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**DOWNTOWN
LONG BEACH
ALLIANCE**

DLBA'S WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ACCELERATOR ACCEPTING GRANT APPLICATIONS THROUGH OCTOBER 15

The program is funded by Farmers & Merchants Bank and presented in partnership with the Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

(October 1, 2020 – Long Beach, CA) The [Downtown Long Beach Alliance](#) (DLBA) is now accepting applications for its Woman-Owned Business Accelerator (WOBA) Grant Program. Funded by Long Beach-based [Farmers & Merchants Bank](#) (F&M) and presented in partnership with the [Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship](#) at California State University, Long Beach, the Accelerator Program provides grant funding and coaching to support women-owned businesses in Downtown Long Beach. Up to five businesses can be awarded a total of \$10,000 (to be split among them), plus one-on-one business development advisement from Downtown-based [Fuller Management Corporation](#).

Applications are due October 15, and may be found at www.downtownlongbeach.org/invest/grants/woman-owned-business-accelerator-grant/.

Now in its third year, DLBA is accepting Women-Owned Business Accelerator applications from existing Downtown businesses owned or majority-owned by women, including those that are in the pre-revenue or start-up phase that have not yet achieved sales.

“Farmers & Merchants Bank recognizes the value women bring to the entrepreneurial makeup of Downtown Long Beach. An investment in them is an investment in the future of our Downtown economy,” said F&M President W. Henry Walker. “We are pleased to partner with the DLBA on this important opportunity for Downtown’s women-owned businesses.” The Bank has committed to sponsoring this program for three years.

“We thank F&M Bank for providing the financial backing to women-owned businesses in our Downtown,” said Austin Metoyer, DLBA Economic Development & Policy Manager. “Now more than ever, DLBA is focused on supporting inclusion and prosperity in our Downtown ecosystem, and partnerships like this one with F&M help create more opportunities.”

Applicants are required to participate in a four-part workshop series held by the Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship that will cover the following topics: supply chain management, knowing your customer, social media and digital marketing, and financial management tools. “These workshops are designed to help business owners set themselves up for success. Whether they are ultimately selected as an awardee or not, participants will leave this experience armed with key business strategies,” said Dr. Wade Martin, Director of the Institute.

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be considered:

- Must be located within the [DLBA's Downtown Business & Parking Improvement Area \(DPBIA\)](#) and have an active business license within DPBIA boundaries.
- Must be a for-profit business
- Must have fewer than 24 employees
- Must have or be able to raise matching funds to receive their award

The \$10,000 pool of grant funds will be divided among awardees based upon need. Awardees will be connected with Kena Fuller, operator of the Downtown-based business consultancy [Fuller Management Corporation](#), to schedule one-on-one coaching regarding business development and planning. Fuller’s consultations are catered to each business, and cover topics ranging from marketing strategies, organizational structure, strategic planning, and more.

Selected finalists will be notified on October 26. Finalists will present their business model for final selection during

DLBA's Economic Development Committee virtual meeting on Wednesday, November 11. Grantees will be announced the same day.

Those interested in applying may direct questions to DLBA Economic Development & Policy Manager Austin Metoyer at AustinM@dlba.org.

About the Downtown Long Beach Alliance: The Downtown Long Beach Alliance is a non-profit, community-based organization whose mission is to cultivate, preserve and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous Downtown. By balancing the interests of the residents, as well as businesses, the DLBA creates tangible progress by way of vested interest and solidified partnerships across local, municipal, and commercial lines. For additional information, visit www.downtownlongbeach.org, follow on Facebook @downtownlongbeach, and follow on Twitter and Instagram @DLBA.

About Farmers & Merchants Bank: Founded in Long Beach in 1907 by C.J. Walker, Farmers & Merchants Bank provides white-glove service to clients at 25 branches across Orange County, Long Beach, the South Bay and Santa Barbara, as well as through robust Online and Mobile Banking platforms. The Bank offers commercial and small business banking, business loan programs, home loans, and a robust offering consumer retail banking products, including checking, savings, and youth accounts. Farmers & Merchants Bank is a California state-chartered bank with deposits insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (Member FDIC) and an Equal Housing Lender. For more information about F&M, please visit the website, www.fmb.com.

About CSULB's Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship: The Institute at CSULB was created to be a central hub for innovators and entrepreneurs in Long Beach. Our programming and services support long-term economic growth that is inclusive and sustainable for our diverse community. The mission of the Institute is to provide programming and guidance for innovators and entrepreneurs that leads to success. We are committed to helping create economic growth for the region through a strong small business foundation that becomes the engine for increased employment opportunities and builds wealth for these business owners. For more information on all of our programs and activities, please visit www.csulb.edu/iie.

About Fuller Management Corporation: Fuller Management Corporation (FMC) is a privately held business development, coaching, and advisement firm based in Long Beach, California. Specializing in small business development, FMC proudly serves organizations ranging from single person operations to 100+ personnel. With emphasis in targeted niche markets, FMC provides customized business development services designed to support client growth and sustainability in an array of professional industries, tailored to the needs of each organization. For more information, please visit www.fullerpros.com.

