

San Francisco Women's Entrepreneurship Fund APPLICATION



What is the San Francisco Women's Entrepreneurship Fund Program?

The San Francisco Women's Entrepreneurship Fund (SFWEF) is a project of the Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) in partnership with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD). The Fund provides mini-grants of up to \$5,000 to San Francisco women-owned small businesses for projects and upgrades that will have a transformative impact on the business' ability to grow. SFWEF strives to improve the small business environment for women entrepreneurs in San Francisco and strengthens the partnership between entrepreneurs and technical assistance providers.

Applicant Eligibility:

Applicants must meet eligibility requirements. As part of your application for the SFWEF grant, please review the eligibility requirements and check each box to confirm that you meet each one.

San Francisco woman-owned small business in operating full-time with at least 40% revenue in the City; Full-time is defined as 32 hours/week or at least \$25,000 business net income.

Current, active relationship with an approved technical assistance provider;

Completed 3 months with at least 8 hours of consulting with an approved technical assistance provider; and

Commitment to continue working with the technical assistance provider for at least 6 months.

Current lease with at least 18 months remaining, if applicable.

Confirm that you understand the grant is considered taxable income.

Eligible Use of Funds:

The SFWEF grant builds upon the work you have invested in your business and support projects and upgrades that will have a positive economic impact on your business' ability to increase sales and grow. Eligible uses of funds should align with the action plan items described on page 4 of this application. Please check each box to confirm you've read through each eligible use.

Business operations improvements: marketing, financial/accounting, new equipment and/or technology, trainings, and networking.

Visual merchandising, space improvements, and marketing: window displays, lighting, signage, layout improvements, design changes, online marketing, trade shows, other marketing and customer acquisition opportunities.

Steps to apply for a SFWEF grant:

1. Contact your approved technical assistance provider (TA provider) to request a nomination letter and their assistance with the application process. See the approved TA provider list.
2. Complete this application and gather copies of supporting documents including Business Registration Certificate, quotes, Business Financial Spreadsheet template, etc.
3. Have your TA provider submit your application and support documents to MEDA Business Development Program Manager Edwin Rodriguez: erodriguez@medasf.org, (415) 282-3334 ext.102

4. Prepare to make a presentation and answer questions about your application (5 minute introduction by your TA provider, 10 minutes of presentation, and 10 minutes of Q&A) to the SFWEF review committee. Let us know if you need translation services. Use the attached Pitch Score Sheet for guidance on the presentation content.

Criteria for Determining Funding:

1. Potential for business growth and expansion due to proposed project - The SFWEF Review Committee will look to the application and presentation to assess the clarity, potential, and compelling quality of the project's vision of growth.
2. Capacity and expertise of the entrepreneur - The business owner should be able to explain their industry knowledge, unique skills, leadership, and key relationships provided in the application and presentation.
3. Quality of relationship with the TA Provider - The nomination letter and presentation will describe the extent of the technical assistance provided and plans going forward. The TA provider should be able to provide their client with a well-rounded network of resources to support the applicant accomplish the action plan items.
4. Feasibility - The committee will review and discuss the details of the proposed project Action Plan.
5. Impact of the grant award on the project success- The committee will gauge the return on investment (ROI) described in the financial projections and assumptions.

Align your presentation talking points with the key criteria outlined on the Pitch Evaluation form found on page 8.

How long does it take?

All eligible applicants will be invited, on a rolling basis, to pitch their project proposal to the SFWEF committee, which meets every 3rd Monday of the month. The committee will provide feedback to all applicants who participate and make determination of fund awards within two weeks of the presentation.

For more information, please contact MEDA Business Development Program Manager Edwin Rodriguez: (415) 282-3334 ext. 102, erodriguez@medasf.org.

Applicant Information

Company Name:		DBA / Trade Name:	Owner(s) Name:
Phone:		Website:	Type of Business:
Street Address:			Unit or Suite:
City:	Zip:	Business Owner email:	
Business Ownership:		Female %	Male %
100% Female Owned		Co-owned	
Current number of employees, including you:	Number of employees, including you, in 2 years:	Business Start Date:	
Total lifetime sales since starting :	Net income last year:	Gross income last year:	
		What stage is your company in?	
Priority will be given to nominees who have never received a grant from the City and County of SF.		Early w/1 year of operations	
Have you received a grant from the City of San Francisco?	Yes, I received a grant.	No, I haven't received a grant.	Expansion
			Established
If you received a grant, please explain:			

Requested Items for Funding (Total grant not to exceed \$5,000):

Items Requested for Funding	Purpose	Vendor + Cost Quote	Anticipated Impact i.e. increase in sales by x%

	Total Request:		

Details about the business. (Completed by the TA provider and applicant jointly.)

Please describe the business to date.

How will the grant help the business grow? What are the challenges with implementing the project?

Project Action Plan

The Action Plan, informed by the technical assistance received, outlines objectives and specific tasks to reach the project goals. As you and your client work toward the objectives in this plan, the business owner will continue to develop their business skills and resiliency.

Action Plan for Line Item #1: For each funding item requested, include the main goal and action item that the business owner(s), advisor, and third party (if applicable) will complete to reach the goal. Include a due date for each action item.

Action Plan for Line Item #2:

Action Plan for Line Item #3:

Action Plan for Line Item #4:

Small Business Technical Assistance Provider Role:

Participants must be nominated by a technical assistance provider to be eligible. To nominate an entrepreneur, technical assistance providers should complete the following steps:

1. Complete a nomination letter for clients who have been working with the provider for at least 3 months and at least 8 hours of business consulting.
2. Assist your client complete the SFWEF Action Plan. The Action Plan items should be excerpted from a full individual business development plan.
3. Sign the participant's application and submit it with copies of their supporting documents including Business Registration Certificate, quotes, completed Business Financials template, and copy of last year's taxes.
4. Be available to introduce the participant during the pitch presentation and answer any technical assistance questions; and
5. Commit to continue working with the participant for at least 6 months if the participant receives a mini-grant.

FAQs:

Can the technical assistance provider nominate more than one entrepreneur?

Yes.

How established should the businesses be?

Businesses in operation for at least 12 months or more are eligible to participate. The business has a current lease with at least 18 months remaining, if applicable.

Is the grant funding for a specific industry?

No, we welcome all types of women-owned businesses.

Can family-owned businesses or partnerships apply?

Yes, as long as a woman has 50% ownership. The woman should not be a silent (investment only) partner. The woman would need to be active in the business decision-making process and present a pitch presentation in front of the committee.

Can trans women apply?

Yes.

Why does the review committee need to see an income statement and financial projections?

The committee analyzes the financial health of businesses to gauge the impact of the SFWEF grant on the long-term sustainability and success of the businesses.

When will mini-grant be disbursed to grantees?

The grant will be disbursed immediately following the approval of the grant project. A check will be made to the business or business owner. Please note, the grant is considered taxable income.

What is the criteria used to evaluate the grant applications?

Applications will be evaluated using the criteria outlined in the evaluation forms on pages 8-9. Priority will be given to business owners who have never received a grant from the City. The mini-grant should fund a significant portion of the proposed project or the entire project. Participants will receive the committee's decision within two weeks of their pitch.

Is there a format for the pitch presentations?

The format is open to the applicant, but the presentation should include the elements outlined on the attached pitch score sheet. Try to make it visual and engaging showing preparation. A/V and an interpreter are available, upon request. Please make presentation arrangements with MEDA Business Development Program Manager Edwin Rodriguez: erodriguez@medasf.org, (415) 282-3334 ext.102

Who will judge the applications?

We are pleased to have the following volunteer judges on the SFWEF Review Committee:

Beth Pride, owner of BPE Global
Diana Matei-Golopenta, Mission Economic Development Agency
Gwendolyn Wright, Business Consultant
Holly Lung, San Francisco Office of the Assessor-Recorder
Rhea Aguinaldo, San Francisco Office of Small Business
Viridiana Ponce, Business Consultant
Zenaida Merlin, owner of D'Maize Restaurant

Application Checklist:

- Completed and signed application.
- Copy of business registration and last year's business taxes.
- Quotes for items requested for funding.
- Business Financials spreadsheet template.
- Confirm that you understand the grant is considered taxable income.

We/I, Business Owner(s), of _____, assert that we/I meet the above eligibility requirements. We/I understand that this is a competitive award process and that an invitation to pitch a proposal is not a guarantee of funding. We/I also understand that, if awarded, we may be asked to provide invoices or other documentation related to our project.

Business Owner Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Business Owner Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

We, _____, an approved technical assistance provider, do hereby affirm that the applicant meets all eligibility requirements, including having worked with us for at least 3 months and received a total of at least 8 hours of consulting.

Technical Assistance Representative Printed Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

For reference only. This score sheet will be completed by the review committee during the pitch.

The San Francisco Women's Entrepreneurship Fund Pitch Evaluation

Business Name: _____ Name of Owner: _____ Date: _____

Technical Assistance Provider: _____ Name of Judge: _____

Grant Amount Requested (\$5,000 max): _____

Pitch Evaluation Criteria		Scoring Scale				
		For each item below, circle the number that best fits your judgment of its quality.				
Criteria	Description	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Potential for Business Growth	Purpose/vision is clear, understandable, and compelling. Opportunity or need is clearly defined. Value proposition is better, faster, cheaper, efficient, convenient, or unique Target customer is clearly identified and the company has the ability to reach and retain them. Profit and Loss statement analysis.	1	2	3	4	5
Capacity and expertise of the entrepreneur	Industry knowledge, unique skills, leadership, and key relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
Feasibility of the project	Does this project Action Plan make sense?	1	2	3	4	5
Impact of the grant award on the project success -	What's the impact of the grant on the project? Rate the upward trend in income and new customers with the completion of the proposed project.	1	2	3	4	5
Pitch Total Score : ____ /20 points						
Additional Comments:						
Recommend Full / Partial / Contingent / No Funds (circle and explain if necessary)						

The San Francisco Women's Entrepreneurship Fund Application/Nomination Letter Evaluation

Business Name: _____

Date: _____ Name of Judge: _____

Application/Nomination Letter Evaluation Criteria		Scoring Scale				
		Rate the quality of each criteria.				
Criteria	Description	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Relationship between TA and client	Refer to the nomination letter.	1	2	3	4	5
Business Accomplishments	Rate the success of the business and ability to overcome challenges.	1	2	3	4	5
SFWEF Action Plan, Business Assessment, Financials	The action plan and goals are clear, understandable, and achievable. The company has the resources they need to execute the project.	1	2	3	4	5
Application Total Score : ____ /15 points						
Additional Comments:						

