

# Update on Regional Grant Opportunities

October 6, 2021

## Q&A Transcript



**One Eastside  
SPARK**

*Center for Business  
Resilience and Innovation*

### **BELLEVUE COMMERCIAL RENT RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM:**

Bellevue based businesses with commercial lease arrears (back rent), 2-25 employees and under \$5 million in revenue, are highly encouraged to apply for Bellevue's Commercial Rent Relief Grant Program. The application deadline is this Sunday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm. You may apply online at [www.bellevuewa.gov/bizresources](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bizresources). If you need assistance, call at 425-452-5241 or email [bizsupport@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:bizsupport@bellevuewa.gov).

#### **I'm a small business that provides arts enrichment instruction for K-12 students. Am I eligible for the Bellevue grant?**

If you have 2-25 employees and annual revenue under \$5M, and you have back rent, you are eligible! I would encourage you to apply at [www.bellevuewa.gov/bizresources](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bizresources).

#### **Is our music store considered a target sector for the Bellevue grant opportunity?**

Yes, it is! That would be in the creative economy category, so you are one of the targeted sectors that is going to be prioritized for grant funding.

#### **Do you think this opportunity will be expanded to include different target sectors?**

Right now, all businesses are eligible, so if you are eligible, under the rest of the guidelines, except for the target sectors, we encourage you to apply. The targeted sectors are simply going to provide additional weight to an application once it's submitted. Since the program is going through a lottery system, if you aren't in one of these sectors, if you're say a restaurant or a retailer that that doesn't meet the other target sectors, we still encourage you to apply. There is definitely the potential that you could receive funding through this program. Again, it just depends on how many applications we receive that fall into those categories.

### **KIRKLAND COMMERCIAL RENT RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM**

Please go to [www.kirklandwa.gov/business-help](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/business-help) and fill out the intake form prior to October 19<sup>th</sup> at midnight. The grant opportunity is for \$1,000 to \$10,000 and is open to small businesses and nonprofits in the city of Kirkland, who have between 1-25 full time equivalent employees, less than \$3 million in revenues from 2019 and documented rent arrears over the past 18 months -- March 1, 2020 through the end of September 2021. We encourage you to coordinate with your landlord when applying. We are happy to answer any questions via email at [businesssupport@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:businesssupport@kirklandwa.gov) or call 425-587-3266.

#### **I have previously received funding for utilities like past due utilities. Can I still apply for this program?**

I would say yes. To the extent that utilities have been abated already, then I think staff would disaggregate that relief amount you had already received, if in fact, there was a crossover. But it wouldn't disqualify you from relief for back rent if that was something that you haven't had covered before.

#### **Are nonprofits eligible for this grant?**

Yes, they are

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### **BELLEVUE & KIRKLAND PROGRAMS:**

**Can the Bellevue & Kirkland Commercial Rent Relief Programs be used for deferred rent added to the end of the lease?**

Yes

**Are home-based businesses located in Bellevue and Kirkland eligible, like childcare providers?**

**Bellevue:** We encourage you to apply. Not all home-based businesses will be eligible, because it is a little bit different in terms of how rent is calculated, but I childcare providers that are located in home based businesses to apply.

**Kirkland:** I echo that. The program broadly is not intended for home-based businesses, but a childcare provider, I absolutely encourage you to apply. Kirkland also has a Residential Rent Relief Program. Between the two, I think we could figure out how it might work. But yes, absolutely apply.

**How can I make my application as competitive as possible, other than ensuring that I fulfill the basic eligibility requirements?**

**Kirkland:** We will be running a lottery system. The lottery will sequence intake forms in order so that we can begin to distribute funding on a rolling basis. We don't know how much money each applicant will apply for. We don't know exactly how many grants we can fund, I would say the most competitive thing you could do would be to get your documentation in order very early, so that when your number comes up, you're ready to go and be sure to communicate with your landlord. That way, your application can be verified and processed really quickly.

The closing date for the Kirkland Commercial Rent Relief Program is October 19, one minute before midnight. Immediately thereafter, our community-based partner will begin working with applicants to compile complete applications and get them to the City on a rolling basis. As soon as those applications are complete, verified, and submitted, checks will be cut on a weekly basis. It's largely a function of how complete and quickly applicants get their documentation together and submitted.

**Bellevue:** I would echo that. The biggest thing is going to be to make sure that all of your documents are in order. That way we don't have to go back and forth for additional information. That is the number one thing to make sure that your documents are strong and complete, when they come in and meet all of the requirements. We do have a section where you can explain what the impact of COVID-19 has been on your business, and I definitely encourage you to fill that out as completely as possible. But the biggest thing is going to be uploading those documents.

### **COMCAST RISE INVESTMENT FUND GRANT PROGRAM**

Visit [www.Comcastrise.com](http://www.Comcastrise.com) for more information and to apply. You have until October 14th, to submit your application. The program is focused on minority owned businesses that fit the criteria. You'll find more about that at [www.comcastrise.com](http://www.comcastrise.com). A total of a hundred \$10,000 grants will be awarded to

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companies in King and Pierce County. Awards will be announced on November 27th. Don't forget, we also have marketing and tech makeovers opportunities are available to businesses and the deadline to apply for those programs is October 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **How long does the application take to complete?**

Our application is fairly straightforward. I'm hearing that it takes approximately 30 minutes to complete the application. We tried to streamline it to make it easy for businesses to complete.

### **Are any cities outside of Seattle but still in the Seattle MSA eligible for the Comcast RISE Investment Fund, for example, Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Everett, Tacoma?**

Our program is available to businesses throughout King and Pierce County, so businesses in all those cities are eligible.

### **Can a business without employees, just cofounders apply? Do owners that are bootstrapping the business qualify?**

That's a great question. I'd say go through the process. I don't know the answer. It's probably a little more granular than I'm familiar with. I'll give you a great example. My brother-in-law, applied for one of the marketing makeovers. He's the founder. He's the only employee of a company called Public Art Apparel, so he's the founder owner. He actually received a marketing makeover through Comcast RISE. I hope that answers your question and hopefully you're eligible. But what I'd say is go through the application process. As you enter your information it will tell you if you are eligible or update you if, for some reason, you're not.

### **Any tips on what constitutes a competitive grant application?**

Another great question. Comcast, as a business is not the entity that is judging the entries, we are going through a third party just to eliminate any bias that may or may not exist within our company. If you can demonstrate how COVID has impacted you negatively, and how this grant may be helpful in terms of helping you get back on your feet that would be ideal. We understand that businesses are in varying states and are really needing that boost, I would, I would highlight that. We're awarding businesses \$10,000 grants.

Given the volume of grants we're giving away and the applications we think we'll see, you do want to differentiate yourself, be compelling with your story, be descriptive of what you've been through, and how the funds might benefit you. The more detail you can give the people that are reviewing all of these applications will certainly be better. If your company can really benefit from these funds, I encourage you to spend the extra time, maybe have a friend or family member, review it. Get an extra pair of eyes and see if there's other language or other ways of helping to tell your story that would make your application stand out.

### **Where do we get the application?**

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The application process is completely online at [www.comcastrise.com](http://www.comcastrise.com). Remember we're giving away \$10,000. I was talking to a friend of mine, Lewis Rudd, who is one of the founders of Ezell's Famous Chicken, and he was telling me about friends of his that own businesses. Sometimes it's the difference between being able to buy, perishable product, you know, food and whatnot just to get started again, it might mean getting a repair done on a food truck. We're not trying to tell you how to spend the funds, we just want you to spend it in a way that's going to get you up and rolling again, or at least get you to a place of prosperity again.

**Can the owner of the business, someone who wears all the hats apply? What about photography artists, voiceover artists? I started my business in January 2019 -- barely got started and was smacked by COVID.**

Yes absolutely. Again, I'm going to go to the example of my brother-in-law and his story. He is exactly that person. He literally will unpack boxes, he works with designers, and he did qualify. I didn't hear anything, at least in your question that would make you ineligible for this grant opportunity

**What can the funds be used for? Are there any requirements regarding the use of funds for the grant?**

No. We're going to send these grant funds to you and my understanding is that there is no audit process in terms of us saying, you've got to spend it on hardware, computer hardware, or you got to spend it on food. My understanding is the individual businesses have the latitude to spend it in the wisest way possible to propel the success of their business.

**Do I need to be a Comcast customer to qualify for your marketing and technology services?**

Great question. For the Investment Fund Grant Program you do not need to be a customer. I believe that for tech make over, yes. And I believe also for marketing make over, yes you need to be within our footprint.

**Is Comcast prioritizing any specific sectors, like we're hearing from the other two city grant programs?**

That's a great question. I don't have an answer to that. And I'm going to even bring up a question that came up that I also don't know the answer to, but it may come up amongst this group. I don't know if we're trying to focus on service sector versus technology versus retail. I don't have that answer for you. Another question that came up on another panel was -- will funds be distributed based on demographic makeup or racial makeup of Pierce and King County? I also don't know that answer.

**How soon will we find out if our business is awarded a grant? And how are the funds dispersed?**

Winners will be announced November 27 and I don't have that answer in terms of what does that mean. Will it be via electronic transfer or whatnot. I will, however find out get back to the team here so they can share that information with you.