



## MAYOR'S FUND FOR PHILADELPHIA / INNOVATION ADVISORY GROUP Fall 2020 Innovation Fund Grant Guidelines

*The following guidelines concern the application process, eligibility, and criteria for Innovation Fund grants awarded to City of Philadelphia departmental projects, as described below.*

### GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Innovation Fund is a grant opportunity funded by the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia and Verizon, and managed by the Innovation Management team in the City's Office of Innovation and Technology. The Innovation Fund provides grants to launch pilot initiatives proposed by City employees that have the potential to improve the services and functions of municipal government.

The Innovation Fund application process is coordinated by the Innovation Advisory Group – a cross-departmental advisory team of City employees who are trained and invested in seeding innovation – and all final funding decisions are made by the Board of the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia.

The Innovation Fund's application process is unique and is meant to be inclusive, equitable and accessible to any City employee who would like to request funding for a pilot or proof of concept project.

**As of September 2020, the Innovation Fund has \$70,000 to award. Investments are comprised of donations from the Mayor's Fund and Verizon. Projects can receive up to \$10,000, with most awards ranging from \$6,000 - \$8,000.**

### 2020 FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Innovation Fund will prioritize proposals for ideas and projects that:

1. Have never been tried before in Philadelphia
2. Pilot something that is new and different for a given department
3. Push Philadelphia to be the first city to solve a broader problem in a unique way
4. Leverage partnerships and stakeholder collaboration, either internal or external to City government
5. Focus on delivering services more effectively, equitably and efficiently to all residents

### ELIGIBILITY

***Please note: in order to be considered for funding, applications must be submitted according to the deadlines, eligibility, and format as set forth in these guidelines and on the online submission forms.***

- All City of Philadelphia departments and agencies are eligible to apply. As part of the application process, City applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the funding requested cannot be supported through the City's budget, or solely by the City's budget. Applicants will also be expected to demonstrate Department Leadership's commitment to the proposed project.
- Requests may not exceed the Innovation Fund's maximum grant award amount of \$10,000. Please be aware that the average grant amount ranges from \$6,000 to \$8,000. For the 2020 cycle, the Innovation Fund has a total of \$70,000 to distribute.
- The Innovation Fund will not support: Proposals that seek multi-year funding; grants for lobbying or political activity; proposals for activities or services taking place



outside of Philadelphia; proposals that do not satisfy the Eligibility Criteria or Timeline described in these guidelines, or proposals from applicants that previously received a grant from the Fund and did not submit a final report or did not fulfill grantee requirements. Additionally, grants must fund future projects and will not reimburse past expenses.

## APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The Innovation Fund has a unique evaluation process that aims to help employees think strategically about their potential initiatives. While we value the opportunity to fund a select group of projects, we also strive to provide structure and guidance through the Idea Lifecycle, allowing applicants to critically examine all components of their idea, connect with relevant stakeholders, use funds effectively, and create realistic and impactful outcomes.

***Although not all projects will receive financial support from the Innovation Fund, we will do our best to offer feedback and capacity support to all applicants.***

<p>Friday, October 2 5:00pm</p>	<p>Initial submission form is due; applications must be submitted via the online submission form linked below.</p> <p><b>Innovation Fund Application is <a href="#">HERE</a>.</b></p> <p>All submissions will be reviewed and scored using an appropriate rubric developed by the Innovation Advisory Group and the Mayor's Fund Grants Committee and staff.</p> <p>Please direct any questions or issues to Stephanie Orlando, Innovation Coordinator, at <a href="mailto:stephanie.orlando@phila.gov">stephanie.orlando@phila.gov</a>.</p>
<p>Week of October 12</p>	<p>Applicants are notified of status. High-scoring applicants will be invited to attend a <i>mandatory</i> virtual Pitch Session where they will workshop their proposal with members of the Innovation Advisory Group. Low-scoring applicants will be invited to attend an <i>optional</i> virtual session where they can receive feedback on their submission and explore other potential funding avenues and growth opportunities.</p>
<p>October 19 – October 29</p>	<p>Virtual Pitch Sessions will be scheduled during these two weeks. Please note: these pitch sessions are mandatory, and must be scheduled during one of the available dates / times.</p>
<p>Friday, October 30</p>	<p>Applicants are notified of status. A select group of submissions will be invited to submit a full proposal to the Mayor's Fund for funding consideration. We will provide further instructions about the full proposal in this email.</p>
<p>Friday, November 20 5:00pm</p>	<p>Final applications are due to Stephanie Orlando (<a href="mailto:stephanie.orlando@phila.gov">stephanie.orlando@phila.gov</a>) and Eliza Pollack (<a href="mailto:eliza.pollack@phila.gov">eliza.pollack@phila.gov</a>).</p>



**The Mayor's Fund  
for Philadelphia**



Office of  
**Innovation Management**

	<p>Full proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the Mayor's Fund Grants Committee and staff. Final funding decisions will be made by the Fund's Board.</p>
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## **EXAMPLES OF PAST INNOVATION FUND PROJECTS**

### ***Plants Make Positive Places (Parks & Recreation)***

Plants Make Positive Places (P3) was designed to test and measure the feasibility of expanding plant propagation, reuse and distribution within the Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR) system to expand plants' positive aesthetic, educational and ecological impact. The pilot specifically aimed to allow PPR staff to understand the logistics of identifying, retrieving and distributing bulbs for replanting by managing a small number of garden sites to learn the nuances required to successfully re-plant various materials. P3 planned to leverage partnerships with the Love Your Park and Farm Philly programs to help with the logistics, manpower and resources needed to plant and maintain the pilot garden sites.

In the year after the pilot, P3 successfully hired a staff member to run the program, has created more gardens using the process, and has integrated garden inspections into the PPR Standards Program.

### ***Digital Skills & Bicycle Thrills (OAE / Indego / OTIS)***

Computer Skills and Bicycle Thrills aimed to increase the number of safe and healthy bike riders on Philadelphia's streets in low-income neighborhoods, while simultaneously increasing participants' digital literacy skills. This cohort-based, community education program provides up to 40 Philly residents (18+) with free memberships to Indego—Philadelphia's Bike Share program—for six months, in exchange for completing an online bike safety certification program at select KEYSLOT computer labs near Indego locations.

In June 2017, the Office of Adult Education, in partnership with the Better Bike Share Partnership and the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems, graduated its fourth cohort of DSBT. The Office of Adult Education continues to serve as the organizing department, and they have annually prioritized bringing on program managers to run the program.

**[Click here](#) if you're interested in reading more about our most recent Innovation Fund cycle.**