



Newport News Electronic Commerce (e-Commerce) Grant Program Overview

Purpose:

The purpose of this program is to assist Small, Women- and Minority-owned, for-profit Newport News companies in growing their business through e-Commerce.

Overview:

The Economic Development Authority of the City of Newport News, Virginia (EDA) has agreed to help Newport News Small, Women- and Minority-owned private businesses grow revenues and jobs through e-Commerce, and has set aside a business assistance grant fund for that purpose.

Grant Eligibility

To be eligible for a Newport News e-Commerce Grant, the applicant must be a for-profit Small, Women- or Minority-owned business located within the City of Newport News, Virginia. For purposes of this grant the following definitions apply:

Small business is defined as a business which is at least 51% independently owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are U.S. citizens or legal resident aliens, and together with affiliates, has 250 or fewer employees, or average annual gross receipts of \$10 million or less for the previous year. One or more of the individual owners shall control both the management and daily business operations of the small business.

Women- or Minority-owned business is defined as one or more minority individuals control at least 51% of the voting stock or ownership and manages daily operations. Minority groups are defined as:

1. African Americans
2. Hispanic Americans
3. Native Americans
4. Asian-Pacific Americans
5. Asian-Indian Americans

Women- or Minority-owned businesses should be certified by the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (<http://www.dmbv.virginia.gov/>) in order to qualify for this program.

E-Commerce Program Grant Amounts

- Grants are made on a first-come, first served basis and are limited to available funding. Eligibility is determined at the discretion of the Newport News EDA staff.
- Non-Minority owned businesses – grant shall not exceed 50% of the total project cost up to a maximum of \$2,500.
- Women- or Minority-owned businesses – grant shall not exceed 50% of the total project cost up to a maximum of \$4,500.

Grant Approval Criteria

- Must be a for-profit business currently licensed in and with its principal office located within the City of Newport News.
- Projects must be legal and commercially viable, with no adult-only material.
- Applicants must use e-Commerce Grant Service Providers that are properly registered and licensed to operate a business and can provide two (2) references.
- Grant funds cannot be awarded for a project which has been completed prior to approval of a grant application and the execution of the Grant Agreement by the Applicant and the EDA. The intent is to incentivize new e-Commerce services rather than pay for a project that has already been completed.
- Grants are to be used for the creation or enhancement of e-Commerce sites and cannot be used for domain registration, web hosting, general maintenance services, or annual subscriptions.
- Service Providers are not eligible to receive grants for their own websites or to create or make enhancements to an affiliated business website.
- Applicant must provide EDA staff with evidence of at least two (2) estimates from e-Commerce providers when informing EDA staff of their selection.

Approved Grant Uses

- **Consultation Services** – information technology strategic planning, e-Commerce needs and marketing assessments as it relates to the services below.
- **Web Design and Development Services** – custom website design, information architecture and graphic user interface planning, database driven website design and development, content management solutions, usability testing, advanced scripting and programming, custom database development.
- **e-Commerce Services** – Shopping carts, donation and membership systems, and online security assessments and testing tools.
- **Internet Marketing Services** – email marketing, mobile apps, search engine marketing, search engine optimization, e-Newsletters, blogs, RSS, Wikis.
- Other e-Commerce innovations and enhancements as approved at the discretion of the Newport News e-Commerce staff.

Grant Application Process

- Qualified business obtains printed application from City website or by other means.
- For all projects an Applicant must obtain two (2) quotes from a Service Provider for the desired work. An applicant, at its discretion, may select the provider of preference regardless of price, and is not required to take the lowest bid.

- Applicant completes, signs and submits the application to the Newport News Department of Development via fax, mail, hand delivery or electronic submittal.
- Letter and/or email are sent to the Applicant verifying the receipt of the application within one week. The Applicant should contact staff if communication is not received within 14 days of submittal.
- Application is reviewed and is approved or denied within ten (10) business days, pending verification of eligibility.
- Letter and email are sent to Applicant with notification of decision and, if approved, providing notice of the amount of grant funding they are eligible to receive. The Applicant's contract with the Service Provider should be conditional upon the approval of the Grant by the EDA and the execution of the Grant Agreement by the Applicant and the EDA.
- Applicant must enter into a contract with Service Provider setting forth the scope of the services to be performed. The contract must be approved by the EDA and will be attached to, and become a part of, the Grant Agreement between the Applicant and the EDA. The Applicant's contract with the Service Provider should be conditioned upon the approval by the EDA and the issuance of the Grant.
- Upon project completion, the approved grant Applicant will be encouraged to complete a "Customer Satisfaction Survey" for the Service Provider.

Grant Payments

Authorized Service Provider completes the project as quoted and invoices the grantor (the EDA) for its services and a grant check will be issued to the Service Provider for the grant amount. Evidence of payment of the Applicant's proportional costs to the Service Provider should accompany invoice.

Program Administration

- Newport News Department of Development will act on behalf of the EDA in the promotion and implementation of the Newport News e-Commerce Grant Program.
- Interested businesses should contact the Department of Development regarding the application process or questions.
- Development staff reviews all grant applications and, in its sole discretion, determines eligibility and eligible grant amounts.
- Approved grant recipients must pay their portion of project cost to the Service Provider and the EDA will **only pay** the grant-funded portion upon completion of the project.
- Development Staff shall provide semi-annual reports to the EDA regarding the activity of the e-Commerce program.

* City of Newport News employees, employee spouses, EDA Board Members, spouses or other City officials and spouses are not eligible to participate in grant program.

Contact Tricia Wilson, Business Development Specialist, at 757-926-3793 or email twilson@nngov.com.

Newport News Electronic Commerce (e-Commerce) Grant Program Application

Newport News Business Applicant

Business: _____

Business Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

Website address (if applicable): _____

Current Newport News Business License Number: _____

Women/Minority-Owned: _____

e-Commerce Service Provider

Business Name: _____

Business Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (office) _____ Cell: _____

Provider's Website Address: _____

Tax ID Number: _____

Project Summary & Cost Information

Written Summary of Proposed Work:

Two (2) detailed quotes from two (2) e-Commerce providers must be submitted with this application

Quoted Total Project Costs: \$ _____ *Grant Funds Requested: \$ _____

* (Cannot be greater than 50% of estimated costs per grant details)

I certify that at the time of this application website work has not been completed and that everything stated in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Public Information Disclosure: Applicant understands and agrees that all information furnished in connection with this application involves the use of public funds and as such may be made public pursuant to the statues of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Grant Amount Approved \$ _____ Date: _____ By: _____
