



DATE: July 9, 2025
TO: Board of Commissioners
FROM: Lisa Abuaf, Interim Executive Director
SUBJECT: Report Number 25-25
Approving Reimagine Oregon Economic Opportunity Investment Fund Grants

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Adopt Resolution No. 7617

This action by the Prosper Portland Board of Commissioners (Board) will approve \$1,350,000 in Reimagine Oregon Economic Opportunity Investment Fund Grants (Grants) to 25 Portland entities. If approved, Prosper Portland will provide grants to eligible entities within the city of Portland, including for-profit and nonprofit businesses, including social service organizations with a fiscal sponsor, focusing on economic and business development for those disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. The Grants focus on three types of investments: i) Accelerating Business Growth and Entrepreneurship, ii) Building Community Wealth and Economic Empowerment, and iii) Creating Anchor Projects that Enhance Community Engagement and Collaboration.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND OUTCOMES

Awarding these Grants will further the following Advance Portland objectives:

- Objective 2: This program addresses barriers and conditions resulting from disproportionate discrimination in a non-race-based manner. By doing so, today's actions contribute to Advance Portland's goal of promoting equitable wealth creation.
- Objective 3: Foster a vibrant Central City and neighborhood commercial districts with tailored strategies to reimagine and revitalize our commercial centers and corridors as vibrant nodes of employment, small business, entertainment, and cultural amenities.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

On November 8, 2016, Portland voters passed Ballot Measure 26-180, establishing a three percent tax on recreational marijuana sales in the city of Portland. Revenues from this Recreational Cannabis Tax (RCT) are allocated to drug and alcohol treatment, public safety investments, and support for neighborhood small businesses. Since fiscal year (FY) 2018-19, Prosper Portland has received an annual allocation of RCT revenues to support community economic development activities and programs consistent with City of Portland Code 6.07.145, which states that RCT funds can be used to provide "support for neighborhood small businesses, especially women-owned and minority-owned businesses, including but not limited to business incubator programs, management training, and job training opportunities; and providing economic opportunity and education to communities disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition."

Reimagine Oregon began as a statewide movement of Black-led organizations and individuals working to dismantle systematic racism in Oregon. In 2020, the Portland City Council (City Council) committed to supporting Reimagine Oregon by providing approximately \$1,500,000 of RCT revenue on an annual basis. In 2023, City Council redirected administration of annual Reimagine Oregon program funds in addition to \$4,800,000 of one-time funding, from the Office of Civic Life to Prosper Portland for inclusion in the FY 2023-24 Budget.

On February 14, 2024, through Resolution No. 7522, the Prosper Portland Board authorized Reimagine Oregon Economic Opportunity Investment Fund Grant Program Guidelines (Grant Guidelines), establishing eligibility, funding priorities, and award limits. The 2024 grant cycle was a great success; during the mid-point progress check-in, grantees reported over 15 new physical infrastructure projects underway, over 1200 clients served, and over 100 people trained in new, specialized job skills, with expected increased revenue to total over \$4 million. Grantees also appreciated the opportunity to meet other grantees during the awardee celebration and appreciated the cohort level support and access to resources.

Following a successful FY 2024 grant cycle, the Prosper Portland's Reimagine Oregon Economic Opportunity Investment Fund launched its second cycle for potential applicants on February 28, 2025. The application closed on April 4, 2025, with 276 Grant applications submitted, totaling more than \$60 million in requests. Approximately 70 percent of funds requested came from for-profit businesses and 30 percent from non-profit organizations. Prosper Portland staff subsequently convened an evaluation advisory committee (comprised of individuals representing the Reimagine Oregon Steering Committee; community, and small business leaders; Prosper Portland; and Portland City Council offices) to review all eligible Grant applications. On July 2nd, on behalf of the advisory committee, staff submitted a list of recommended Grant awards to the interim Executive Director, who has reviewed and proposed to the Prosper Portland Board the approval of Grant awards to the 25 organizations listed in Exhibit A to Resolution No. 7617.

EQUITY IMPACT

Direct grant investment into equitable economic outcomes will spur improved quality of life across different measures, leading the way and growing new initiatives that will result in holistic, positive, equitable outcomes. These actions will direct resources to support business owners disproportionately disadvantaged by cannabis prohibition, which disadvantage, in the form of higher incarceration rates, arrests, and harsher penalties, has been shown to highly correlate with race and other characteristics.

Grants that fund capital investments will be subject to Prosper Portland's Construction Business Workforce Equity and Green Building policies. This initiative aligns with Prosper Portland's goal of fostering a more inclusive and vibrant economy for all residents. The Grants will provide much-needed financial support and will contribute to building a more equitable and thriving community for all Portland residents.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK

Since approval of the Grant Guidelines, Prosper Portland attended a series of focus group discussions hosted by the Reimagine Oregon Steering Committee that allowed for community input on Grant Guidelines, program design and implementation, and evaluation considerations (see a Community Engagement Insights Report in Attachment A). This report highlights key themes, including the need for investments in initiatives that promote community reconnection, equitable access to capital, youth and community financial education for intergenerational wealth-building, the support of artistic

development, and the revitalization of Portland’s cultural landscape. Community members emphasized the importance of an equitable and accessible grant process that prioritizes assistance for diverse communities.

Feedback from community partners and grantees suggested that the application be split into a for-profit and non-profit application for clarity. The grant evaluation committee was also split into a for-profit and non-profit evaluation committee accordingly. Feedback also suggested higher emphasis on organizational experience and proof of concept for proposals, which was integrated into the scoring rubric (viewable in exhibit B).

The Grant evaluation committee, split into for-profit evaluation and non-profit evaluation committees, reviewed and scored all Grant applications and made recommendations to the Executive Director in alignment with Grant Guidelines.

Since the opening of the Second Grant Cycle, the Reimagine Oregon Steering Committee hosted over 7 virtual office hours and over 20 direct meetings with members from the community and owners of small businesses. Prosper Portland staff engaged with over 300 community members, to answer questions and aid all in learning about the Reimagine Oregon program grant and application process and overall program goals were discussed. Additionally, staff from Prosper Portland along with community leaders from the Reimagine Oregon steering committee held briefings with city council offices to share updates on plans, goals and developments throughout the launch.

The efforts of previous awardees and those recommended for funding in the second cycle can be summarized as responding to the community’s need for Infrastructure and Revitalization, Workforce Development and Skills Training, Entrepreneurship and Business Support, Economic Empowerment and Equity, Health and Wellness as Economic Foundations, Sustainable Economic Practices, Collaborative and Ecosystem Support and more.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

There are adequate funds in the FY 2025-26 Prosper Portland budget for the Grant awards. Staff anticipate there will be approximately \$1,200,000 available annually for future Grant awards. Grant award ranges and sizes will be adjusted within the adopted Grant Guidelines, according to annual funding allocations.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Community Engagement Insights Report
- B. Evaluation Rubric



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INSIGHTS REPORT

First of all
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BACKGROUND

For the People

Reimagine Oregon implemented a community engagement strategy to collect insights that guide policies, grants, and programs aimed at fostering a thriving Black community in Oregon.

The Reimagine Oregon Project is committed to dismantling systemic racism by advocating for the advancement of Black-centered policies at all levels of governance, fostering innovation in social justice, and promoting increased economic opportunities for Black Oregonians. Our efforts are spearheaded and fueled by a Steering Committee composed of Black leaders from across the state who actively engage in their communities to reshape local and state policies, enabling all Oregonians to thrive.

Our leaders—activists, community members, and elected officials who believe in this work—have united to champion transformative change for our Black community. Inspired by the legacy of these change-makers, the Reimagine Oregon team has spent recent months engaging with the community through thoughtfully curated focus groups, gatherings, and informational sessions.

These discussions have been vital in capturing the voices and recommendations of our community, aiming to drive inclusive policy reforms and utilize the upcoming grant to enhance economic opportunities.

This insights report compiles the findings from these engagements, showcasing our continued commitment to fostering a thriving and prosperous Black Oregon.

For the people, our work is never done.

METHODOLOGY

Our Approach

FOCUS GROUPS

Partnered with a diverse collective of vendors and venues to facilitate thoughtfully curated focus groups, bringing together community members from diverse backgrounds.

DIGITAL SURVEYS

Distributed digital surveys throughout the community, encouraging widespread participation and sharing within personal networks.

COMMUNITY WEBINARS

Conducted webinars to provide detailed insights into the project and inform the community about the upcoming grant process.

Inclusive Engagement Process

To ensure comprehensive community engagement and that every voice was heard, the Reimagine Oregon team implemented a multi-faceted approach:

KEY *Our Truth* THEMES

Reconnect Our Communities

Supported initiatives and programs that strengthen community bonds by creating spaces and experiences facilitating resource sharing and collective growth, overcoming geographical barriers exacerbated by gentrification.

Next Gen Prosperity

Shared the need for programs that actively engage youth in robust educational experiences, exposing them to economic opportunities that foster financial independence and growth.

Equitable Access to Capital

Addressed the urgent need to eliminate financial barriers and implement trust-based, community-focused financial programs that guarantee wider and more equitable access to capital.

Art is Culture

Expressed art's vital contribution to Portland's cultural identity and the need to champion funding and development of a range of artistic mediums, talents, and approaches.

Education for Wealth Creation

Advocated for supporting, funding, and accelerating programs that educate the Black community on effective methods for improving financial literacy and driving generational wealth.

Grant Priorities

Championed the importance of designing an equitable grant process that prioritizes transparency, accessibility, and technical assistance for diverse communities.



RECONNECT OUR COMMUNITIES

Better Together

Reimagine Oregon

Reimagine Oregon

Historical and present-day gentrification has led to a disconnected Black community. Supporting programs, experiences, and centers that foster connection and give access to resources among the Black community is crucial for ensuring prosperity and unity.

FEEDBACK

- Participants reminisced about the strength and connection within the Black community before gentrification, emphasizing the missed sense of community and accountability.
- They discussed the lack of centralized spaces where Black individuals can access resources, products, and experiences.
- People shared the importance of having churches, nonprofit organizations, and businesses participating in the enrichment and enhancement of the Black community.

RECOMMENDATION

- Ensure funding and future investments focus on initiatives, businesses and nonprofits that reconnect the community and dedicated to the enhancement of it.
- Prioritize funding programs and initiatives that emphasize community development, money circulation within community, and Black prosperity as central elements of their mission.
- Back projects and organizations committed to establishing centers and spaces that offer essential resources, educational opportunities, and experiences designed to enhance community well-being and growth.

Better Together
RECONNECT OUR COMMUNITIES



Reimagine Oregon

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We need accountability for each other. We used to care about each other. Because we don't have the same neighborhoods that we had, we are so independent now. We need to get back to caring about each other, watching out for each other, and reporting back to each other, but not in competition, rather in community.

— Cobi L.

Better Together



Reimagine Oregon

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We, as a community, should continue creating spaces that allow us to connect our own dots. We have the talent, the brilliance, and can gather the resources to make our own difference in the community. But we have to create the space where we come together and brainstorm the best ways to do that.

— Marcus M.

Better Together



Reimagine Oregon

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For us not to have one centralized place for Black people to come together is something we are missing. In the future, I'd love to go to a space where there is a cluster of Black people, where you can go and be among family.

— Faith J. W

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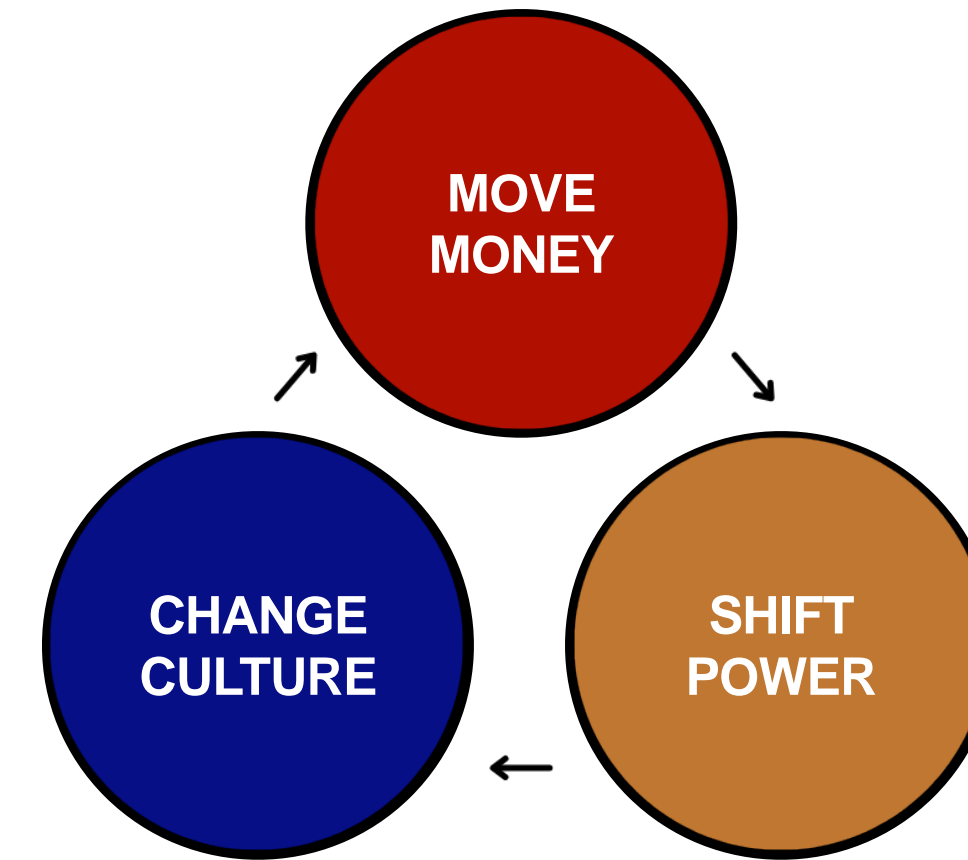
Better Together

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CAPITAL

*Build Financial
Bridges*



Lack of access, technical support, consistency and systemic barriers have played a part in prohibiting the Black community to receive equitable access to capital to not only start their businesses but sustain them.



“We must embrace the mantra of ‘move money, shift power, change culture,’ - focusing on deep, systemic transformations that redistribute financial resources, empower underrepresented communities, and foster cultural shifts towards more inclusive, equitable society.” - Paige H.-B.

KEY FEEDBACK

- Participants noted a lack of consistency in funding, complicating their ability to find reliable financial support during unpredictable downturns.
- People shared that financial institutions, state agencies, and nonprofits present qualification and technical barriers that prevent Black individuals and organizations from accessing funding and capital.
- Groups shared the need for an abundance of capital and funding to propel businesses to the next level - not just focusing on small grants.
- Many shared that individuals are often unaware of available funding or are unable to apply due to a lack of consistent communication and the absence of necessary technical support.

ACTION

- Reduce barriers to funding by simplifying criteria and adopting trust-based funding approaches.
- Establish a reliable and well-publicized funding program that serves as a dependable resource for small businesses.
- Diversify recipients of funding or vendor hiring to avoid the same people getting access to capital.
- Offer a range of grant sizes to promote scalability for businesses positioned for growth and provide smaller grants for those facing temporary challenges.
- Enhance communication strategies to keep the community well-informed about available funding options and instructions to access to workshops and technical support that aid in the application process.

Build Financial Bridges
EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CAPITAL

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Equal access also looks like making sure that we have Black retailers in downtown Portland, not just when downtown is struggling and we need to fill spaces with Black bodies. That's exploitation.

— Kamelah A.

Build Financial Bridges



Reimagine Oregon

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Despite the significant presence of Black-owned businesses in the city, navigating the complex and inaccessible processes for funding remains a major hurdle for all of our businesses' survival.

— Sam T.

Build Financial Bridges



Reimagine Oregon

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By reshaping racial dynamics through strategic investments and ownership, we can transform not only our own narrative but also our relationship with the rest of the state.

— Desiree W-J.

Build Financial Bridges



Reimagine Oregon

Build Financial Bridges

EDUCATION FOR WEALTH CREATION

Financial Fluency

Reimagine Oregon

Historical systemic barriers have hindered wealth creation within the Black community. Additionally, limited access to financial education has further widened this gap. Addressing these issues requires targeted programs, partnerships and policies that increase financial literacy and access to capital.

FEEDBACK

- Participants highlighted the gap in financial literacy, attributing it to the current financial status of the Black community.
- Individuals shared stories of a lack of expertise regarding assets, property, and business value, which has hindered wealth growth within the community.
- Participants emphasized the importance of culturally competent wealth education that is relatable to the community's own experiences.
- People expressed the need for education that covers various forms of wealth building, including investments, land ownership in rural communities, and emerging innovations like AI and cryptocurrency.

RECOMMENDATION

- Provide funding for programs and partners that offer financial education that is culturally competent; reflecting the experiences, values, and historical context of the Black community.
- Create and fund educational programs that cover basic financial management, understanding credit, investment strategies, real estate acquisition, and the valuation of assets and businesses.
- Collaborate and communicate with financial institutions (such as MESO) to establish year-round grant programs, grant writing workshops, low-interest loans, and other financing options specifically tailored for underrepresented entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- Implement ongoing feedback mechanisms to continuously adapt and improve the programs offered, including regular community forums, surveys, and focus groups to ensure the initiatives remain aligned with the community's needs and aspirations.

Financial Fluency EDUCATION FOR WEALTH CREATION



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Self-reliance is the highest form of human dignity. We need to create opportunities to learn business acumen and gain access to business incubators, training, and mentorship. The majority of folks, even myself, have learned how to make money, but not how to keep it. We must change that.

— Lou R.

Reimagine Oregon



Financial Fluency

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Building trust within the community is crucial, especially when organizing financial literacy classes and sharing valuable information. We can provide authentic insights and real-life experiences. Personally, I have invested time in learning about the history of injustices faced by Black individuals, which has empowered me to share this knowledge with the community.

— Justina S.

Reimagine Oregon



Financial Fluency

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We need to bring education to unconventional spaces. I've always envisioned the barbershop as more than just a place for haircuts. Some kids might not feel comfortable in a traditional classroom setting but would be willing to learn in a familiar environment like a barbershop. This vision of the barbershop as a community hub is central to who I am.

— Art W.

Reimagine Oregon



Financial Fluency

Financial Fluency

NEXT GEN PROSPERITY

*Our Youth
Our Future*



The topic of economic opportunities and development often neglects the experiences and needs of youth and children, deemed too young to grasp its relevance. To ensure economic prosperity within the Black community, it's imperative to empower young people with opportunities to learn, understand, and access financial resources. They are the future.

KEY FEEDBACK

- Participants shared that the lack of financial literacy courses and workshops for young people is a barrier to achieving wealth and high income as adults.
- Participants emphasized the power of mentorship and role models who are not only visible to youth but also actively engage with them to teach life skills and financial literacy.
- People highlighted the importance of funding programs that provide opportunities for youth to engage in financial literacy activities and workshops.

ACTION

- Allocate grants for programs that offer young people opportunities to engage in community activities and events addressing fiscal responsibility.
- Invest in programs that not only increase visibility of role models in the community but also actively involve these leaders in teaching life skills, wealth creation and management.
- Establish and fund programs that provide comprehensive financial literacy courses and workshops tailored specifically for young people.
- Create programs that fund young people's ideas, fostering belief and confidence in their early entrepreneurship and career journey.

Our Youth
NEXT GEN PROSPERITY
Our Future

Reimagine Oregon

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It's essential to provide children with role models in professional positions who look like them. We must prioritize reintroducing children to diverse professional opportunities to inspire them and reaffirm their potential to achieve any goal they set their minds to.

— Eric K.

Reimagine Oregon



*Our Youth,
Our Future*

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Where does youth fit into our economic opportunity plans? It's important for us to introduce youth to wealth creation and self-determination opportunities as early as possible.

— Kayin T. D

Reimagine Oregon



*Our Youth,
Our Future*

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I envision trajectories spanning 10, 20, even 30 years ahead, creating avenues for Black lawyers, teachers, entrepreneurs, doctors, and various other professions. We need to start building these trajectories from kindergarten all the way through to graduation.

— Karanja C.

Reimagine Oregon



*Our Youth,
Our Future*

*Our Youth
Our Future*

ART IS CULTURE

Creative Investment

Reimagine Oregon

Reimagine Oregon

Portland is renowned for its vibrant creative scene, but Black artists often miss out on funding and partnerships, making them less visible. By increasing access to funding, we can amplify their voices and enrich our city's cultural fabric.

FEEDBACK

- Participants highlighted the need and opportunity to establish Black centers for galleries and exhibits, which would position Portland as a world-class destination for Black art and creative experiences. The talented artists who can bring this vision to life are already here; they simply need the support to make it happen.
- Participants noted that the engagement of Black artists or creatives is often performative, primarily occurring during cultural heritage months, which complicates their ability to secure funding throughout the year.
- People emphasized that artistic disciplines are diverse; however, a narrow view of what constitutes an artist often leads to overlooked funding and opportunities for other kinds of artists, such as designers, DJs, storytellers, etc., who frequently miss out on these opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

- Allocate funding that can adequately support Black artists and creatives' projects throughout the year.
- Invest in businesses and organizations committed to developing Black centers, exhibits, and experiences showcasing Black art and creativity.
- Offer workshops, seminars, and mentorship programs that help Black artists and creatives develop their skills, manage their finances, and promote their work effectively.

Creative Investment
ART IS CULTURE



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We have to make sure all types of artists are aware of funding and grant opportunities. There are many artists, like DJs, who are often overlooked. We have to widen the reach and create accessibility for all who want to participate.

— Ambush

Creative Investment



Reimagine Oregon

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Our imagination and creativity are an inexhaustible well of who we are. I'd like for Oregon and the Pacific Northwest to be places full of resources for Black arts—to make it a Mecca of the arts.

— Intisar A.

Creative Investment



Reimagine Oregon

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The ability to do art is imperative. Art is more than just pictures and photography. We have a lot of space and creativity, but our creativity gets put into silos, and people only reach out during this month [February - Black history] for a reason. We don't always get the opportunity to create it, but we can if given the chance.

— Ian W.

Creative Investment



Reimagine Oregon

Creative Investment

REIMAGINE OREGON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY INVESTMENT FUND GRANT PRIORITIES

Funding For Us

For the Reimagine Oregon Economic Opportunity Investment Fund, the community has emphasized the need for a grant that is accessible, community-centric, inclusive, and supportive of scalable growth for Black-owned businesses. It is also essential to provide sustained post-award resources to ensure the sustainability of projects and businesses.

PROCESS

- Ensure a clear and simple application process that accommodates neurodiverse applicants.
- Make criteria and evaluation rubrics visible and accessible to all applicants and community members.
- Offer technical assistance, office hours, and information sessions to aid applicants and provide necessary guidance.
- Broaden communication about the grant to reach new communities, avoiding repeated funding to the same recipients.
- Adopt a trust-based process instead of a reimbursement approach to remove financial barriers for applicants.
- Design the rubric to challenge applicants to propose viable plans with clear success metrics and indicators, encouraging them to demonstrate their agency and vision for a vibrant, thriving Black community.

EVALUATION & DISTRIBUTION

- Award sizable grant awards to ensure recipients have sufficient funds for business development or expansion.
- Prioritize projects that significantly impact the Black community's economy by hiring and partnering with other Black-owned businesses.
- Consider applications that show innovation and potential for economic expansion of their Portland based business into new markets - but continuing to benefit our city.
- Provide funding opportunities for new businesses with promising ideas that may lack a long history but have proven significant potential.
- Ensure high-potential awardees can show viability and sustainability of their projects.
- Prioritize applicants that have community support and history supporting locally owned business and community initiatives.
- Consider applicants whose projects demonstrate sustainable and generational wealth-building within the community and families, such as land ownership, commercial real estate, and global partnerships.

COMMUNICATION & SUSTAINABILITY

- Provide media and communications training to help awardees effectively communicate their business and projects to the public (when approached).
- Connect awardees with banks and financial institutions to help them effectively utilize their funds and prepare for business growth.
- Create cohorts among grantees to foster collaboration and encourage collaboration and partnership among them to leverage resources and services; circulating funds within the community.
- Implement reporting within the grant cycle to collect data for use in storytelling campaigns.
- Provide executive coaching to enhance personal and leadership development for awardees.
- Treat grant cycles as iterative, focusing on continuous improvement and learning.

Funding For Us
GRANT PRIORITIES



THANK YOU

Evaluation Process for the

Reimagine Oregon Economic Opportunity Investment Fund Grant FY25-FY26

Purpose: This document outlines the evaluation process for reviewing proposals submitted to the Reimagine Oregon Grant Program. It aims to provide a standardized framework to assess the strength of various proposals, determine funding recommendations, and allocate resources effectively. This rubric serves as a comprehensive evaluation tool that establishes a clear, equitable, and transparent method for reviewing both for-profit and non-profit organizations, ensuring alignment with program goals and community impact.

Outcomes Summary: The advisory committee will consider the following criteria to assess all received proposals:

1. Impact on Business Growth and Community Service
2. Addressing Disproportionate Impacts of Cannabis Prohibition
3. Well-defined Plans to Achieve Intended Outcomes
4. Financial Feasibility of the Proposed Budget and Timeline
5. Demonstration of Financial Need for Grant Funding
6. Organizational Experience and Proven Track Record

Evaluation Process Timeline ([Click HERE for Details](#)):

- **April and May:** Internal team and advisory committee meeting to review evaluation criteria and application folder.
 - **Internal team conducts culling process which will include –**
 - **Eligibility Check:** Review all applications for eligibility based on basic criteria (e.g., organization type, project scope, funding limits).
 - **Basic Completeness Review:** Ensure that each application includes all required documents and information (e.g., application forms, budget, letters of support).
 - **Advisory Committee** reads through all eligible proposals and scores applications
 - **Applications scoring 65 points or above** will be prioritized for recommended funding scenario considerations for executive director
- **May 30:** Deadline for committee evaluations and final recommendations to the executive director.
- **June 2:** Deadline for preparing the Board report and resolutions.
- **June 18:** Final recommendations presented to the Prosper Portland Board of Commissioners.

Definitions and Context Reminders:

- **Alignment with RO Program Priorities:** Aims to support small businesses, especially those disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition. Funding can enhance entrepreneurship and community wealth-building efforts.
- **Three Funding Priorities:**
 - **Accelerate Business Growth & Entrepreneurship** (For-Profits)
 - **Build Community Wealth & Economic Empowerment** (Non-Profits)
 - **Create Anchor Projects for Community Engagement** (Both)

Scoring Rubric:

Criteria	%	Excellent (5)	Great (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	No Response (0)
Alignment with RO Program Priorities	20%	Exemplifies core values of the program with profound understanding and engagement.	Clearly addresses funding priorities with a solid alignment.	Some alignment but lacks specific details.	Shows minimal connection; requires clarification.	Misunderstands program goals.	No alignment or unclear communication.
Project Feasibility and Impact	20%	Unparalleled expertise; demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of funding needs and measurable outcomes.	Well-defined plan with clear goals and strong positive impact.	Feasible plan: some refinement needed for goals/outcomes.	Lacks clarity; raises feasibility concerns.	Unrealistic or poorly defined; unlikely meaningful impact.	No response or lacks communication.
Organizational Capacity and Team Expertise	15%	Demonstrates leadership and excellence; showcases impactful past work.	Strong capacity and relevant experience; clear vision for success.	Adequate capacity but lacks strong vision/examples.	Raises concerns about project management abilities.	Insufficient capacity; lacks past accomplishments.	No response or lacks communication.
Budget Justification & Financial Need	15%	Exemplary budget model; responsible management of funds with strong justifications.	Clear, realistic budget aligned with project activities; solid justifications provided.	Generally sound budget but needs minor adjustments.	Raises concerns about budget alignment and accuracy.	Unrealistic or poorly justified, questioning financial management.	No response or lacks communication.

Criteria	%	Excellent (5)	Great (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	No Response (0)
Community Impact/ Support	10%	Strong stakeholder support; clear community engagement strategies with demonstrated investment.	Shows significant community investment and opportunities for engagement.	Evidence of community involvement; could benefit from broader engagement.	Lacks significant community engagement; unclear relevance.	No evidence of community support; isolated from beneficiaries.	No response or lacks communication.
Multi-Generational Impact	5%	Demonstrates leadership in creating sustainable multi-generational economic opportunities.	Clear examples of fostering community growth impacting future generations.	Some evidence of positive ripple effects; limited forward-thinking.	Minimal demonstration of multi-generational impact.	No evidence of positive impact on future generations.	No response or lacks communication.
Innovation	5%	Exceptional, transformative ideas leading to substantial economic growth.	Promising ideas for economic development with community impact.	Some evidence of innovation for positive economic change.	Limited demonstration of potential impact or momentum.	No evidence of intended community impact or relevance.	No response or lacks communication.
Serves or is led by those directly affected by cannabis prohibition	5%	Specialized knowledge on cannabis prohibition; prioritizes those affected.	Demonstrates meeting needs of socially/economically disadvantaged groups.	Evidence of addressing cannabis prohibition effects, but lacks economic vitality focus.	Fails to address support for impacted communities.	No evidence of support for communities impacted by prohibition.	No response or lacks communication.
Organizational Experience and Proof of Concept*	5%	Established track record with significant experience in relevant projects; proven models of success.	Strong history of successful implementation; evidence of sustainable impact.	Some experience with past projects; moderate proof of concept.	Limited history; raises questions about reliability and effectiveness.	Very little experience or no documented successes.	No response or lacks communication.

Criteria	%	Excellent (5)	Great (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	No Response (0)
Total		100%					

* **Organizational Experience:** Evaluates how long the organization has been in operation, its accomplishments, and its ability to demonstrate a successful implementation of similar projects.