



## ***MBVB FY25 Mini-grant Program FAQ's***

### **Q. Who is eligible to apply for a mini-grant?**

A. The applicant must be a member of the MBVB based in one of the 19 towns that comprise MetroWest or be devoted to attracting potential visitors to the 19 towns. Our region includes: Ashland, Bellingham, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland and Westborough. If you are not currently a member, you must apply and pay for your membership PRIOR to applying for a grant to be considered.

### **Q. What are my chances of being awarded funding?**

A. While we do not guarantee funding to all applicants because we do not know how many requests we will receive each year, we do make every effort to award at least some funding to every eligible project. In the last grant cycle, 100% of eligible projects were awarded funding. Because grant applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, the application process will be closed once funds are exhausted. We encourage you to apply early for funding.

### **Q. Do I have to be a non-profit to apply?**

A. No, both for-profit and non-profit organizations may apply, though the funding awarded is different for each. Non-profit organizations may apply for up to 25% of their project. For-profit organizations may apply for up to 10% of their project.

### **Q. What types of costs are eligible?**

A. These are marketing and advertising grants. Print, digital, TV, radio, billboard, website and social media advertising can be included in your project. Social media can ONLY be included when run through an agency capable of invoicing the MBVB. You may also use these funds for marketing collateral such as brochures, fliers, etc. These grants do NOT cover graphic design, staff hours, agency commissions, or non-advertising related expenses such as operational costs, food & beverage, etc.

### **Q. What is the MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau Co-op Advertising Program? How can I use my mini-grant towards this program?**

A. This program allows member organizations to "buy in" to large advertising campaigns that the MBVB runs for a fraction of the price. Each full page print ad in the co-op campaign features 6-8 organizations. Each organization pays a portion of the ad cost, thereby allowing them the greater exposure that comes with full page advertising in regional and national publications for a much smaller investment. You may apply for a mini-grant to be used towards our Co-op Advertising Program. The same rules apply: contract for a certain number of ad placements, and your mini-grant could cover 10-25% of your campaign. You will be invoiced for the balance. If your advertising commitment is dependent upon receiving a mini-grant, you may wait for mini-grant decisions to sign your co-op ad agreement.

### **Q. Can I use my grant towards other MBVB advertising such as banner ads or the visitors guide?**

A. You may use your mini-grant towards banner ads on the MBVB website or in our newsletter. Ads in our print visitors guide are NOT eligible.

**Q. Will these grants cover operational expenses for an event, for example, my DJ or catering?**

A. No, these grants will not cover operational expenses. They cover advertising only.

**Q. Will these grants cover marketing expenses such as printed collateral, fliers for an event, or yard signs?**

A. These grants can cover most marketing expenses when the project targets visitors to the region. The grants do NOT cover local advertising such as yard signs or print ads in your town's paper.

**Q. How much can I apply for?**

A. Grants of \$1,000 - \$10,000 will be awarded during this grant cycle. For non-profits: grants will cover up to 25% of your total ad budget, not to exceed \$10,000. So if your ad campaign is \$4,000, you can receive up to \$1,000. If your ad budget is \$50,000, you can receive up to \$10,000. For for-profits: grants will cover up to 10% of your total ad budget, not to exceed \$10,000. So if your ad campaign is \$10,000, you can receive up to \$1,000. If your ad budget is \$100,000, you can receive up to \$10,000. Not all applicants may be awarded funds, and not all awards will be for the requested amount. Grants cannot cover ads that have already been contracted for, unless those contracts can be reissued with the MBVB as the agency of record. Grants cannot cover any advertising that has already run.

**Q. I am a local business who only draws from MetroWest. Can I apply for a campaign that just advertises to my surrounding community?**

A. No. These grants are intended to drive traffic into MetroWest from outside the region. At least part of your marketing campaign MUST target people outside of the region.

**Q. When are applications due, and will late applications be accepted?**

A. Applications open October 1, 2024 and close November 30, 2024 at 11:59 PM EDT (Midnight). Award decisions will be sent via email on a rolling basis as applications are reviewed, but no later than Dec 15. Late applications will only be considered if we have additional, unawarded grant funds, which is never guaranteed.

**Q. Are these reimbursement grants?**

A. No. Your vendor must invoice the MBVB for the total cost of your project. We will then invoice you for the project amount less your grant award. You must pay your invoice to us no later than June 1, 2025 or risk losing your award.

**Q. What is the timeline for projects?**

A. Projects must be invoiced from the vendor by May 15, 2025. The grantee must pay the MBVB their portion of the project no later than June 1, 2025, or risk losing their grant award.

**Q. Does the MBVB have to approve my ad creative?**

A. Yes. You must include either the MBVB logo or the line "Funded, in part, by the MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau" on your project. We must approve this funding acknowledgement PRIOR to your piece being published. We will not control the content of your advertising outside of ensuring the funding acknowledgement is in place.

**Q. My project timeline changed. Can I have an extension to the May 15 deadline for project invoicing?**

A. No, all projects MUST be invoiced by May 15 or the grant funding will be lost.

**Q. Who do I contact with questions about the mini-grant program or the application process?**

A. Most questions can be answered in the initial information and eligibility section of the application or these FAQ's. Should you have additional questions, please contact Stacey David, MBVB Executive Director, at [sdavid@metrowestvisitors.org](mailto:sdavid@metrowestvisitors.org).

**Please make sure** that you clearly detail in your application the following: who you are as an organization, the nature of the marketing project proposed and how that will drive visitors to MetroWest, any prior experience or successes with these types of initiatives, and details of your budget and plans so that we understand exactly what you wish to do and how you plan to accomplish it.