

## WDVA ENTREPRENEURSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (FY-24)

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**Our organization is not considered a registered 501(C)(3) or a 501(c)(6). Are we eligible to apply?**

No, the Entrepreneurship Grant funds are for nonprofit organizations that are registered as a 501(C)(3) or 501(c)(6).

**Our organization is not registered with the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI/WDFI) but we are in good standing. Are we eligible to apply?**

The organization must be registered and in good standing with the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI/WDFI) by the application deadline by 4:00 pm by the date and time within the Public Notice Announcement.

**Our organization is not based in Wisconsin, but we operate in Wisconsin. Are we eligible to apply?**

If your application clearly demonstrates that your organization is a registered 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6), is registered and in good standing with WDFI, and all grant funds are to benefit the veterans of the state of Wisconsin, you may apply for the grant.

**How are the applications graded for consideration?**

All applications are rated based on a 100-point system. The criteria and point system are located on the scoring criteria document posted on the department's website.

**Who makes the final determination for the grant, the reviewers, or the department?**

The Evaluation Committee, appointed by the Department, evaluates the applications on a 100-point scale system.

**Are there any similar grants that you offer for nonprofit organizations?**

WDVA offers a Nonprofit Grant Program available to registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that provide assistance to veterans and/or their families.

The Veteran Employment Grant is an incentive program to support businesses hiring honorably discharged veterans with a 50 percent or more service-connected disability. To learn more, please go to the WDVA website and select the Benefits/Employment/Employer Resources tabs.

<https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/educationEmployment/EmploymentEmployers.aspx>

**What is the amount that we can request for the grant?**

Please refer to the Public Notice Announcement for the maximum amount that can be received and applied for.

**Does our organization have a better chance of being approved based on the amount requested?**

The amount requested should be in relation to the planned program and not more than the amount posted in the public notice announcement. The Evaluation Committee evaluates applicants based on multiple factors as described in the application.

**The name of our organization has changed since we requested our nonprofit status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Will we need to provide any additional documentation to reflect this?**

Yes, per the application, a letter from the IRS is required as verification of your organization's tax status. The name on the IRS letter must match the name of the applicant on the application. It is not permitted to have another organization with proper status serve as a surrogate applicant or sponsor. You will need to provide the necessary documentation that the IRS determines your specific organization's (name on the application) status as a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6).

**If our organization is awarded the grant, will the funds go directly to us or our head organization?**

The funds will be dispersed to the "applicant" listed on the application. A separate bank account for the funds will be required as stated in the Terms and Conditions of the application.

**Can a veteran from out of state attend a training class given by an Entrepreneurship Grant recipient in Wisconsin?**

The awardee is responsible for determining eligibility of veterans for the program(s). For a grant participant to receive services from the grantee that are funded by this grant, a grantee may submit a certification request to the Department to verify eligibility of each grant participant. The individual receiving services must meet requirements of Wisconsin Statute § 45.01(12), to be deemed a veteran under Wisconsin law, and, consistent with Wisconsin Statute §45.02(2), be a resident of Wisconsin and live in the State. Violation of this use may result in an obligation to return the full grant award.

**Can a grant recipient use the funds for a different purpose or add another item after the grant has been received?**

The grant funds must be used for the intended purpose as outlined in the original grant proposal, subsequently approved by WDVA. Violation of this use may result in an obligation to return the full grant awarded.

**Can the grant be used for employee salaries?**

Grant funds are not to be used to supplant existing employee salaries. Not more than 50 percent of grant funds may be used for employee wages, compensation, travel, and related expenses assignable to the approved purpose of the grant for staff hired exclusively to implement and administer the program(s). Violation of this use may result in an obligation to return the full grant awarded.

**Are the grant funds equally disbursed by the number of applications received?**

The total amount available to be awarded to all eligible nonprofits is a total of \$300,000. WDVA retains full discretion on the amount of any award determined, including caps on awards to provide a wider distribution within the state.

**Can the grant be used for start-up costs?**

Yes, a nonprofit grant request/proposal could include (for the veteran) actual start-up costs, entrepreneurship training, technical assistance, etc. The costs need to be clearly stated in the budget.

**What is the preferred method to submit the application?**

All applications are received via electronic portal. The link to the electronic portal will be located on the WDVA's website at <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Grants.aspx>. WDVA will not be accepting any paper applications going forward.

**If I send the application via postal mail, does it need to be received by you/on the deadline?**

All applications are received via electronic portal. The link to the electronic portal will be located on the WDVA's website at <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Grants.aspx>. WDVA will not be accepting any paper or emailed applications going forward. Applications must be received by 4:00 pm by the date and time within the Public Notice Announcement.

**If I forget to include anything with the application, will you let me know?**

No. Grant reviewers will not be responsible for following up with grant applicants if information is missing or uploaded incorrectly.

**How will I know if you received my application?**

Once an application is submitted, the applicant will receive an email informing the applicant the application has been submitted.

**What is a Letter of Support?**

A Letter of Support is a letter from an organization that the non-profit agency recently worked with.

**Can a Letter of Support be in the form of an e-mail, thank you letter/card or newspaper clipping?**

Yes, but scores for this portion may be reduced. The letter must be uploaded in PDF format via the electronic submission portal.

**Who should the letter of support and/or the cover letter be addressed to?**

The letter of support and/or the cover letter should be addressed to the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

**How old can the letters of support be dated?**

The letters of support should be current within one year of the application announcement.

**May I use a letter of support that is dated over a year old?**

Yes, but scores for this portion may be reduced.

**May my application be submitted in Word format?**

No. The application and all application materials must be in PDF format and uploaded in PDF format via the electronic submission portal.

**What will happen if I do not submit a letter of support?**

The database will not allow you to submit your application until you have uploaded the letters of support. If you upload anything other than a letter of support, you will receive a lower score for that portion of the application. If you are just starting your business, then upload a statement that indicates you do not have letters of support.

**I am going to submit my application via e-mail. Where should I send it?**

All applications are received via electronic portal. The link to the electronic portal will be located on the WDVA's website at <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Grants.aspx>. WDVA will not be accepting any paper or emailed applications going forward. Applications must be received by 4:00 pm by the date and time within the Public Notice Announcement.

**I want to send spreadsheets as part of my application, is this acceptable?**

All documents need to be in PDF format and submitted through the electronic submission portal.

**Our organization does not submit applications electronically. Will WDVA submit our application on our behalf?**

No. All applications are received via electronic portal. The link to the electronic portal will be located on the WDVA's website at <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Grants.aspx>. WDVA will not be accepting any paper or emailed applications going forward. Applications must be received by 4:00 pm by the date and time within the Public Notice Announcement.

**Is there a page limit or any formatting restrictions on what is being submitted?**

All documents need to be in PDF format. Please refer to the online submission portal for page limit restrictions while completing the application.

**We are going to submit our application via mail, can we use binders or other things for presentation?**

No. All applications are received via electronic portal. The link to the electronic portal will be located on the WDVA's website at <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Grants.aspx>. WDVA will not be accepting any paper or emailed applications going forward. Applications must be received by 4:00 pm by the date and time within the Public Notice Announcement.

**How is my application presented to the Evaluation Committee for grading?**

The Evaluation Committee will review your application through the same electronic submission portal applicants used to submit their applications.

**What is considered 'Financial Statements'?**

Income statement, balance sheet, and statement of cash flows for the most recent fiscal year.

**I was awarded the Grant in the past; do I need to submit the name change documentation with the IRS Determination Letter?**

Yes, **anything** submitted in the past was for that year's application and will not be used for the current year's application.

**What is your definition for "underserved populations" and "underserved geographic areas"?**

"Underserved populations" means minority groups, women, low-income, or veterans with disabilities.

"Underserved geographic areas of the state" means rural communities.

**Can the funds be used for operational or administrative costs? Such as rent, accounting fees, insurance?**

The funds can be used for operation expenditures if it shows how it is supporting veterans and is reflected on the Detailed Budget. Plus, the nonprofit organization must be financially viable independent of the grant funds. The rent, accounting fees, and insurance should only be charged to the grant if these expenses are reasonable, necessary, and properly assignable to the purposes of the approved grant.

**Our organization has multiple locations in Wisconsin. At least two locations are planning to apply for the grant. Will there be any issues because they share the same tax ID #?**

No, as long as the different locations are appropriately indicated in the application, and they keep any awarded funds separate from one another.

**Can applicants submit application material using hyperlinks or zip files?**

No. All application material must be submitted via PDF format through the electronic submission portal. The application material is divided into different sections through the electronic submission portal.

**Can I add to my application after it has been submitted?**

No. Applicants **do** have the option to edit their application **prior** to submittal through the electronic submission portal within the application period announced in the Public Notice Announcement.

**Our organization received funds from this grant last year but has not exhausted all the funds yet. Are we eligible to apply for this year's grant?**

Yes, please remember not to co-mingle the funds from last Fiscal Year with the current Fiscal Year.

**How will WDVA notify grant applicants of their results?**

We will notify the applicants by either mail and/or e-mail.

**How do I create an account to submit an application?**

Per the instructions in the Public Notice Announcement, applicants must visit <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Grants.aspx> and click on the link that is provided to the electronic submission portal.

**If applicants need additional help navigating the database or have questions about the database, who should they contact?**

Per the Public Notice Announcement, you can submit your question(s) via email to [VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov](mailto:VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov).

**What statute(s) and or administrative codes are associated with this grant?**

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/45.437>

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/administrativecode/VA2.08>