -
3. Non-Personnel Cost (Program related materials, supplies, food, and travel)		
Total Non-Personnel Costs	\$ -	\$ -
Total Direct Costs (1+2+3)	\$ -	\$ -
4. Administrative Overhead/ Indirect Costs (e.g. utilities, rent, audit, admin staff )		
Utilities, rent, audit, admin staff		
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST (1+2+3+4)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
FUNDING SOURCES/REVENUE ELEMENTS	Lead Agency Amount (\$)	Award Date
Identified Funding Sources		
Projected Fees		
Matching Funds		
Contributions		
Contracts/ Grants (list separately)		
Total Organizational Funding	\$ -	
<b>MGCC Request</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	
TOTAL PROJECTED FUNDING/REVENUE	\$ -	
<b>Funding Gap or Revenue</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	

**Appendix B: Performance Data & Outcome Form (Mid- Year and Final Report)**

<b>Organization Name:</b>		<b>Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation</b>
<b>Mid-Year and Final Performance Data &amp; Outcome Report Form</b>		<b>Reporting Template</b> (excel sheet with automated addition and percentage calculations)
How many businesses received technical assistance/ Cohort based technical assistance? <b>(primary grant service) 5hrs+</b>		
THIS REPORT WILL FOCUS ON OUTCOMES ONLY FOR BUSINESSES THAT RECEIVED 5 HRS+ OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE		
Percentage of businesses that received 5hrs + technical assistance		
<b>What were the business stages of the 0 businesses that received technical assistance?</b>		
Prospective business owners (>1 year from starting a business)		%
Pre-Start-Up clients (within 1 year of start-up)		%
Start-Up clients (business operating/generating revenue)		%
Established business clients (is/was profitable and employing at least 1 FTE)		%
You did not count 0 businesses. This number must be 0. You need to count every business. If this number is negative you are overcounting.		
You are reporting 0 businesses not in operations (prospective + pre-start-ups).		
You are reporting 0 businesses in operations (start-ups + established).		
<b>What were the outcomes for the 0 businesses that received technical assistance?</b>		
Total # new businesses created		%
Total # businesses stabilized		%
Total # businesses that grew/increased revenue as a result of services		%
Total # businesses that didn't experience a positive outcome		%
You did not count 0 businesses. This number must be 0. You need to count every business. If this number is negative you are overcounting.		
<b>Job Creation &amp; Preservation</b>		
<b>What were the jobs outcomes for the 0 businesses that received technical assistance?</b>		
FTE jobs created as a result of technical assistance		%
FTE jobs preserved as a result of technical assistance (applies to businesses stabilized)		%
Total # FTE jobs created and preserved	0	

<b>Outcomes- Access to Financing &amp; Grants</b>		
<b>What were the financing outcomes for the 0 businesses that received technical assistance?</b>		
# of Direct loans (you are a CDFI or CDC)		%
# of Indirect loans (loan packaging- you helped a business put their documents together in order to apply for a loan)		%
<b>Total # of businesses receiving financing</b>	<b>0</b>	
\$ Value of direct loans		%
\$ Value of indirect loans		%
<b>Total value of loans closed</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
\$ Value of smallest loan closed		
\$ Value of largest loan closed		

<b>Target Populations Served</b>		
<b>Gender</b>		
Total # women-owned businesses		%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
<b>What were the ethnicities of the 0 businesses that received technical assistance?</b>		
Total # African American-owned businesses		%
Total # Latino-owned businesses		%
Total # Asian-owned businesses		%
Total # Native American-owned businesses		%
Total # African-owned businesses		%
Total # Arab-owned businesses		%
Total # Black/Caribbean-owned businesses		%
Total # Multiracial-owned businesses		%
Total # Non-minority businesses		%
Total # Unknown/other		%
You did not count 0 businesses. This number must be 0. You need to count every business. If this number is negative you are overcounting.		
<b>You provided technical assistance to 0 BIPOC businesses (Black Indigenous &amp; People of Color)</b>		
% of technical assistance provided went to BIPOC businesses.		

Gender & BIPOC		
Total # women & BIPOC-owned businesses		#DIV/0!
Total # men & BIPOC-owned businesses		#DIV/0!
You did not count gender for 0 BIPOC businesses. This number must be 0. You need to count every business. If this number is negative you are overcounting.		
Other attributes of the 0 businesses that you provided technical assistance to		
Total # LGBTQ-owned businesses		%
Total # of immigrants/non-native English speakers		%
Total # US Military Veterans		%
Total # owners that started businesses as a result of being unemployed		%
Total # Low/Moderate income business owners (use HUD guidelines)		%
Total # disabled business owners		%
Total # businesses located in gateway communities		%
Total # businesses located in rural communities		%
Total # businesses located in low/moderate income community (as defined by HMDA/CRA – use: <a href="http://www.ffiec.gov/geocode">www.ffiec.gov/geocode</a> )		%

Cooperatives		
Total # of businesses structured as Cooperatives		
% of technical assistance services was provided to Cooperatives		
Types of Cooperative		
Total # worker-Owned Cooperatives		%
Total # consumer-Owned Cooperatives		%
You did not count 0 businesses. This number must be 0. You need to count every business. If this number is negative you are overcounting.		
Cooperative Ownership		
Total # of worker-owners served		#DIV/0!
Total # of consumer-owners served?		#DIV/0!
Total # of owners 0		
Cooperative Ownership Range		
# of members for smallest cooperative?		
# of members for largest cooperative?		
Cooperative Underserved Communities		
Total # of worker-owners who were women		%
Total # of BIPOC worker-owners		%
% of technical assistance services provided to worker-owned Cooperatives went to BIPOC-owners		
% of technical assistance services provided to worker-owned Cooperatives went to women-owners		
Management Training		
Total # of worker-owners who completed governance and participatory management training?		%