

**New Jersey Economic Development Authority  
NJ Cannabis Business Development Grant Program  
NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (“NJEDA” or “Authority”) will begin accepting applications for the NJ Cannabis Business Development Grant Program (“CBD” or “Program”) on November 13, 2025 at 10:00 A.M. EST. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and will be available for three years from the date applications are made available to the public, or until funding is exhausted, whichever is sooner.

The Program will make available up to \$4.75 million in grant funding, as approved by the NJEDA Board on May 13, 2025, delivering essential financial support to recreational cannabis businesses in New Jersey that have received their annual license digital card in one of the eligible categories as per the final recommendation issued by NJ Cannabis Regulatory Commission (“NJCRC”) Office of Licensing.

Application fees for this program will be \$750 due at the time of application submission payable by credit or debit card. The application can be accessed at: [Cannabis Business Development \(CBD\) Grant - NJEDA](#).

### **Purpose and Overview**

The Program will support the sustainable and equitable development of New Jersey's recreational cannabis industry. The program aims to alleviate the financial burden of ongoing state and local compliance and offset operating expenses for early-stage companies. This initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen the long-term viability and equity of New Jersey's cannabis market, which has experienced significant growth since the legalization of adult-use cannabis in February 2021 under the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement, Assistance, and Market Modernization Act (“CREAMM Act”). The program addresses the unique barriers faced by cannabis businesses, such as high startup costs and limited access to capital due to federal restrictions. The legislative framework, including the CREAMM Act, enables the New Jersey Economic Development Authority to establish financial and technical assistance programs for cannabis businesses, promoting equity and diversity within the industry.

### **Funding Source**

The total funding available for the Program is up to \$4.75 million, sourced from the New Jersey FY25 State Appropriation Act.

Note: The total funding and award amount are based upon current information about funding availability. NJEDA reserves the right to increase or decrease that amount and number of awards should the funding availability change.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 24:6I-49 and in alignment with other NJEDA cannabis programs, 5% of the available funding will be set aside for businesses located in a NJCRC Impact Zone. These zones are designated by the NJCRC which are historically underserved areas identified based on factors such as past marijuana arrests, law enforcement activity, unemployment, and population.

### **Program Details**

The goal of the CBD Grant Program is to provide financial support to recreational cannabis businesses through a grant that reimburses applicants that have received their annual license digital card from the NJCRC Office of Licensing.

### **Eligible Applicants**

1. At the time of application, eligible applicants possess and provide a valid and current annual license digital card issued by the NJCRC Office of Licensing in one of the following categories:
  - Class 1 - Cultivator
  - Class 2 - Manufacturer
  - Class 5 - Retailer
  - Testing Lab License (Medicinal-Only Labs are ineligible).
2. Applicants must have at least \$75,000 of eligible expenses with supporting documentation for reimbursement.
3. Applicants must be in substantial good standing with the NJCRC, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection prior to approval.
4. Applicants must also provide a current tax clearance certificate to demonstrate good standing with the New Jersey Division of Taxation prior to approval.
5. Applicants must provide a New Jersey Certificate of Formation.

### **Ineligible Applicants**

Entities that have already received funds from the Authority's Cannabis grant programs, specifically the Joint Ventures and Seed Equity programs, **are not eligible**.

Holders of "Final Agency Decision Acceptance of Alternative Treatment Center ("ATC") Certification Authorization to Operate in Adult Personal-Use Market" and Multi-State Operators (MSOs), which are defined as cannabis companies with operations in multiple states, **are not eligible**.

## Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses that may be reimbursed include:

1. **Rental Expenses:** Including common area maintenance (“CAM”) charges, evidenced by a fully executed lease signed by both the landlord and the tenant (the named tenant must be the applicant or a related entity to the applicant) that has commenced. Sub-leases are ineligible. Applicants must demonstrate good standing with their landlord through certification in the application.
2. **Payroll Expenses:** May be evidenced by a quarterly WR30 or equivalent payroll documentation/reports, including 1099 contractor payments or contracts.
3. **Employee Training Expenses:** Costs related to training employees or independent contractors for any function related to their business operations.
4. **Professional Services:** Must be invoiced and/or addressed to the applicant entity listed on the application. These may include legal services, legal services related to the NJCRC license and regulatory process, accounting services, human resources services, business planning, transportation services, security, marketing or branding services, website development, or lab services, and any other outside services needed to operate an eligible cannabis business in New Jersey or obtain/maintain any license or authorization to operate from the NJCRC.

## Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible uses of the grant award proceeds include, but are not limited to,:

- Business supplies;
- Controlled inventory;
- Construction;
- Equipment and/or installation fees costing greater than \$2,000.00; and
- Violations, fines, or penalties.

All expenses and associated supporting documentation are subject to NJEDA review and discretion for eligibility. Applicants must provide documentation to verify expenses, such as paid invoices with proof of payment like canceled checks, credit card statements, or bank statements for cash payments. Applicants will need to provide as much detail as possible regarding all eligible expenses included in their application. Failure to provide adequate supporting documentation and proof of payment may cause a delay in the processing of the application.

## Application Submission and Review Process

The CBD Grant Program will accept applications on a rolling basis. Applications that are complete will be evaluated for approval on a “first in, first out basis” using the date and time that the Authority receives a completed application and application fee. As part of the application, the Authority will request information that shall include, but is not limited to,:

1. A copy of the NJCRC annual license digital card as per the final recommendation issued by NJCRC Office of Licensing is required for a complete application. Conversion letters are not acceptable.
2. An NJ Certificate of Formation.
3. A brief project description and overview.
4. All business locations/addresses that are open and operating in and outside of New Jersey.
5. Identify any other states the applicant has filed licenses in to operate a recreational cannabis facility.
6. Certification that the applicant is in good standing with their landlord (if applicable).
7. Certification that the applicant is to not use proceeds on controlled inventory or violation, penalties or fines.
8. Certification that the applicant is aware of and agrees to comply with the two-year compliance requirement.
9. The Authority will capture applicant expenses through an NJEDA-provided template (in an Excel file format) that lists out all eligible expenses, descriptions, dates, and amounts of the item or service already paid for in the last 36-months prior to their application submission date.

The Authority will perform a review of applications for completeness in the order that they are received. At the sole discretion of the Authority, staff may ask for cures and/or clarifications of the information included in the application, including but not limited to narrative responses, supporting documentation, and attachments. For missing or incomplete information, applicants will be given ten (10) business days from the date of the staff's notification to provide the requested information and submit any missing and/or incomplete documents. During this 10 business day period, the application is deemed incomplete and will not be processed until all requested information has been received. Applicant's responses to the staff's requests will be reviewed in the order they are received. Failure to respond to the request within the same 10-business day period will result in the application being deemed administratively withdrawn. If an applicant fails to meet eligibility requirements as described above, the application may be declined from the program. Applicants have the ability to withdraw from the application process at any time.

### **Grant Amounts**

The Program provides a fixed grant amount of \$75,000.

The Authority will award only one grant per applicant (based on EIN) for a single location. Applicants that hold more than one license are only able to receive one award per location.

### **Grant Funding Disbursements**

The Authority will disburse grants only to the applicant. The applicant shall be responsible for assuring compliance with all terms and conditions of the application and the Program funding requirements.

Following the execution of the grant agreement, a one-time payment of the \$75,000 grant award will be disbursed.

### **Post – Compliance Terms**

The compliance term for this grant will be 24-months post the fully executed grant agreement date. Awardees must remain open and operating and maintain good standing with the NJCRC every year after the date of their fully executed grant agreement through an NJEDA-prepared awardee certification.

If awardees are no longer open and operating or not in good standing with NJCRC, then NJEDA may seek recapture at the Authority's discretion. In the event of any default on the grant agreement within 12 months of executing the grant agreement, 100% of the grant will be recaptured; any defaults after 12 months will result in a 50% recapture.

As per NJCRC, awardees are not allowed to sell or transfer license of their business for 24 months following the award date. Awardees are not allowed to pursue another cannabis business license and open operations outside the state of New Jersey during the compliance term of the grant.

### **Fees**

A \$750 non-refundable fee is required at the time of application submission and can be paid only through a credit/debit card.

### **Additional Requirements and Information**

Information about the NJ Cannabis Business Development (CBD) Grant Program is available at [\[Cannabis Business Development \(CBD\) Grant - NJEDA\]](#).

Questions concerning this Program's Notice of Funding Availability should be submitted to [\[cannabis@njeda.gov\]](mailto:cannabis@njeda.gov).

### **State and Federal Requirements**

Funding for this grant is subject to State and Federal statutes including, but not limited to, the following, which may impact affiliates: N.J.S.A. 52:32-60.1, et seq., which prevents the New Jersey government entities from certain dealings with businesses engaged in prohibited activities in Belarus or Russia; Compliance with the list of "Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons" promulgated by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov>; N.J.S.A. 24:6I-49 which provides that the following are not eligible for most State or local economic incentives (a) a person or entity issued a license to operate as a cannabis cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or delivery service, or that

employs a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service; and (b) a property owner, developer, or operator of a project to be used, in whole or in part, by or to benefit a cannabis cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or delivery service, or to employ a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service; and N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12, et seq., which prohibits a member of the Legislature or a State officer or employee or their partners or a corporation in which they owns or controls more than 1% of the stock to undertake or execute any contract, agreement, sale, or purchase of \$25.00 or more, made, entered into, awarded or granted by any State agency, with certain limited exceptions including grant awards by the New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation and Technology.