1) **What is this funding opportunity or Request For Proposals (RFP)?**
The Citi Foundation has launched a $25MM RFP to support nonprofit organizations that are providing direct technical assistance to small businesses owned by people of color which have been disproportionately impacted by the unprecedented health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Selected nonprofit organizations will receive up to $500,000 in one-year, unrestricted grant support.

2) **Why is this RFP focused on providing technical assistance to small businesses owned by people of color that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19?**
According to the Small Business Credit Survey published by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in February 2021, “firms owned by people of color, smaller firms, and leisure and hospitality firms were in weaker financial condition.” Similarly, research published by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) in June 2020, and reinforced by the US Chamber of Commerce’s Q4 2020 Small Business Index, indicates that small businesses owned by people of color have been disproportionately impacted by the unprecedented health, social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; facing higher rates of closure and sharper declines in cash balances as compared to white-owned small businesses. Moreover, the research shows that Black-owned businesses closed at more than twice the rate of white-owned businesses and experienced declines in cash balances nine times as steep as white-owned businesses. Although Black-owned businesses have been impacted more than any other racial group, Latinx- and Asian-owned businesses have also experienced outsized closures and declines in cash balances in comparison to white-owned businesses.

3) **What types of small business technical assistance is the Citi Foundation interested in supporting through this RFP?**
Citi Foundation seeks to support nonprofit organizations that are delivering direct technical assistance to help small businesses owned by people of color that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 to recover and rebuild. Technical assistance could include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

- **Financial and Application Assistance:** Support for identifying and completing applications for financial assistance programs, preparing financial documentation, warm referrals to lenders/other funders, and, in some cases, delivering grants or direct cash assistance programs
- **Human Resources:** Hiring and staffing, employee safety, compliance with federal and/or local employment laws (paid sick leave, minimum wage), benefits and relief and tax forms
- **Technology Solutions:** Broadband and computer access, e-commerce platforms, systems networking and remote office set-up, backup/redundancy disaster planning, cyber security, accounting software implementation, POS software implementation (for retail/restaurants)
• **Legal:** Compliance, contracts, lease review and negotiation, licensing, regulation and permits, buying or selling a business, payment disruptions/delays and collections, employment laws

• **Marketing and Communications:** Market and customer analysis, competitive analysis, digital, social, and community media, industry partnerships and referrals, brand/identity development, collateral design, direct marketing assistance, earned media/press/PR planning, merchandising, signage/display development

• **Real Estate and Property Services:** Lease negotiation, relocation assistance, site acquisition, regulatory support, provision of office, work or community space

• **Strategic and Financial Planning:** Succession planning, mentoring/coaching, cash and debt management, implementing/upgrading accounting standards, data and documentation, operations and risk assessment, inventory and supply chain management, local market evaluation

• **Shared Services:** Accounting, payroll, benefits, administrative, and/or loaned executive

4) **Do applicants need to be working within a specific geography to be eligible for this RFP?**

To be eligible to apply, nonprofit organizations must be able to demonstrate that they are actively delivering technical assistance to small businesses owned by people of color that are located in at least one or more of the following geographies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US States / Territories</th>
<th>Eligible County(ies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California – Northern counties</td>
<td>Alameda; Contra Costa; Fresno; Kern; Kings; Marin; Merced; Napa; Sacramento; San Francisco; San Joaquin; San Mateo; Santa Clara; Sonoma; Stanislaus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California – Southern counties</td>
<td>Los Angeles; Orange; Riverside; San Bernardino; San Diego; Ventura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Fairfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Broward; Duval; Miami-Dade; Palm Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Cook; DuPage; Elgin; Lake; McHenry; Will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Montgomery; Prince George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Bergen; Essex; Hudson; Passaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Bronx; Kings; Nassau; New York; Queens; Richmond; Rockland; Suffolk; Westchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>Territory-wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>Statewide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Collin; Dallas; Denton; Hunt; Kaufman; Rockwall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Alexandria City; Arlington; Fairfax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5) **What type of organizations are eligible to apply?**

Applicants must:
- Have IRS 501c(3) status and a Federal Employment Identification Number
- Have three years of audited financial statements. This may be covered by two audits that include two years of comparative financials and/or three individual audits. Applicants must provide a 2019 audit or later, or at least some part of the 2019 fiscal year must be audited.
- Have a mission to serve low- and moderate-income individuals and communities
- Provide direct technical assistance (as described in question #3) to small businesses owned by people of color that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
- Have a current portfolio of small business technical assistance that falls within one or more of the Citi Foundation’s target geographies as listed in question #4.

6) **What type of organization will not be considered?**

- Organizations not incorporated as 501c(3)
- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender identity or expression, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran’s status or other legally protected personal characteristics or status
- Religious or fraternal organizations (unless they are engaged in projects that benefit the entire community)
- Private foundations
- Organizations that require the use of a Fiscal Sponsor or Agent
- Organizations that don’t meet the eligibility criteria noted in #5

7) **Are current Citi Foundation grantees eligible to apply?**

Yes. A current Citi Foundation grantee is eligible to apply; however, their application will need to demonstrate how additional support would enable the organization to dramatically enhance the impact it will have on small businesses owned by people of color, above and beyond the activities that the Citi Foundation is already supporting.

8) **Can a local affiliate of a national organization apply?**

Yes. Local affiliates of national organizations can apply.

9) **Are audited financials a requirement?**

Yes. At least three years of audited financial statements are required as part of the application. This may be covered by two audits that include two years of comparative financials and/or three individual audits. Applicants must provide a 2019 audit or later, or at least some part of the 2019 fiscal year must be audited.

10) **What is the size and structure of the grant award?**

One-year, unrestricted grants of up to $500,000 will be awarded.
11) **What can grant funds not be used for?**
Grant funds cannot be used for political or lobbying purposes, including without limitation, independent expenditures.

12) **Should grant proceeds be presented as restricted on the grantee’s balance sheet?**
No. Grants awards will be unrestricted, with the provision that no proceeds from the Citi Foundation can be used for political or lobbying purposes, including without limitation, independent expenditures.

13) **What is the application process?**
Nonprofit organizations interested in applying should request access to the online application by completing the registration form. If your organization is eligible to apply, you will gain access to the application within 3 business days of submitting the registration form. Organizations interested in applying are encouraged to complete the registration form and, if eligible, access the application as early as possible.

14) **What is the submission deadline and award timeline?**
Once an applicant has been granted access to the online portal, the applicant should submit a complete grant application online by **April 12, 2021 at 4pm ET**. The Citi Foundation reserves the right to ask clarifying questions. The Citi Foundation seeks to notify applicants of funding decisions by July 2021.

15) **What is the grant term and what are the reporting requirements?**
The Citi Foundation seeks to disburse grant payments in July 2021 and the grant period is 12 months from the date the grant is awarded. Selected organizations will be required to submit an interim report and a final report online.

16) **What is the grant making timeline for this funding opportunity?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>RFP Issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16 at 2PM ET</td>
<td><strong>Informational Webinar</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12 at 4PM ET</td>
<td>Application Submission Deadline/ RFP Closes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Grant Awards Announcement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17) **What should applicants do if they have questions about this RFP?**
The Citi Foundation will host a webinar on **March 16 at 2PM ET** to review the application process and to answer questions from potential applicants about this funding opportunity. If possible, please send your questions in advance of the webinar to citifoundationrfp@ci.com. A recording of the webinar will be made available for those unable to join. **Registration for the webinar is required. Please register here.**
18) Who do I contact for more information?
   If you have further questions, please contact citifoundationrfp@citi.com