Salt Lake County expands reach of $40M Small Business Impact Grant program to include all business, COVID-19 aid recipients

SALT LAKE CITY—Salt Lake County opened its Small Business Impact Grant to businesses closed by COVID-19’s public health orders with the goal of reaching small businesses forgotten in the rush of initial federal relief.

Since June 16, Salt Lake County successfully reached out to thousands of eligible business owners and has awarded $2.4 million in grants to 142 businesses across the County, with $2.1 million in grants requested by businesses still under review. Based on documented losses, the average grant award in the first round was $17,000.

During Round 1, Salt Lake County found 45% of the businesses that applied were outside the main industries temporarily closed, but still felt the very real effects of COVID-19 and a need for more support. Another large segment of applicants received federal aid from the SBA’s Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), but the loans were not enough to sustain businesses through this extended period of the disease’s spread.

While economic recovery will continue to be a long-term strategic effort, the County is committed to mitigating short-term effects in its collaborative effort to stabilize the economy.

In Round 2 of the SBIG Program launching immediately, all business industries are eligible to apply, as well as those who received other federal, state, or local COVID-19 aid. Those who received financial aid through CARES Act funding are eligible if their amount did not exceed $35,000. These changes will allow thousands of more businesses to apply and avoid taking on additional debt.

“Listening to business owners in the past month, we learned and assessed additional needs required to prevent our small businesses from closing,” said Salt Lake County’s Regional Development Director Dina Blaes. “After meeting the SBIG’s initial goals, this second round is in response to those developing needs. The County is uniquely positioned to pivot more quickly than federal programs, and we aim to get more money into the economy as fast as we can.”

The grant cannot be used for duplication of expenses in the same timeframe. It can be used for losses from March 16 to July 31. Applicants with questions are urged to call the County’s Business Relief Hotline, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., at (385) 468-4011. Extensive FAQs are available online in multiple languages. The application is open and accessible at slco.org/covid-19/.

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