General

1. **Are current CCG Operating Grantees eligible to apply?**

   Yes. Current Operating grant recipients are eligible to apply and do not need to have expended all funds to submit an application for the next round.

2. **If this is Round 2, does this mean that Round 1 will be released in the spring or in FY21?**

   This is the second Round of CCG Capital and Operating grants in the history of the program. They are being offered at one time through the same application portal with the same deadline.

3. **Is a 990-N acceptable in lieu of the 990 (for a small organization whose contributions are less than $50,000)?**

   Yes.

4. **Is it possible to submit a draft of a 990 (if the 990 has not yet been filed) as part of this application?**

   DHCD cannot accept drafts of IRS documents – only submitted tax returns.

5. **Will an organization be disqualified if it does not have evidence of matching funds at the application due date but instead has a number of grants that have been submitted to funders that have supported this organization in the past?**

   The matching funds forms allow applicants to indicate the status of the funds ("Committed," "Applied," or "Going to Apply/TBD"). For additional information, please refer to pages 5-6 of the Funding Guidelines.

6. **Is there a limit on the number of neighborhoods your program may potentially service? In other words, are you limited to just the areas you list on the application?**

   There is no limit to the number of neighborhoods an applicant's program serves.

7. **Will there be future rounds of funding? The grant rules state funding must be used in a 24-month period. If we need additional funds to complete the project can we submit another proposal?**

   DHCD is unable to respond to questions about potential future rounds of the CCG program at this time.

8. **Will HCD use evaluations of current Catalyst recipients to inform this round of funding?**

   DHCD is unable to answer project-specific questions.

9. **What documents do a collaborative partner (an emerging organization) need to provide in order to meet the threshold criteria outlined in the Community Catalyst Grant?**

   Collaborations and partnerships are defined by more than one organization applying in a joint relationship for a grant. All threshold documents that state "from all parties" in the description are required from all organizations in the partnership.

10. **Since the Operating and Capital Grants are combined can both grants be applied for in the same document or must you decide which fund you are applying for?**

The online application allows applicants to submit one application for two different projects (Operating and Capital) at the same time. Question B.1. in the online application allows applicants to indicate if they are submitting an application for both Operating and Capital and if the two applications are for the same or different projects. If an applicant has a personal preference to submit separate applications for each project, they may.

11. **Will a hard copy be required to be delivered to your office as in years past?**

All applications must be submitted electronically for this round through the online application portal.

12. **Yesterday during the information session it was stated that there are page limits for each of the narratives required with the application; can you please direct me to where I can find those page limits, I don't see them in the application or the guidelines?**

An early version of the online application was missing the page limits in the project narrative sections. This error has been corrected. Please read each question carefully for page limits and other requirements.

13. **What is the closing date of this opportunity?**

The deadline for having submitted a completed application through our online portal is December 18, 2020 at 5 p.m. EST.

14. **If any team member has outstanding unpaid taxes, and they are paying through a payment plan will this disqualify the applicants?**

DHCD reserves the right to undertake a credit history of applicants to determine applicants' eligibility. An award may be revoked based on substantial liens or unpaid taxes.

15. **Is the request for the Annual Budget for the projected project, or is the Annual Budget for previous projects? If for previous projects what information would an emerging developer be required to submit is no previous budget is available?**

The Annual Budget referenced on page 13 of the Funding Guidelines (for the purpose of determining what financial information is required for the applicant and/or fiscal agent) refers to the organization's most recent annual budget.

16. **What information would answer Applicant Capacity?**

Please review the application (in the online portal) for the questions each project narrative should address.

17. **What information would answer Evaluation process?**

Please review the application (in the online portal) for the questions each project narrative should address.

18. **For the Capital Grant what is a Certificate of Compliance?**

All submitted applications (Operating and Capital) require a completed "Certificate of Compliance" (section K of the online application) to verify that an applicant is authorized to submit the application and to indicate an applicant's understanding of programmatic requirements.

<u>**Capital**</u>

19. **If a team member owns a vacant property and on a number of occasions have received a notice of trash that has been dumped on the property will this disqualify the applicant?**

Yes, it can disqualify the applicant. All owned properties listed on the "Owned Property Disclosures" form will be checked by the Code Enforcement department for violations.

20. **What is a Request for Waiver?**

The Request for Waiver form is for applicants to request a waiver from the requirement that Capital Grant funds can only be requested for projects involving more than 3 properties.

21. **Does the CCG program require an open bid for contractors/subcontractors for capital projects? (It is mission-centric for this applicant to partner with a specific worker-owned construction company based in the organization's neighborhood to complete all construction and related work.)**

The CCG program does not require an open bid for Capital projects, but the methodology for selecting contractors and subcontractors should be included in the construction methodology narrative. The MWBOO department may require MBE/WBE goals which should be considered when selecting contractors and sub-contractors.

22. **Is it possible to fund a revolving capital loan pool?**

A revolving loan is an eligible use of Capital grant funds.

23. **For the attachments, it is marked as "required" to attach "Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws." If we're applying through a fiscal agent, I assume we don't need that if we attach the item listed below in your list (i.e., Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws for Fiscal Agent)? There are a few items like that in Part J.**

These items are required from the applicant and fiscal agent (even if an applicant is applying with a fiscal agent). If an applicant organization does not have Articles of Incorporation or By-laws, the applicant must upload an official statement explaining their circumstances and a proposed timeline for getting those documents in place.

24. **If a project is neither rental nor homeownership, what are the guidelines for the allowable developer fees?**

Fee-based developer fees for non-residential projects will be negotiated following an award of funds. Grantees may be asked to defer a portion of the development fee as part of the terms of a Funding Agreement.

25. **Can we rent the houses to the residents in the community once the rehab is done?**

Projects involving residential rentals are an eligible use of funds.

26. **If the property that we are seeking a grant for gets sold before the award is granted after the application is submitted what is the responsibility of my company?**
Site control is required at the time of submission and can be demonstrated by any of the following documents: a title, a contract of sale, or a land disposition agreement approved with the city. If an applicant has a property that falls into a different category, please submit a separate question through DHCD.CCG@baltimorecity.gov to determine eligibility.

27. **If our organization gets awarded the grant but the property is sold what is our responsibility?**

    See the response to question 28. However, if a project changes after a grant is awarded, DHCD will work with the applicant to adjust the budget and project if possible.

28. **Can we substitute another property for those funds that were awarded?**

    DHCD is unable to respond to questions regarding specific projects or applicants.

29. **We are interested in applying for predevelopment funds for a new construction project. Are predevelopment funds for new construction an eligible activity for Capital Grant?**

    Predevelopment funds are an eligible use of CCG Capital funds.

Operating

30. **For matching funds, what type of evidence needs to be provided for "in-kind" matches? Can the applying organization make the "in-kind" match by providing volunteer staff hours or other such unbilled expenses?**

    Volunteer staff hours can be part of an in-kind match. Evidence of in-kind matches in the form of volunteer or staff hours should include a letter of intent from the volunteer or organization. Applicants should also calculate the hourly value of the donated hours. For additional information, please refer to pages 5-6 of the Funding Guidelines.

31. **Can matching funds can come from operating revenue?**

    Yes.

32. **For the Operating Grant can we submit an application before we have a commitment letter for matching funds?**

    Yes. The matching funds forms allow applicants to indicate the status of the funds ("Committed," "Applied," or "Going to Apply/TBD"). For additional information, please refer to pages 5-6 of the Funding Guidelines.

33. **The operating grant award amounts are not ranges but fixed amounts? For example an established applicant can't request $60,000 or $85,000?**

    That is correct. Applicants can only submit one of the fixed amounts noted on page 5 of the Funding Guidelines and in section C.1 of the online application.

34. **For operating grants: Can funds be used to hire PR consultants that can help with the branding/marketing/external communications needed to educate and excite community members about a project?**

    Consultants for branding, marketing, or external communications are an approved use of Operating funds as long as the consultant services fits within the goals of the project.

35. **For operating grants: If organizations will be partnering with us on just a part or stage of our project (but not all of it), should they be listed as partners?**

    Yes. Please consult the Threshold and the Required Documents Checklist in the application to verify that all required documents for partnership or collaborative applications are included with the application.

36. **For operating grants: Many of your questions ask how the effort/plans fit into your organizational strategic plan. Can you detail what you consider a strategic plan? And if an organization doesn't have one that fits your definition, will they be able to secure a grant for a specific organizational program through Catalyst? Does the answer change if the grant will be used for a program that has a plan for <u>its roll-out, implementation, and sustainability</u> (but the organization itself does not have a strategic plan)?**

    A formal strategic plan is not required to be eligible for CCG. However, an applicant organization's vision or business plan should be considered as the "organizational strategic plan" when responding to those questions. The "plan for roll-out, implementation, and sustainability" mentioned above contains many of the same elements of a formal strategic plan.

37. **For operating grants: If we are applying under a fiscal sponsor and thus, have no Board of Directors of our own, should we answer this question for our fiscal agent: "Does your Board of Directors include members of underrepresented groups in leadership positions?"**

    Yes, in this case, please answer applicable questions with the Fiscal Agent in mind. An Emerging organization may not have a Board of Directors but should still submit an organizational chart or staff list for the "List of Board of Directors, titles, and affiliations" document.