



IMAN – Muslim Run Campaign for Health, Wellness, and Healing
Healthy Marketplace
Call for Proposals

Background

Many of Chicago’s inner-city neighborhoods qualify as “food deserts”—spaces with little or no access to large scale supermarkets with fresh food or produce. Oftentimes communities are void of choice and resources to consume fresh produce as part of their daily diet, and are left to rely on corner and/or liquor stores that provide a limited choice for neighborhood residents.

The Inner-City Muslim Action Network’s (IMAN’s) Muslim Run Campaign for Health, Wellness, and Healing was created to address a long history of injurious business practices, ingrained racial tensions, and unhealthy food options at inner-city corner stores. Since its launch, Muslim Run has focused on four critical goals:

- 1) Developing alternative business models for Muslim-run stores on Chicago’s South Side.
- 2) Using public policy to promote lasting change toward food justice.
- 3) Launching an education campaign that stresses the benefits of healthier lifestyles.
- 4) Healing racial tensions between Muslim store owners and their mostly Black patrons.

Healthy Marketplace Project

IMAN’s larger corner store work is expanding to support the development of alternative business models for stores on Chicago’s South and West Sides. IMAN is interested in supporting the work of current store owners, private investors, and property owners who are determined to see an alternative to the typical corner store model and provide easily accessible fresh food resources to communities on the south side.

IMAN is commencing the conversion of a local corner store and neighboring commercial space located at 63rd and Racine into a Healthy Marketplace. The Healthy Marketplace will consist of two businesses: a small scale grocery and an adjacent business that aligns with the mission of providing fresh foods and healthy options for the consumer.

This conversion requires substantive changes to the actual building structure to cater to the layout of the adjacent business, henceforth referred to as the “incubating subsidy.” The incubating subsidy is intended to complement the neighboring corner store and contribute to the transformation of the street corner into a Healthy Marketplace.

A successful incubating subsidy requires leadership in the management of the employees to implement daily routines to provide fresh and healthy prepared food choices. This includes setting up procedures not limited to handling, managing, and preparing fresh food items.



The incubating subsidy is expected to be a place of small scale gatherings that allows small seminars/workshops related to healthy lifestyles. This may require the execution of regular meetings that invite community members to learn about the advantages of incorporating fresh foods into their daily diet. Henceforth, “community” will refer to those who will be served by the incubating subsidy.

This project is designed to build relationships with community members, leaders, and small scale grocery store owners to advance community wellness. Partnership and engagement with community members are key in this process.

The business owner is encouraged to employ neighborhood residents and will be required to advertise employment opportunities and conduct interviews that are fair, proactive, and encouraging of resident applications.

The Goals for the Incubating Subsidy

- 1) To introduce a viable alternative business model that can create a domino effect amongst other local business owners and corner stores owners.
- 2) To demonstrate a viable alternative business model to aspiring entrepreneurs from within the community.
- 3) To conduct an educational program that works with community leaders, residents and business owners to encourage a shift towards healthy eating among adults?? and children.
- 4) To open avenues for dialogue and partnership between residents and corner store owners in order to deepen reconciliation efforts between Arab and Black communities on the South Side.
- 5) To create examples in the community of sustainable, viable business models that, in turn, encourage larger businesses to see the community as able and growing consumers and partners in business.
- 6) To create opportunities for community members to be trained and employed with local businesses, focusing special attention on residents who have criminal records and may have challenges finding employment.

Overall Guidelines For Incubating Subsidy

The incubating subsidy must:

- 1) be used for the development of the business, including but not limited to brick and mortar enhancements, employment, training and fostering partnerships.
- 2) be used at the intended marketplace location of 63rd & Racine in Chicago



- 3) participate in a six-month review of allocation and use of the incubating subsidy by the granting organization (IMAN).
- 4) not be used for private contracts that are not specific to the alternative business /corner store.

Eligibility Criteria

All recipients must:

- 1) have a viable business plan.
- 2) be a local business owner/entity/ corner store owner
or
- 3) be an established business owner with ties to the community
or
- 4) be an established investor who has a history of investment in the community.
- 5) be an established business owner who can demonstrate ties with the community with a focus on training and development of community members.

Selection Criteria

The Committee awarding for the future business owner will look for the following criteria to be met in the selection process:

- 1) The applicant must demonstrate the financial standing to successfully participate in the process of developing an alternative business. The Committee will look into things such as but not limited to credit history, bankruptcy patterns, local or state business violations and good standing in the community.
- 2) The applicant must demonstrate the character standing of a business owner/investor who has indicated prior intent to contribute to the economy of the community by engaging with community residents in a positive way or providing products in a manner that serves for the betterment of the community.
- 3) The applicant must demonstrate the ability to work with community members in training and by employing members of the community. Factors that will be looked into include, but are not limited to, past engagement with residents seeking job re-entry opportunities and programs.
- 4) The applicant must be open and willing to work with The Committee to facilitate training programs for community members and consumers on the impact of healthy living and basic daily habits.
- 5) The applicant must develop a viable business plan for a healthy food related entity that promotes health and wellness in the community



Upon Selection

If selected, the applicant will be provided with the following:

- 1) Physical space of 1700 square feet
- 2) Technical assistance and access from various sectors – IMAN has access to statewide support from local business leaders in the industry of retail and management. The networks will provide training in execution and management of small food establishments including, but not limited to, management of employees, process of selection and retention of employees and guidance in day to day procedures for running a successful food establishment.

IMAN will also provide access to experts in healthy living and process of distribution of fresh produce, building healthy workshops and community engagement.

- 3) Public exposure – IMAN will provide opportunities for publicity for the incubating subsidy as an alternative business model, allowing community residents and local and national media outlets to learn about the execution of the project. IMAN believes that strong public exposure will encourage a larger incentive for community members to work with the project.
 - 4) First nine months of business operations will be rent-free
 - 5) Assistance in identifying loan, grant, and tax credit opportunities
- *If selected, IMAN will receive 10% of total monthly sales beginning in Year Two*
- 6)

Evaluation and Monitoring

The business owner selected will be expected to comply with the following evaluation and monitoring expectations:

- 1) The Committee will be assigned to periodically monitor the progress of the grantee's development in
 - a) Remodeling the incubating subsidy
 - b) Training and recruitment of community members
 - c) Training and recruitment of program development for healthy living and value of daily healthy changes.
- 2) A Task Force will be assigned to request monthly progress reports that evaluate the status and development of the three items stated above.



How to Apply

To apply, applicants must submit the following to **Sara Hamdan** at sara@imacentral.org by **11:59pm on February 10, 2016**:

- 1) Completed application
- 2) Cover letter
- 3) Full disclosure of all local or state business violations
- 4) Detailed, viable business plan

Please direct all questions to Sara Hamdan at sara@imacentral.org.



**Healthy Marketplace Incubating Subsidy
Application**

Applicant Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

In 200 words or less, please explain why you believe you should be chosen as the business owner of the incubating subsidy.

In 200 words or less, please provide an overview of your history as a business owner/investor.

Please disclose all local or state business violations incurred below.

Please attach a cover letter and detailed business plan to this application.