

Tustin Cares Program

Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program

Program Description & Guidelines



Program Overview

About the Program

As part of the Tustin Cares program, the City of Tustin is offering a four-week Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program in partnership with the Orange County-Inland Empire Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The Main Street Digital Training and Grant Program will provide training and funding to retail businesses, home-based businesses and nonprofits (collectively, “Business or Businesses”) seeking to increase their social media presence and/or revenue due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. All eligible Businesses are invited to apply. Businesses which have previously received alternative sources of funding such as the City of Tustin Small Business Emergency Grant, the City of Tustin Non-Profit Recovery Grant, the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) or Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan are eligible to apply. The program is based on the availability of funds, program guidelines and submission of all required information and supporting documentation. Businesses with a minimum of 2 employees – which may also include owner, and a maximum of twenty-five (25) employees (full or full-time equivalent combination) may be eligible to receive a digital marketing grant of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). The grant must be used for a paid digital/online advertising campaign, developed during the training program and in conjunction with a SBDC consultant.

Funding Availability

In May 2021 the U.S. Department of Treasury allocated funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to the City of Tustin for COVID-19 response, relief and reinvestment. The City is allocating up to forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) from ARPA and the City General Fund for the Tustin Cares Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program. These funds are to be used to mitigate a Business’ financial hardship caused by declines in revenues due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The City’s Economic Development Department will be responsible for oversight of the Tustin Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program and disbursement of funds will take place through the City’s Finance Department. SBDC, the City’s Program Partner, will be responsible for program administration, application processing, underwriting, training and for the review and approval of financial and business documentation for disbursement approval. City staff is obligated to fulfill the terms and conditions of the funds as established by the City Council, these program guidelines, and Federal, State, and local rules and regulations.

Program Description

The SBDC created a virtual training program aimed at assisting Businesses with “Creating a Digital Presence” for their business. Each Business will learn how to set-up an online profile through Google, will reach out to customers for a Google review and will learn how to create and send Facebook or Instagram posts. The program will highlight how to use paid and non-paid advertising to generate leads that turn into sales and/or increased community awareness. The program will culminate with Businesses receiving a small grant to put towards digital/online advertising that will generate customer traffic and/or community awareness. The program will consist of building a digital presence over four (4) weeks. All sessions will take place in a group format and will be

coupled with individual one-on-one consulting with SBDC consultants. The program will be conducted in English only.

The training program will cover the following topics:

All about Google

- Understanding how customers find you in a digital world
- Why Google?
- Creating your own Google profile

Reaching my Audience through Facebook (FB) and Instagram (IG)

- How to use social media, specifically Facebook and Instagram
- Capturing pictures and video
- Creating a successful: call to action

My First Facebook/Instagram (FB/IG) Post

- How to post a video or picture to Facebook or Instagram
- Each Business will post their video/picture
- How to attract a fan base to social media
- Creating a successful social media campaign that increases sales

Advertising on Social Media

- Different types of advertising campaigns on Facebook and Instagram
- What is the cost to run an ad campaign? How much should you spend?
- What should you be measuring?
- What goes in a FB/IG ad campaign
- Are Twitter and Tik Tok a good option for your Business?

Setting up the FB/IG Campaign

- Let's put together and launch your FB/IG Campaign
- What are you offering (Call to action and image/video)?
- Who are you targeting?
- Which Keywords are you using?
- What is your goal?
- How much are you spending?

Wrap-up: Utilizing Grant for Paid Digital/Online Advertising – Measuring and Tracking

Each Business will be assigned a SBDC business consultant to assist them with their paid advertising platform. The SBDC consultant will provide one-on-one assistance, customized to each Business' needs. The SBDC will continue to work with each client through the program and beyond. Every quarter, the SBDC will track and measure the success of each Business as they deploy their marketing campaigns. The SBDC will track change in sales, jobs created and/or increase in customer traffic.

City Reserved Rights

The City reserves the unqualified right, in its sole and absolute discretion at any time: (1) to amend or terminate this program with no recourse for any proposing applicant; (2) to choose or reject any or all applications received in response to this program; (3) to modify the application deadlines; (4) to request additional information of the applicants as deemed necessary and appropriate by the City; (5) to conduct further due diligence with applicants or any third party; (6) to modify the City's objectives or the scope of the program; (7) to modify program requirements, general terms and conditions, or eligible activities; and/or (8) to disqualify any proposing applicant on the basis of any real or perceived conflict of interest that is disclosed or revealed by materials submitted or by any data available to the City.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the Tustin Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program, a Business must meet certain criteria that has been established by the City of Tustin and retail businesses and home-based businesses must meet the guidelines set forth by the U.S. Department of Treasury for utilizing ARPA funds. Retail businesses and home-based businesses must also demonstrate the need for financial support resulting from the temporary loss of revenue due to the impact of COVID-19.

*General Terms and Conditions**

The Business applicant must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for grant funding:

- The Business must either be a retail business, home-based business or nonprofit physically located in Tustin;
- Cannabis-related businesses, gambling facilities, adult entertainment businesses, massage parlors, and largely cash-based businesses are not eligible;
- Residential or real estate projects including short-term rental operators are also not eligible;
- Retail and home-based businesses must have had an active Tustin business license since the first quarter (January – March) of 2019.
- Nonprofits must have had an active Tustin business license since the first quarter (January – March) of 2021;
- As of March 31, 2023, the Business must have at least a minimum of 2 employees –which may also include owner - and no more than twenty-five (25) full-time equivalent employees (two part-time employees equal one full-time employee);
- The Business must be in good standing with the City (current on bills, no liens or judgements, etc.), unless directly correlated to COVID-19 impacts;
- The Business must submit the application and all required supporting documentation;
- Retail and home-based businesses must certify they have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19; and
- Specific to retail and home-based businesses, the amount requested (\$1,000) cannot exceed the amount of lost revenue.

* City employees and elected and appointed officials are not eligible to participate in this program.

Eligible Activities

The funds must be used to develop a paid digital/online advertising campaign for the purpose of increasing their social media presence and/or increasing revenue to offset lost revenue due to COVID-19 impacts (“Eligible Expenses”). Each applicant will need to sign and verify that the use of funds will be spent on a paid advertising campaign, such as expressed above. Any use of funding other than for paid advertising is strictly prohibited. If there is a remaining balance after August 31, 2023, the Business will be required to return the funds to the City by September 30, 2023.

In addition, the applicant cannot use these funds for paid advertising costs that have been or will be reimbursed or recovered through other funding programs.

Equal Opportunity Policy

The City of Tustin and the SBDC shall not discriminate upon the basis of sex, age, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, marital status, ancestry or physical handicap in accepting applications and processing program application.

Application Process

Application

The Tustin Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program application includes information about the Business, the number of employees, location of the business, amount of time in business, and type of business: retail, home-based or nonprofit. The application and Grant Agreement will require the following Attestations:

- The Business is a retail business, home-based business, or nonprofit.
- The retail business or home-based business experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- The retail business or home-based business must have held an active Tustin business license since the first quarter of 2019 (January – March).
- The nonprofit must have held an active Tustin business license since the first quarter of 2021 (January – March).
- The Business is in good standing with the City (current on bills, no liens or judgments, etc.), unless directly correlated to COVID-19 impacts.
- The retail business or home-based business has not been suspended or debarred or otherwise excluded from receiving federal funding.
- The nonprofit is in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service and State of California.
- The Business understands the grant is distributed as part of a four-week digital marketing training program.
- As of March 31, 2023, the business has a minimum of 2 employees – which may also include owner – and does not exceed a maximum of twenty-five (25) full or full-time equivalent employees (two part-time employees equal one full-time employee).
- Certification that funds will be spent by August 31, 2023.

- Certification that the retail business or home-based business is able to produce financial records to show the economic losses, if requested.
- Certification that financial loss, if applicable, and grant amount spending records will be available for audit when requested. The Business must maintain records for at least 6 years.

Application Period

The program application will be available at **9:00 am on Monday, May 1, 2023**. Applicants must apply for the training program by visiting www.tustinca.org/businessgrant and submitting the application online.

Applications must be submitted online and will only be accepted from **9:00 am, Monday, May 1, 2023 to 11:59 pm, Sunday, May 14, 2023**. The applications period will close promptly at 11:59 pm on May 14, 2023. Applications received online after this due date and time will be considered late and will not be accepted.

The City will disburse forty (40) \$1,000 grants, a total of \$40,000, to forty (40) Businesses. The City anticipates the number of applications will exceed the amount of funding available for disbursement. As a result, the City will implement a lottery system for all eligible Businesses.

Documentation Requirements

Upon pre-approval and selection for the program, Businesses will be required to submit the following documents by **June 5, 2023**, for review and verification in order to receive the grant:

- The most recent monthly bank statement; and
- Current City of Tustin Business License.
- Nonprofits –Nonprofit Employer Identification Number (EIN)

In addition, SBDC will provide the selected Businesses with the following documents to complete and submit by June 5, 2023:

- W-9;
- Direct Deposit Form (includes voided check which matches account and routing numbers listed on Direct Deposit Form. Grant funds are directly deposited into your account); and
- A signed Tustin Small Business Grant Agreement, which includes business impact statement and self-certification. Retail businesses and home-based businesses will execute a Grant Agreement different from the Grant Agreement nonprofits execute. The retail businesses and home-based businesses will need to certify they have experienced financial hardship due to COVID-19 in their Grant Agreement and they have not been suspended or debarred from receiving federal funding.

Although selection is not guaranteed, Businesses should begin to collect the required documentation in order to expedite the approval process in the event they are selected.

Grant Review and Approval Process

Review

The application will be reviewed by the SBDC to determine application completeness and preliminary eligibility. **The application must be complete by the application submittal deadline date of May 14, 2023, 11:59 pm.**

Lottery

The City of Tustin is expecting the Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program to have an overwhelming number of applications. If the number of applications far exceeds the amount of funding that is available for disbursement, the City will implement a lottery system for all eligible Businesses. Once applications and eligibility have been approved, they will be assigned a number and entered into a lottery. Potential program participants will be contacted by email, phone and/or letter **starting May 22, 2023.**

Verification and Eligibility Determination

Upon pre-approval and selection, the SBDC shall request the applicant submit all required documentation for review and verification for grant approval. SBDC will assign a consultant to work with each individual grantee to assist with completing all required documentation. Grantees documentation will be submitted directly to SBDC on a secured site. If the grant request meets the criteria for program funding, all required documentation **must be submitted by June 5, 2023, by 10:00 pm to remain eligible.**

Grant Disbursement

After each Business recipient submits a complete set of required documentation and attends the first two to three weeks of the training program, the documents will be reviewed and verified, and funds will be disbursed to the individual Business. The City will award grant funds in a single disbursement. **All grant funds shall be expended on a digital/online paid advertising campaign by no later than August 31, 2023.** Any portion of the grant funds not expended on Eligible Expenses shall be returned to the City by no later than September 30, 2023.

Grant Report

Eligible Expenses are considered necessary expenditures that provide economic support in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency. In the event a Business does not expend the entire grant amount, the Business will be required to return the remaining balance by September 30, 2023.

The Business recipient shall keep documentation evidencing use of the Grant Funds. The City may request to evaluate the Business' compliance with the Grant program. If it is determined the Business did not expend the funds consistent with Eligible Expenses, it may constitute an Event of Default under the Grant Agreement.

Post Grant Follow Up

The SBDC will continue to work one-on-one with each grantee, throughout the next twelve (12) months. If contacted by the City or SBDC, all awardees will be required to update the City on their Business and if additional employees have been hired or employees retained. A twelve-month report will be created by the SBDC and the City of Tustin, to document the success of the program. By acceptance of the grant, the Business agrees to comply with City information requests that may include use of photos or business logos.

Program Complaint and Appeal Process

Complaints concerning the Tustin Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program should be made to the City of Tustin Economic Development Department. If unresolved in this manner, the complaint or appeal shall be made in writing and filed with the City Manager's Office.

Contact Information

For additional information regarding the Main Street Digital Training & Grant Program, please contact the following:

City of Tustin
Economic Development Department
300 Centennial Way
Tustin, CA 92780
(714) 573-3117
TustinEconDevDept@tustinca.org

For questions about the guidelines and application or assistance in completing the application and to set up a one-on-one consultation (at no cost), please contact the SBDC at:

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