



DOWNTOWN ATHENS, GEORGIA
ATHENS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BUSINESS MARKETING GRANT PROGRAM

1. About the Grant Program

The Athens Downtown Development Authority (ADDA) Business Marketing Grant Program is intended to incentivize economic development by encouraging investment in brand development and online marketing. This grant supports funding for branding strategies; logo design; web design and development; e-commerce; and online/social media marketing optimization. The program will offer a 50% matching grant up to \$5,000 for reimbursement. Improvements must contribute to the overall value of downtown business and investments.

The Business Marketing Grant Program is funded and administered by the Athens Downtown Development Authority (ADDA). The ADDA will determine the amount of matching funds based on the proposal, grant funds available, and the number of requests under consideration.

2. Eligibility to Apply

- Any business currently located in the ADDA boundary or any business that intends to open in the ADDA boundary is eligible to apply. For information regarding district boundaries, contact Rachel Swartz at 706-353-1421, or Rachel@downtownathensga.com.
- In order to receive grant funding, a representative from the business seeking funds must attend the ADDA marketing workshop or a comparable workshop. This will be a daylong program that highlights the basics of online marketing. After attending the workshop, a business may submit a grant application.

3. Guidelines for Business Marketing Grant

- Eligible projects are limited to marketing strategies that include an online component which enhances the ability of downtown businesses to better serve or to expand their current target market.

- Priority will be given to professional services businesses and businesses that enhance or complement the District's existing retail mix and/or help strengthen the economic impact of the ADDA district. Examples of businesses that complement the existing retail mix are children's products, art shops/galleries, florists, bookstores, etc.
- Priority will be given to businesses with projected tangible benefits to the ADDA district and/or Athens-Clarke County.
- Eligible projects will include phrases, hashtags, links, photographs, etc., that highlight the business location as part of the downtown Athens community.
- Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - *Brand Identity Strategies* - creating or redesigning a business' brand to more accurately reflect their vision and mission
 - *Logo Design* - creation or modernization of a logo
 - *Web Design/Development* - updating a current website or creating a new website to fit business needs, website maintenance education, content creation tools such as photography
 - *Ecommerce* - adding ecommerce abilities to a website, educational opportunities regarding maintenance, support for, or logistics for utilizing ecommerce
 - *Online/Social Media Marketing Optimization*- educational opportunities for social media marketing, content creation tools such as photography
- **Ineligible projects** include but are not limited to:
 - TV, radio, newspaper ads
 - Promotion of a sale or another one-time event
 - Applications for solely print marketing materials
 - Applications from businesses who did not attend the ADDA marketing workshop or comparable workshop
- Eligible projects must be in accordance with all government rules, regulations, and laws, including but not limited to the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government's ordinances.
- Participants assume full responsibility for all aspects of the project, including any relationships with contractors and suppliers.

4. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The attached application form is to be submitted to: ADDA, c/o Rachel Swartz, 250 W. Broad St., Suite 108, Athens, GA, 30601. For assistance and more information, please contact Rachel Swartz at 706-353-1421, or Rachel@downtownathensga.com.

Applications will be reviewed by the Business Marketing Grant Committee within four weeks of receipt and in the order received. Only complete applications will be reviewed. A complete application includes the attached form and all supporting materials as specified in the instructions. Incomplete application packets will be returned to the sender within two weeks if all materials are not submitted.

5. APPLICATION REVIEW

During the application review process the Business Marketing Grant Committee will:

- Review each application for completeness and make an eligibility determination.
- Classify the project as either a minor or major improvement to set the timeline for completion.
- Provide a grant recommendation to the ADDA Board for funding or deny the project.

Each application packet will be evaluated on the following standards for review:

- Quality of the work proposed.
- Proposed outcomes that enhance the ability of downtown businesses to better serve or to expand their current target market.
- Level of match participation of the applicant.
- Range of projects completed and proposed as part of the Business Marketing Grant Program.
- Any other relevant factors deemed by the ADDA to be applicable.
- Priority will be given to professional services businesses and businesses that best complement the District's retail mix and/or help strengthen the economic impact of the ADDA district.
- Priority will be given to businesses with projected tangible benefits to the ADDA district and/or Athens-Clarke County.

The applicant will receive a confirmation letter indicating the grant award decision, or in some cases, a request for additional information. The ADDA reserves the right to table, deny, or request modifications in any or all application packets, in whole or in part, and to negotiate changes in the proposed project. In the case of denial by the ADDA, the applicant can address the issues identified by the ADDA and re-apply for a grant.

6. GRANT AWARDS

Approved projects will be reimbursed at **up to fifty percent (50%)** of the approved project's total cost. The award will not exceed the Business Marketing Grant Program maximum grant of five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

Please note: If work is started on the applicant's project before the decision to make a grant award, the ADDA reserves the right to determine that only the remaining work will be eligible for a matching grant.

The ADDA reserves the right to recommend funds as it deems best to achieve its purposes and at its sole discretion. For example, ADDA can grant funds in amounts as it deems appropriate to encourage the projects it deems most beneficial. Many factors are considered, such as the ADDA budget, number of applicants, financial considerations, applicant match, mixture of proposed projects, and the extent to which projects fulfill the goals and standards for eligible projects as set forth above.

7. PROJECT COMPLETION

Improvements must be started within ninety (90) days of receiving the confirmation letter and completed within twelve (12) months of said receipt, or re-application will be required. To qualify for reimbursement, all work must be complete and in conformance with the approved plans.

8. REIMBURSEMENT

After project completion, the applicant is reimbursed with awarded grant funds upon:

- Satisfactory completion of the project
- Receipt of a reimbursement request plus all receipts and proof of payment

All reimbursement requests are to be submitted to ADDA, c/o Rachel Swartz, 250 W. Broad Street, Suite 108, Athens, GA 30601. The ADDA reserves the right to increase or decrease a grant award in accordance with receipt of actual expenditures.

Athens Downtown Development Authority
Business Marketing Grant Program
Application Form

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant full name

Business name

Application date: _____

Mailing address

Contact

Telephone

E-mail

2. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Athens street address

3. PROJECT SCOPE

Project Dates:

Proposed beginning date* _____ Anticipated completion date _____

*Project start date, or the date for start of work to be included in the grant award.

Details of proposed work with projected costs:

Item 1 _____

Est. Cost _____

Description of proposed work and how this will enhance business:

<u>Item 2</u>	<u>Est. Cost</u>
<u>Description of proposed work and how this will enhance business:</u>	

<u>Item 3</u>	<u>Est. Cost</u>
<u>Description of proposed work and how this will enhance business:</u>	

4. PROJECT BUDGET AND QUOTE

Total project cost: \$ _____

Grant amount requested: \$ _____

Applicant match* intended: \$ _____

PLEASE NOTE: All quotes MUST be an itemized estimate. Please have two quotes for items over \$2,500.00.

**Projects matched by more than 50% will receive preferential review status.*

5. AUTHORIZATION

I, _____ do hereby make application to the Athens Downtown Development Authority for a Business Marketing Grant for the above project. I verify that the information in this application and its attachments is valid and correct. I verify that I have reviewed and understand the rules and regulations set forth in the Athens Downtown Development Business Marketing Grant Program Guidelines, and I agree to be bound by the same.

I understand any changes in the approved project must be re-approved or I could forfeit funding for the above project(s).

I understand that the receipt by the ADDA of my application does not obligate the ADDA in any way, indicate any funds are available, or that my application will be approved. I understand that furnishing false or misleading information can lead to denial of my application and/or bar me from receipt of any funds.

Signature of Applicant

Date

6. APPROVAL TRACKING

Date application submitted: _____

Submitted to ADDA: _____

Approved by ADDA: _____

Reimbursement request submitted: _____

CHECKLIST

- Fully complete and signed application
- Complete and itemized project description and explanation of funding needs.
- Budget estimate and quotes*

*These items may be submitted separately; however, these items MUST be submitted within two weeks of turning in the application. Applications without all the checklist items after two weeks will be considered incomplete and will be returned