Startup Assets for Economic (SAFE) Opportunity Grant Program to Provide Financial Support to New and Aspiring Entrepreneurs

Kansas City, Mo. (July 23, 2020) – A new entrepreneurship grant program launched in Kansas City today. Administered by the Community Capital Fund (CCF), in partnership with the City of Kansas City, Mo. Health Department, the Startup Assets for Economic (SAFE) Opportunity entrepreneurship grant program will award microgrants ranging from $500 to $2,000 to residents of Kansas City's 64128 zip code area.

Rooted in an asset-based approach to community economic development, SAFE Opportunity will provide funds to grantees to directly support expenses related to starting a small business venture. From supplies and equipment, training and certification expenses, to startup expenses like registration and business license fees, the program will support developing new and aspiring entrepreneurs, while lowering individuals’ risk for involvement in violent activities, and increasing individual wealth and financial stability.

“This groundbreaking project was born from the idea that public health issues—especially with respect to crime and violence—can be addressed by unique organizations representing various types of industry,” Dr. Marvia Jones, Violence Prevention and Policy Manager within the City of Kansas City Health Department, said. “We need to find new ways of providing hope and pathways forward in our city where there have been decades of neglect, decades of lack of opportunity, and decades of harmful and destructive stress. We need to invest in people.”

With the SAFE Opportunity program, CCF will assist new and aspiring entrepreneurs in accessing additional resources to increase the success of their small businesses. From providing small business development technical assistance and financial services, to facilitating partnerships with neighborhood organizations and the larger business community, CCF will work to advance grantees and increase their opportunities for economic mobility.

“We can’t just expect new and aspiring entrepreneurs from communities of color to pull themselves up by their bootstraps when they often lack boots,” Dr. Jones said during her keynote speech at the 8th Annual Community Development Workshop in February 2020. “In 1886, Frederick Douglass gave a speech on the 24th anniversary of Emancipation in Washington, D.C. and said, ‘The American people have this to learn, that where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel the society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither person nor property is safe.’ Nearly 135 years later, we are seeing this play out every day. We all, each of us, have a role to play in violence prevention in our communities, and the SAFE Opportunity grant program is a strong and meaningful start.

(more)
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How to Apply for the Startup Assets for Economic (SAFE) Opportunity entrepreneurship grant program

2020 SAFE Applications may be submitted in three ways:
1. Complete and submit the online form available at www.ccfkansascity.org
2. Complete fillable PDF application and email to info@ccfkansascity.org
3. If online submission is inaccessible or burdensome, please print & mail your grant application to:
   Community Capital Fund, ATTN: SAFE Opportunity, 3200 Wayne Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109
   (Copies of the grant application can be picked up at the CCF office. Please call in advance, (816) 502-9584)

Key Milestones for the Startup Assets for Economic (SAFE) Opportunity entrepreneurship grant program

- July 28, 2020 – 1st Grant Information Session (6:00 p.m.)
- Aug. 5, 2020 – 2nd Grant Information Session (12:00 p.m.)
- Aug. 14, 2020 – 3rd Grant Information Session (9:00 a.m.)
- Aug. 24, 2020 – Applications due by 5:00 pm (CST)
- Sep. 8, 2020 – Applicants notified of award, non-award
- Sep. 22, 2020 – Orientation Gathering + 1st Business Briefing Workshop (make-up date TBD)
- Oct. 20, 2020 – 3rd Business Briefing Workshop – Asset-Based Community Development
- Nov. 17, 2020 – 5th Business Briefing Workshop – Asset-Based Community Development

SAFE Opportunity is the first initiative of the KC Blueprint for violence prevention and a safe and healthy community, which addresses how to fight violence in Kansas City from youth through adulthood through social gateways instead of primarily through law enforcement. Sixty local organizations contributed to the program with their input. The Kansas City Health Department, Violence Free Kansas City Committee and the Health Commission plan to work with organizations across the city to implement it in a number of sectors including health, faith, education, business and more. The Kansas City Council approved KC Blueprint for immediate adoption on July 16, 2020.

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