



PRESS RELEASE

BET, 125TH STREET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND THE APOLLO ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR HARLEM ENTREPRENEURS MICROGRANT INITIATIVE

Microgrant program to provide ten local businesses and nonprofits \$10,000 as a part of BET's ongoing commitment to COVID-19 recovery

NEW YORK, NY – February 28, 2022 – BET, a subsidiary of Paramount Global, announced today that the Harlem Entrepreneurial Microgrant Initiative, a \$100,000 program created to provide support to small Harlem businesses in partnership with the **125th Street Business Improvement District (BID)** and **the Apollo Theater**, will be accepting applications as of March 1, 2022 until March 31, 2022. Established in 2020 in response to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black communities, this third round of the microgrant initiative will continue to aid in small business recovery.

Through this initiative, ten local Harlem businesses and nonprofits will receive a \$10,000 grant from BET to support their continued recovery from COVID-19 and to honor the entrepreneurial spirit of Soul Train's innovator and pioneer, Don Cornelius. To date, the 2020 and 2021 Harlem Microgrant program has awarded 40 recipients and, in this iteration with BET, will continue to provide relief and resources to the community.

Through social impact partnerships, BET continues to support Black communities as they emerge stronger post-COVID," says Jeanine Liburd, BET's Chief Social Impact and Communications Officer. "From providing COVID-19 relief through BET's Saving Our Selves Fund to establishing the Harlem Entrepreneurial Microgrant Initiative, BET is focused on being a resource to our communities during challenging times and we will absolutely continue to use our platforms to uplift the communities we serve."

"Small businesses and cultural organizations are staples in the Harlem community. Our social impact partnership with BET takes the Apollo Theater and 125th Street BID's microgrant program to a new and important higher level," says Barbara Askins, 125th Street BID's President and CEO. "We are now able to bring additional financial support for those who are surviving COVID-19 and need continued support to move into sustainability."

"The Apollo remains committed to providing support to our neighbors. As we enter year three, it's clear that even though we are all still dealing with the effects of COVID, the Harlem community remains resilient," said Jonelle Procope, Apollo Theater's President and CEO. "We hope that this partnership with BET and 125th Street BID will contribute to our vibrant community."

Independently owned and operated businesses and non-profit organizations in Harlem, New York are encouraged to apply for the Harlem Entrepreneurial Micro-Grant Initiative. Applications will be open from March 1 to March 31, and recipients will be notified the week of April 24. To review the complete eligibility requirements and submit an application, please download and complete the application [here](#).

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ABOUT BET

BET, a subsidiary of Paramount Global, is the nation's leading provider of quality content from Black creators and the champion of Black content and culture. BET linear is in 125 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, Brazil, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, sub-Saharan Africa and France. After a record-breaking 40 years as the leading cable network among Black Americans, BET transformed into the multi-platform media powerhouse that it is today, with business extensions including BET Studios, an unprecedented studio venture that offers equity ownership for Black content creators; BET+, the preeminent streaming service for the Black audience; BET Digital, including BET's wide reaching social platforms and BET.com, a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; BET HER, a 24-hour entertainment network targeting the African-American Woman; BET Music Networks - BET Jams, BET Soul and BET Gospel; BET Home Entertainment; BET Live, BET's events and experience business; and BET International, which operates BET around the globe.

ABOUT THE APOLLO

The non-profit Apollo is a performing arts presenter, commissioner, and collaborator that also produces festivals and large-scale dance and musical works organized around a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend the Apollo's legacy through a contemporary lens, including the world premiere of the theatrical adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*; special programs such as the blockbuster concert *Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo*; *100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella*; the annual *Africa Now! Festival*; bi-annual *Women of the World (WOW) Festival*; as well as other multidisciplinary collaborations with partner organizations. Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres—including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at the Apollo are Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, H.E.R., D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly, and Miri Ben Ari; and the Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy. For more information about the Apollo, visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

ABOUT BID

The 125th Street Business Improvement District (BID) was signed into law in 1993 by Mayor David N. Dinkins. It is a non-profit organization that strives to enhance the Harlem area through marketing local businesses, directing area improvement projects, and promoting a clean and safe

environment. Harlem is one of the liveliest neighborhoods in New York City and its 125th Street economic hub is a unique place to live, work, visit and invest. Located in the heart of Historic Harlem, 125th Street is a multi-dimensional destination with a range of uses including commercial, social, residential, educational, civic, and religious, with a strong emphasis on arts, culture, and entertainment and culture-related commerce. Our work is dedicated to expanding sustainable economic activity, maximizing the ability of local residents, businesses and institution to benefit from any and all opportunities created by commercial revitalization efforts and to improving the quality of life in the community.

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