



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

B TAP



BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Supporting Business
Growth in the City of Minneapolis

Notice of Funding Availability 2025 Funding Round

1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Minneapolis is seeking applications from local organizations that provide direct business technical assistance and training to small businesses, micro-enterprises and cooperatives located in Minneapolis. The total funding available for the Business Technical Assistance Program (BTAP) in 2025 is \$450,000 and we expect to receive multiple applications. During the contracting process, the selected applicants and the City will agree upon the grant agreement outcomes and deliverables.

2. BTAP PROGRAM BACKGROUND

a. Program Goals

The goal of BTAP is to help small, Minneapolis-based businesses start or expand to support job creation and economic health in the City. The City's Strategic Racial Equity Action Plan (SREAP) identifies a set of priorities that the City focuses on to eliminate racial disparities in the City of Minneapolis. Eliminating the racial disparity in business startup and expansion is specifically identified in the following strategic need statement for the Economic Development priority area of the SREAP, as per the following excerpt:

Economic Development: Increase the number of Minneapolis-based businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; and increase businesses with BIPOC ownership that are still in business after 5 years.

BTAP will prioritize support in the City's Cultural Districts, which are contiguous areas that have historically been impacted by economic exclusion. Because these areas are significantly populated by people of color, Indigenous people, and/or immigrants, it is anticipated that B-TAP will positively impact the Economic Development priority of the SREAP.

b. Eligible Area

The program is available for businesses, micro-enterprises, and entrepreneurs throughout the City of Minneapolis.

c. Small Business Eligibility

BTAP generally defines a small business as an independently owned for-profit enterprise that employs 500 or fewer persons.

BTAP exists to increase access to resources that may otherwise be out of reach small-scale businesses. As such, participating businesses may not be charged by the selected applicants for services that are reimbursed through B-TAP funding.

3. NOFA FUNDING

a. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include non-profit or for-profit organizations that have demonstrated capacity to perform the business consulting and training work. This includes staff (or consultants) with experience providing business development, establishment and expansion assistance, and experience managing contracts.

b. Priority Services

While BTAP is interested in serving any business located in Minneapolis, this year the program will prioritize funding for eligible applicants serving participating businesses in one or more of the following areas:

- Support for businesses located in Cultural Districts
- Support for businesses facing urgent financial or operational challenges
- Support for businesses addressing hardship related to construction activity
- Legal advising

c. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities support the economic vitality of local small businesses, micro-enterprises, and cooperatives through one-on-one technical assistance or group training, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Support writing business plans and other strategic planning.
- Assistance with business registration, license applications, and other business set up and regulatory tasks.
- Access to capital by preparing loan packages, cash flow projections and providing financial coaching.
- Bookkeeping training and accounting support.
- Real estate acquisition or lease agreements.
- Support in applying for business certifications.
- Marketing planning and support.
- Legal services.

d. Funding Categories

Funding for BTAP has two main categories. Applicants may apply for one or both categories. Your application should clearly indicate which category or categories you are applying for:

- 1) **Small Business Technical Assistance:** The selected applicants will provide one-on-one technical assistance to forming, new, or existing Minneapolis businesses. The technical assistance provided will help entrepreneurs and businesses to start new businesses, retain existing businesses, increase profitability, or expand locations. BTAP will pay \$125 per hour for one-on-one consulting with licensed legal providers and \$100 per hour for one-on-one consulting with all other providers. BTAP recipients are limited to 50 hours per provider. Selected applicants must report how the provided services made a significant contribution toward business development, retention, or expansion. Technical assistance is not limited to low-income individuals. Selected applicants may choose to subcontract with third party professional services to meet business needs.

- 2) **Cooperative Technical Assistance:** The selected applicants will provide one-on-one consultations to forming and existing co-ops in Minneapolis. One-on-one consultations to refine the participants’ co-op business ideas and take the appropriate steps to implement them and/or so they can sustain operations and/or prepare for expansion. Eligible co-ops will need to be pre-approved through their consultant or contact C-TAP staff to receive services. C-TAP will pay up to \$125 per hour for technical assistance, up to 50 hours per cooperative. Technical assistance is not limited to low-income individuals. Selected applicants may choose to subcontract with third party professional services to meet business needs.

e. Funding Summary

Type of Technical Assistance	Total Available Funding	Unit Price	Max Hours per Business
Small Business Support and Cooperative Support	\$450,000/\$50,000 cap per provider	\$100 per hour (1:1 consulting)	50
		\$125 per hour (1:1 consulting licensed legal provider)	50
		\$125 per hour (1:1 consulting - cooperatives)	50

Note: The hours caps above are per business per service provider. Multiple service providers may work with the same business, provided that those services are different (e.g. loan packaging vs. marketing plan).

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Technical Assistance Report

4. APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND SELECTION

a. Anticipated Timeline

NOFA released: February 14, 2025

Pre-proposal conference: February 25, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams

Questions due: February 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

Applications due: March 7, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

Contract dates: April 17, 2025 – April 16, 2026

b. Informational Meeting

An informational meeting will be held on February 25, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. Attendance is recommended but not required. [Click here to join the meeting](#) or call in (audio only) 612- 276-6670, Phone Conference ID: 289 835 105#

c. NOFA Inquiries

Prospective applicants should direct questions by email to: BTAP@minneapolismn.gov

All questions are due no later than February 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. Questions and responses will be posted on the CPED web site (<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/business-services/doing-business-with-the-city/community-planning-development-rfps/>). The department contact person cannot vary the terms of the NOFA. The City reserves the right to modify this NOFA at any time prior to the application due date. An addendum will be posted on the [CPED web site](#) if the NOFA is modified.

d. Application Submission and Deadline

The 2025 BTAP Program Application is attached as Exhibit A. All applicants, including current service providers and new applicants, must submit a completed application. Applications shall be delivered to the City on or before: March 7, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. Applications and supporting documentation must be submitted in PDF or Microsoft format (up to 10mb file), by email to btap@minneapolismn.gov with the subject line "BTAP NOFA".

Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is neither CPED's responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any application. It is the applicant's responsibility to assure that an application is received in a timely manner. Please make sure your application is complete. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

e. Review and Selection Process

A committee of City staff will review applications and make a recommendation to City Council for funding. The City reserves the right to reject any or all applications or parts of applications, negotiate modifications to an entire application or specific components of the scope of work within an application to create a project of lesser or greater magnitude than described in this NOFA or the submitted application.

f. Evaluation Criteria

In reviewing B-TAP applications, the review team will consider the following criteria. Funding for existing service providers will be based in part on current and past performance. This includes reimbursement rates and left-over funds on previous contracts, as well as contract balances on current B-TAP contracts. If the evaluation team considers a new service provider for funding, an interview may be scheduled before making a final recommendation on that service provider. The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions.

- 1) **Applicant's mission, background, and performance:** Do the mission, vision, and services of the applicant align with City goals? Does the applicant and/or consultants have a track record serving businesses and the ability to keep appropriate documentation? Does the applicant have an established technical assistance, training, and coaching program?
- 2) **Applicant's services, expertise, and systems:** What are the applicant's primary services and areas of expertise? What is the organizational capacity to provide business consulting services? What are the qualifications of the business consultants (or how will the capacity be expanded)? How does your organization track outcomes?
- 3) **Priority Populations:** What is the experience of this applicant working with disadvantaged and distressed communities, in areas of concentrated poverty, or in the City's Cultural Districts? What industries, business stages, and/or entrepreneur characteristics does your organization primarily serve? Does the applicant demonstrate effective methods of outreach to engage potential clients? Are the promotional materials, website, and other marketing tools accessible and appealing to the target population?
- 4) **Contract management and availability of services:** Did the applicant provide at least two references that can speak to the quality of services received by the applicant in 2024? If the applicant is a current or previous provider, do they have a history of utilizing contracted funds? Does the applicant have availability of services through other public programs, e.g. Elevate Hennepin? Does the applicant send accurate invoices and respond to referrals in a timely manner?

g. Selection & Contracting

Final funding recommendations will be made by the evaluation committee to City leadership. Selected applicants will be required to enter into grant agreements with the City. The grant agreements will be for one year in duration. The terms of the agreements will be finalized by the City and the selected applicants following selection. The agreements will be reimbursable, performance-based grant agreements. Selected applicants with grant agreements will submit quarterly invoices for payment for the delivery of outcomes in accordance with the terms of their agreements.

h. No Applicant Recourse

The City shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by any applicant in connection with this NOFA. Applicants shall bear all costs associated with application preparation and submission, and any other activity associated with this NOFA. This NOFA does not commit the City to award a contract. Submission of an application shall neither obligate nor entitle any applicant to enter into a contract with the City.

EXHIBIT A

Application form – BTAP 2025 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

SECTION A – COVER PAGE			
Business/ Organization name	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Website	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Primary Contact or Program Manager	Click or tap here to enter text.	Title	Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone Number:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Email:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Street Address	Click or tap here to enter text.		
City/State:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Zip Code:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Amount you are applying for:	\$Click or tap here to enter text.		

**Please check here if your organization provides technical assistance to forming an/or existing cooperatives.*

**Please check here if you are a licensed legal provider.*

The contact person (entered below), on behalf of the above organization, hereby authorize the submittal of this application form in response to the B-TAP NOFA.

Contact Person: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Section B- Organization’s Mission, Background and Performance (25 points)

1. What is the organization’s mission and vision?

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. How long has the organization been providing technical assistance? Please include consultant history if it is a new organization.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Approximately how many entrepreneurs and/or existing businesses/cooperatives received technical assistance from your organization in 2024?

<i>Total number of businesses/cooperatives served</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<i>Number of Minneapolis businesses/cooperatives served</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.
---	----------------------------------	---	----------------------------------

4. Optional: additional information about businesses served in 2024. (E.g., scope of work, hours per business, accomplishments to note, etc.)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section C - Organization’s services, expertise, and systems (25 points)

6. What is the organization’s primary technical assistance model (E.g., 1-on-1 consulting, group training or workshops, other)

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. What are the organization's main technical assistance areas of expertise? Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeping and Accounting Procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> License Applications
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Buildouts or Improvements	<input type="checkbox"/> Loan Packages
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Registrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing and/or Branding
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Acquisitions or Lease Agreements
<input type="checkbox"/> DBE or Other Business Certifications	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax Preparations
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Projections and Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Website Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Business or Strategic Plans

8. Please include a description of any other specialty services your organization offers.

Click or tap here to enter text.

9. Who are the business consultants and trainers who will provide the services? Provide a brief description of expertise and qualifications or attach bios. Please differentiate between organization staff and third-party consultants.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section D - Priority Populations (25 points)

1. What geographic area(s) do you serve within the City of Minneapolis? Does your service area include any cultural districts? Please describe.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Do you provide services in languages other than English? If so, please specify the languages available and methods (e.g. bi-lingual staff, use of translators/interpreters)

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe the industries, business stages (e.g., idea phase, startup, micro-enterprise, growth), and/or entrepreneur characteristics that you primarily serve.

Click or tap here to enter text.

4. How do you promote your services to potential clients?

Click or tap here to enter text.

5. What is your organization's capacity to respond to referrals from The City of Minneapolis? How would you prefer to receive said referrals?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section E – Other Information

Professional References: Please provide two businesses/entrepreneurs that have received technical assistance from your organization in 2024. These references may be contacted by our team.

Contact person	Click or tap here to enter text.	Business	Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone Number:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Email:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Description of Technical Assistance Provided	Click or tap here to enter text.		

Contact person	Click or tap here to enter text.	Business	Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone Number:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Email:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Description of Technical Assistance Provided	Click or tap here to enter text.		

1. Outside of BTAP, does your organization have any other contracts with the City of Minneapolis? If so, please describe.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Does your organization receive funding or have contracts with other government entities, besides the City of Minneapolis, to provide technical assistance to businesses in Minneapolis (i.e. Hennepin County, State of Minnesota, SBA, etc.)? If so, please describe.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Is there any other information you would like to provide relevant to this application?

Click or tap here to enter text.

