

SEED FUNDING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About SEED Funding

Where did SEED funding come from?

In June 2020, the California Legislature approved Assembly Bill 82 (Chapter 14, Stats. 2020), which established the Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED) Initiative to be administered by the California Workforce Development Board within the Labor and Workforce Development Agency. The Employment Training Panel, also within the Agency, is administering SEED on behalf of the Board.

What is Immigrants Rising?

Founded in 2006, Immigrants Rising transforms individuals and fuels broader changes. With resources and support, undocumented young people are able to get an education, pursue careers, and build a brighter future for themselves and their community. For more information, visit immigrantsrising.org.

What does Immigrants Rising hope to achieve with SEED Funding?

In this highly politicized moment in American history, Immigrants Rising believes it is essential to support undocumented entrepreneurs who are working to create positive social change. Their contributions are vital to the state of California, as well as the entire country. We hope to showcase the talents of undocumented entrepreneurs across the state, and help to amplify the positive social impact they are making.

Who are SEED outreach partners?

Immigrants Rising is proud to bring together a coalition of eight partner organizations, who will ensure that diverse immigrant constituencies across the state of California are able to benefit from this initiative.

The coalition is comprised of the following organizations: [Ahri Center](#), [Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative \(CVIIC\)](#), [Dreamers in Tech](#), [Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement](#), [Inclusive Action for the City](#), [La Cocina](#), [Pilipino Workers Center](#), and the [UndocuBlack Network](#). These organizations serve a wide array of ethnic groups, geographic constituencies, and industries, and have decades of experience building relationships with the diverse communities that form an integral part of California's economy.

Eligibility Questions

Who can apply?

SEED funding is open to California residents who are starting or growing a business/nonprofit in California that addresses a social problem or community need.

Applicants must identify with at least one of the following:

- Limited English proficiency
- Non U.S. citizens or Lawful Permanent Residents (green card holders). This includes individuals who may not be lawfully present in the United States, and individuals who have been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

Do I have to live in California?

Yes. SEED funding is only available to California residents starting or growing a business/nonprofit in California.

Does my business have to be registered in California?

SEED funding is only available for people doing business in California. However, businesses/nonprofits do not have to be registered to apply for SEED funding.

How does Immigrants Rising define a “social entrepreneur”?

Social entrepreneurs undertake enterprises that are centered on solving social problems in their communities while simultaneously generating revenue.

We are looking for undocumented entrepreneurs who have the passion, determination, and leadership skills necessary to lead social change businesses and non-profits that are innovative, important, impactful, and sustainable.

Read profiles of our [Previous Entrepreneurship Fund Grantees](#).

What kind of businesses/nonprofits will the SEED funding support?

We will consider applications for businesses/nonprofits that address a variety of needs, target diverse populations, and employ different strategies.

Applicants can engage in any of the following types of business: a sole proprietor, independent contractor, 1099 employee, C-corporation, S-corporation, cooperative, limited liability company, partnership, or limited partnership.

We are open to supporting either nonprofit or for-profit initiatives -- or hybrid projects that include both nonprofit and for-profit components.

We are open to supporting businesses/nonprofits that serve and advocate for undocumented people. We are also open to supporting businesses/non-profits with broader potential impact, as we are certain that undocumented entrepreneurs have ideas that could benefit society in countless ways: projects that strengthen families and build community; projects that advance educational achievement; and projects that broaden economic opportunities; and projects that improve public health or the environment.

We want to support businesses/nonprofits that are sustainable. A sustainable business/nonprofit is one that will continue to grow and function beyond SEED funding. Sustainable projects must demonstrate an understanding of upcoming challenges and uncertainties, and articulate a plan for how to address these challenges and uncertainties. We will evaluate both financial sustainability (steady flow of funding or revenue generation) and programmatic sustainability (ongoing relevance of programs and services).

Most importantly, the projects must create positive social change, as well as be designed and led by undocumented people.

Read profiles of our [Previous Entrepreneurship Fund Grantees](#).

What types of businesses/nonprofits are not eligible to apply?

- Businesses without a physical location in California
- Government entities (other than Native American tribes) or elected official offices
- Businesses primarily engaged in political or lobbying activities (regardless of whether such entities qualify as a 501(c)(3), 501(c)(19), or 501(c)(6))
- Passive businesses, investment companies and investors who file a Schedule E on their personal tax returns
- Churches and other religious institutions (regardless of whether such entities qualify as a 501(c)(3), 501(c)(19), or 501(c)(6))
- Financial businesses primarily engaged in the business of lending, such as banks, finance companies and factoring companies
- Businesses engaged in any activity that is illegal under federal, state or local law
- Businesses of a sexual nature, including businesses which present live performances
- Businesses engaged in any socially undesirable activity or activity that may be considered predatory in nature such as rent-to-own businesses, check cashing businesses, and companies with multi-level marketing practices
- Businesses that restrict patronage for any reason other than capacity
- Speculative businesses
- Multiple business entities, franchises, locations, etc. are not eligible for multiple grants and are only allowed to apply once using their eligible small business with the highest revenue

How does Immigrants Rising define “undocumented”?

We define the term “undocumented” broadly to include all immigrants who reside in the United States without legal status, including all of the following categories:

- Immigrants who entered the country without inspection, entered presenting false documents or overstayed temporary visas, and may now be considered “unlawfully present” in the United States.
- Immigrants who have been granted temporary reprieve from deportation through the federal government’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.
- Immigrants who have been granted prosecutorial discretion through Deferred Action, Stay of Removal or various forms of temporary humanitarian relief but are unable to fully legalize their status.
- Immigrants who are in the process of legalization but currently have no legal status.

Is SEED funding only available to DACA recipients?

Definitely not! We believe that entrepreneurial talent is not limited to undocumented young people with DACA, and that undocumented young people who do not yet have work authorization can still lead entrepreneurial projects. Any undocumented* person is eligible to apply for SEED funding.

*See above for our definition of undocumented.

Is Immigrants Rising seeking applications from a diverse pool of applicants?

Yes! We recognize that the undocumented community is very diverse. We welcome and strongly encourage proposals that reflect and respond to that diversity. We are especially interested in proposals from project leaders from the African and Asian diasporas and from leaders who identify as LGBT, queer, or transgender. We also strongly encourage applications that address the needs and concerns of diverse communities.

Is there an age limit to apply?

There is no age limit.

Funding Questions

How much SEED funding can I apply for?

We will consider requests for one-time, non-renewable grants of \$5,000 or \$10,000.

Who can qualify for the \$5,000 funding?

The \$5,000 grants will be available to individuals starting or growing a business/nonprofit with annual gross business revenue/gross receipts less than \$100,000 in the 2020 taxable year.

Who can qualify for the \$10,000 funding?

The \$10,000 grants will be available to individuals growing a business/nonprofit with annual gross business revenue/gross receipts more than \$100,000 up to \$1,000,000 in the 2020 taxable year.

How much SEED funding will be awarded?

We will disburse \$4.06M in funding through \$5,000 or \$10,000 one-time grants.

What kinds of expenses will SEED funding cover?

We are open to providing support for a wide variety of expenses directly related to your business/nonprofit:

- Business/nonprofit expenses including incorporation, licenses and permits, training and education (that pertains to the business), supplies, marketing, communications, equipment, and repairs.
- All employee expenses including payroll costs, health care benefits, paid sick, medical, or family leave, and insurance premiums.
- Working capital and overhead, including rent, utilities, mortgage principal and interest payments and debt obligations.
- Costs associated with re-opening business operations after being fully or partially closed due to state-mandated COVID-19 health and safety restrictions and business closures.
- Costs associated with complying with COVID-19 federal, state or local guidelines for reopening with required safety protocols, including but not limited to equipment, plexiglass barriers, outdoor dining, PPE supplies, testing, and employee training expenses.

Ineligible Uses of Funds

- Personal expenses or other expenses unrelated to the business;
- Expenses for repairs from damages already covered by insurance;
- Reimbursement to donors for donated items or services;
- Employee bonuses or severance pay.

Will SEED awardees receive additional support beyond financial support?

Yes! SEED awardees will be provided with a wide array of technical assistance offerings, join a national network of undocumented entrepreneurs and freelancers, and get media exposure for their projects. We will partner with established organizations to offer support and guidance to awardees.

Application Questions

Do I have to complete the online training in order to apply for SEED funding?

Yes. You must complete all five modules in the Spark entrepreneurship training (spark.immigrantsrising.org), including all worksheets, to apply for SEED funding.

I'm working in a team. Can more than one of us apply for SEED funding?

No. If you are working in a team, you must select one person to submit one application. Do not submit multiple applications for the same business/non-profit.

I'm leading more than one business/nonprofit. Can I submit more than one application?

No. Each individual will only be eligible to receive one grant. We encourage you to concentrate your efforts on a single business/nonprofit.

How can I preview the application questions?

You can view and print a PDF of the application [here](#).

What should I prepare to submit the application?

We recommend you gather the following materials before you begin:

- California ID or any other form of identification with a California address.
- 2020 Business Tax forms (IRS Form 1040), 2021 Year-to-Date Profit and Loss Statement, Balance Sheet, or Financial Statement (you only need one)
- Business Plan
- Itemized budget for how you will use the grant if awarded

When can I apply?

SEED grant applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the end of the grant period on June 30, 2022 or until funds run out. However, the review of the applications will be conducted according to the schedule below. Applications must be submitted by the deadlines listed below to be considered for review in that cycle.

SEED Grant Application Review Cycle 3 Deadline: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. PT

SEED Grant Application Review Cycle 4 Deadline: Sunday, May 1, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. PT

What criteria will be used to evaluate projects?

The criteria below will be used to evaluate SEED funding applications:

- Viability of the business/nonprofit
- Review of identifiable financial need
- Detailed use of the proceeds of the grant
- The potential of the grant to satisfy the identified financial need
- The potential impact of the grant on overall growth and success

Can people reapply?

If you are NOT selected for a SEED grant, you may submit another grant application in the next funding cycle.

Other

I'd like to support Immigrants Rising's entrepreneurship program. How can I make a donation?

Fantastic. We would love for you to support our work. You can make an online donation to Immigrants Rising [here](#).

How can I learn more about entrepreneurship?

You can learn more about entrepreneurship on our site at immigrantsrising.org/makingmoney.

[Watch this short film](#) to learn more about Immigrants Rising's entrepreneurship programming!

I have more questions...

We welcome your questions! Please email us at entrepreneurship@immigrantsrising.org or schedule a time to speak with us [here](#).