



2017 CREATE COLUMBUS COMMISSION GRANTS

A. Mission & Purpose of Create Columbus Commission Grants

The Create Columbus Commission (CCC) has been charged to help the community answer this question: “How can Columbus better attract and retain young professionals – the most educated and mobile demographic in the workforce?” Through diligent research and studies commissioned by the CCC, four priority areas have been identified to support the attraction and retention of young professional talent. Cities with a thriving young professional population:

- 1) Improve personal financial health and wellness
- 2) Decrease dependency on personal vehicles
- 3) Amplify the urban pulse of the city
- 4) Position young professionals as co-creators of the city

Projects funded by the CCC will reflect at least one of the identified priorities and will benefit both future and current young professional residents of Columbus, generally aged 25-35. The priorities are described in detail below.

B. The Four Priorities of the Create Columbus Commission

1) Improve personal and financial health and wellness

Wealth is often measured by home ownership and investment for retirement and savings. A 2013 study by Urban Institute showed that young professionals in their 20s and 30s have accumulated 7% less wealth than their 1983 predecessors, and those aged 29 to 37 had their wealth fall by 21%. The same study shows that this age group accumulates far less non-retirement assets and business equity, 22% and 15%, respectively. Two big factors are the increasing of home/apartment prices and the explosion of student debt.

The burden of debt and increasing cost of living in desired neighborhoods in Columbus keeps young professionals renting instead of buying property and ties up money from otherwise being invested in emergency savings or financing their retirement. The CCC believes that by fast tracking debt repayment among residents in Columbus, the region’s competitiveness for talent will be improved.

The City of Columbus can better attract and retain millennial talent if there is greater opportunity for young people to set themselves up for long-term financial success. **Potential grantees committed to improving personal and financial health and wellness of young professionals will have programs that include one of the following goals:**

- Freeing up income to invest for the long-term by
 - Relieving the burden of student loan debt by fast-tracking repayment
 - Increasing the affordable living options by expanding desirability of central city neighborhoods
- Increasing the potential for per capita income growth by

- o Improving the pathway to entrepreneurship
- o Supporting the health of small businesses

2) Decrease dependency on personal vehicles

The City of Columbus has greatly benefitted from the addition of the C-Bus as well as Uber, Car2Go, and CoGo establishing operations in the market. This diversification of transportation options has given residents more options for getting where they want to go when they want to go without the hassle of owning a car. Amidst the ongoing planning processes occurring in the community to improve public transportation, the CCC recognizes that the reality today is that you cannot depend on one transportation alternative to get anywhere you want to go. As a result, personal vehicles are less of a necessity among residents and hike the cost of living. The Urban Land Institute found in their “America in 2015” study that less reliance on a car appeals especially to millennials and renters, almost two-thirds of whom (63% and 64%, respectively) would prefer to live in a “car-optional” place. Approximately 60% of the residents of big and medium-sized cities, as well as African Americans and Latinos, are in favor of car-optional living.

Rather than waiting for long-term improvements to existing systems, to attract and retain talent today, the CCC believes there should be a sense of urgency applied to adopting technological improvements that ease multi-modal route planning, simplify payment processes, and maximize rider convenience.

Furthermore, as we look to the future of transit from a technological point of view, driverless cars have arrived. The bigger task is for cities to integrate them. [Chicago is quietly preparing](#) itself to be a testing ground for driverless cars as officials are currently in the process of identifying “innovation zones” within the city that could pilot autonomous vehicle projects and other new technologies. This summer the [University of Michigan opened a 32-acre facility to give the auto industry a hub](#) for researching self-driving vehicles, an investment that could boost Detroit’s ability to compete in the auto industry’s emerging tech war. Uber Technologies has quietly set up shop in Pittsburgh partnering with [Carnegie Mellon to establish its Advanced Technologies Center](#), where the company will test autonomous cars. Columbus needs to boldly get in the game to compete for the economic benefit of this disruption. The region is well positioned to be an early adopter of the technology and forward thinking about the applications due to the density of world-class research institutions in our community.

The CCC sees the disruption in the automotive industry as a significant shift in the way residents will commute. Young professionals are attracted to forward-thinking and affordable cities, and the incorporation of driverless car technology in a city will be a desired qualification for future and current residents. The driverless car presents a myriad of consumer benefit including a dramatic improvement in safety, inevitable boost in convenience, as well as exciting enhancements to one’s ability to digitally socialize and work while traveling. All benefits are desires identified among millennials for what they want from alternative transportation in the Transit Center’s 2014 survey about the attitudes of riders.

In summary, decreasing the need for a personal vehicle would lower the cost of living and facilitate a lifestyle desired by young professionals. **Potential grantees committed to making Columbus a more “car-optional” city will have programs that include one of the following goals:**

- Support and invest in the diversification and expansion of transportation options (E.g. Co-Go, Car2Go, Uber, COTA, C-Bus, bike lanes, etc.)
- Fiercely prioritize the user experience in all alternative transportation improvements, expansion, and additions
- Create a unified information portal that provides residents and visitors a comprehensive view of transportation options in the Region to simplify route planning, access purchase, and understanding
- Adopt technology solutions that establish automated, on-demand, and mobile payment processes
- View the various transportation networks as part of a regional network of transportation options
- Seek regional solutions for consolidating processes and connecting the user experience in order to simplify the transition between bus lines, modal types, and vendors/platforms
- Ensure a safe and connected rider experience for all entities in the Regional Transportation Network
- Share forward-thinking innovation and technology advances in transportation (E.g. Driverless cars, car-sharing)
- Position Columbus as a hub for the future of transportation by aggressively marketing our research assets and test-market attributes
- Adopt technology solutions that make navigating Columbus easier and more efficient for the rider
- Work collaboratively with industry to develop model policies that pro-actively invite autonomous vehicles to the Columbus market

3) Amplify the urban pulse of Columbus

The 2014 Columbus Reputation Study commissioned by Experience Columbus found that the city's greatest barrier in attracting visitors, and we would also argue young professionals, is the lack of pulse. Pulse defines the ease of finding things to do and the amount of nightlife and urban vitality. It has been argued in countless reports on millennials that young professionals are increasingly moving to cities. A 2014 study by City Observatory found that in the 51 largest metropolitan areas, college-educated young professionals are more than twice as likely to live in close-in urban neighborhoods.

YPs today want an active lifestyle in a walkable area where they can easily find fun things to do. Columbus needs to overcome the perception gap related to what there is to do and be discovered in Columbus. In the process, there continues to be room for improvement, most notably in making our downtown and surrounding neighborhoods more pedestrian friendly, which will in-turn facilitate a more urban, dense and walkable environment.

The strength of our urban neighborhoods is foundational to our city's ability to accelerate the pulse. It is important that we are continuously investing and facilitating vibrancy in our neighborhoods. Making the areas closest to downtown hot beds for local business growth and affordable living is important for attracting young professional residents.



The goal with the CCC's current work is to identify what is working in neighborhoods across the city and around the world so that we can amplify our pulse by building upon our strengths and adopting the best practices and further compete as a city.

Potential grantees committed to amplifying the urban pulse of Columbus will have programs that include one of the following goals:

- Encourage and support out-of-the box thinking about how we use our public spaces, especially during the winter
- Remove barriers from making imaginative ideas a reality
- Foster local business and retail success in the urban core and surrounding areas
- Eliminate surface parking lots on key corners
- Encourage mixed-use development

4) *Position young professionals as co-creators of the city*

In almost every facet, Columbus is a different city today than five years ago. As we continue to grow bigger, our competition gets fiercer, our successes higher profile, our expectations more demanding, and our problems more complex. Nonetheless, amidst the unprecedented growth, Columbus' spirit of *collaboration* endures and secures our ability to be intentional about the path we take forward in creating our city's future.

The CCC believes that Columbus' competitiveness will accelerate if young professionals are intentionally engaged as active collaborators and co-creators of the city's future. Having young professionals at the table as equal contributors will help the city avoid complacency, sustain a sense of urgency for progress, and commit to making forward-thinking change. **Potential grantees committed to positioning young professional as co-creators of Columbus will have programs that include one of the following goals:**

- Increase transparency by maintaining accessible and up to date records of all appointments made by city and county officials.
- Increase and continuing city and county appointments of young professionals onto key boards, councils, task forces, and commissions (E.g. COTA, MORPC, CDDC, JET Task Force, etc.)
- Utilize the Create Columbus Commission as a thought leader on the young professional experience and leverage their ability to convene around important community issues
- Formally recognize the talents and contributions of young professionals that are helping to shape our city's future
- Make it a priority to have young professionals represented at the board level of non-profits and community organizations

C. Eligibility and Criteria

Grant applications will be accepted from non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 standing. If you are not a 501(c)3 non-profit you may partner with a 501(c)3 non-profit organization as your fiscal agent.

Applicants are required to provide their IRS Letter of Designation to confirm 501(c)3 status. Please



attach this document as a separate pdf document.

If an applicant is using a fiscal agent, a signed authorization letter from the chair or president of the fiscal agent's board, along with that organization's IRS Letter of Designation must be submitted with the grant application. No exceptions. Please attach this document as a separate pdf document.

This is NOT a reimbursement grant. All receipts must be dated after grant checks have been issued.

Letters of Intent should be less than three pages and address the following:

- An overview of the applicant, the project and how much money is being requested
- A description of the organization or group of people represented
- The needs being met if the grant is funded (target population, geographical area)
- Methodology to solve the need (what the actual project is)
- Other funding sources

D. Grant Funding Amounts

The City of Columbus will disburse to \$70,000 for grants in 2017. Applicants can request any amount, but should be advised that historically disbursements have not exceeded \$10,000.

The Create Columbus Commission Grants Committee evaluates each letter of intent on its own merit. Upon review of the letter of intent, the grant committee will invite select applicants the opportunity to submit a full grant proposal. Full proposals will be presented to the full Commission for review and a vote. Final decisions are not up for appeal; however, applicants may re-apply during the next grants cycle. Also note that the Create Columbus Commission has the discretion to reduce the amount of a grant request, or accept with conditions as they see fit.

The Grants Committee may recommend one of the following four actions:

- Approval for full or partial funding
- Approval for full or partial funding with stipulations
- Denial with suggestions for resubmission of request in the next grant cycle
- Denial of request

E. Timeline

Letters of intent are due Friday, April 7, 2017. Please complete the application form at:

<http://ahut.us/2017-Grant-LOI>

Applicants chosen to submit a full grant proposal will be notified after Friday, April 28, 2017. Final grant selections will be made on Tuesday, July 11, 2017.

Disbursement of grant funds will occur in September.

Grant Workshops

The Create Columbus Commission provides workshops for grant applicants. Each grant workshop offers:



CREATE COLUMBUS COMMISSION
GRANTS PROGRAM 2017
REVISION MARCH 16, 2017

- Explanation of Create Columbus Grants Program and the intent of the grant funds
- Review of grant application guidelines, sample application, and strengths of previously awarded grants
- Q&A session
- Opportunity to work one-on-one, directly with the Create Columbus Grant Committee members who will be voting on the applications. This will help you in drafting, revising, and promoting your initiative so it has the best chance of being awarded funding

2017 Grant Application Workshops:

Wednesday March 15th, 5pm-8pm

[Late Night Slice](#)

268 S 4th St, Columbus, OH 43215
Upstairs Room

Saturday March 18th, 1pm-4pm

[Northwood + High Building](#)

2231 N High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43202
Room 100

Friday March 31st, 9am-12pm

[Columbus Main Library](#)

96 S Grant Ave, Columbus, OH 43215
Main Library Meeting Room 2A

Question? Reach out to Josh Lapp at createcolumbusgrant@gmail.com