

---

# PSR WRITING LLC

Career • Business • Legacy

---

Issue 02 | Spring 2026

Six national grants with zero application fees – three open right now, three worth tracking all year. Verified March 2026.

## — WHAT'S INSIDE

# Free Money, No Excuses.

### APPLY NOW

Three nationally open grants with no application fee, verified active in March 2026: Brevva Thrive (\$5K), Intuit QB + Mailchimp Hero (\$20K), and Mona Impact Grant (\$5K).

### GRANTS TO WATCH

Three programs that are free when open but currently closed or on an unconfirmed cycle: Amex Shop Small (\$20K), Venmo Small Business Grant (\$20K), and FedEx Grant Contest (up to \$50K).

### THE TRUTH ABOUT GRANT LISTS

Most widely shared grant lists mix fee-based and free programs without telling you the difference. This issue only includes grants that cost you nothing to apply – and flags every caveat honestly.

### SUBSCRIBER RESOURCE

The complete Free Grants Guide – with step-by-step application instructions, prep checklists, and current deadlines for all six programs – is available from PSR Writing.

---

## — FEATURE

*Most grant lists are wrong – and it costs you time you don't have.*

Search 'free small business grants' and you will find dozens of lists that look helpful. Most of them are not. They mix programs with \$15–\$25 application fees alongside truly free ones without any distinction. They include programs that closed months ago. Some list grants that no longer exist. After verifying every entry individually in March 2026, only three nationally open grants with zero application fees and zero membership requirements were confirmed active. Three more are worth watching because they are free when they open – but they are closed right now.

That honesty is the point. Applying for grants takes real time. Spending that time on programs you don't qualify for, or that charge you to apply, is a loss. The programs below are verified. The caveats are included. Apply accordingly.

---

— APPLY NOW — OPEN IN MARCH 2026

### Breva Thrive Grant

Q2 opens April 1 – April 30, 2026 | \$5,000 | Free to apply | [breva.ai/thrive-grant](https://breva.ai/thrive-grant)

Quarterly \$5,000 grant for U.S. businesses making measurable positive impact in underrepresented communities – through job creation, service innovation, or improved access. Race and gender neutral. At least 12 months in business is strongly preferred. Applications are reviewed as a batch each quarter – not first-come-first-served – so you have the full month to prepare a strong submission. Specificity wins: quantified impact (jobs created, people served, ZIP codes reached) consistently outperforms general statements.

□ Deadlines: Q2 Apr 30 | Q3 Jul 31 | Q4 Oct 31

### Intuit QuickBooks + Mailchimp Small Business Hero

Phase 3 closes May 15, 2026 | \$20,000 | Free | [intuit.com](https://intuit.com) – search 'Small Business Hero'

Three winners per quarter receive \$20,000 plus social media promotion and free QuickBooks and Mailchimp access. Critical distinction: you cannot nominate yourself. A client, colleague, customer, or community leader must submit the nomination on your behalf. Brief your nominator with your strongest story – specific challenges overcome, concrete community impact, and your business website. This is the largest grant in this guide and requires the most preparation on your nominator's part.

□ Phase 3 deadline: May 15, 2026. Monitor [intuit.com](https://intuit.com) for Phase 4 dates.

## Mona Small Business Impact Grant

Next cycle TBD — monitor [monaventures.co](https://monaventures.co) | \$5,000 | Free | [monaventures.co/impact-grant](https://monaventures.co/impact-grant)

Unrestricted \$5,000 grant from Mona Ventures, a Harvard Innovation Labs incubate. Open to any U.S. small business or nonprofit at any stage. The application is intentionally brief — which means judges rely heavily on your existing digital presence to verify claims. A strong website or active social media profile matters here. The 2026 cycle just closed March 16. Sign up at [monaventures.co](https://monaventures.co) to be notified when the next cycle opens.

▫ All applicants receive a status notification, winner or not.

---

### — WATCH — FREE WHEN OPEN, CLOSED NOW

## Amex Shop Small Grant (American Express + Main Street America)

Closed Jan 23, 2026 | \$20,000 | Reopens ~November 2026 | [mainstreet.org](https://mainstreet.org)

One of the strongest free grants in the country for brick-and-mortar businesses. \$20,000 per winner, 250+ grants funded annually from a \$5M+ pool. Requires a physical storefront (no pop-up or shared space), 20 or fewer full-time equivalent employees, and a ready-to-execute project plan with a detailed itemized budget. Based on past cycles, the next application window opens on Small Business Saturday — the Saturday after Thanksgiving, approximately November 29, 2026. Begin developing your project plan now.

▫ Monitor: [mainstreet.org](https://mainstreet.org) starting October 2026

## Venmo Small Business Grant

No 2026 cycle confirmed | \$20,000 when active | [venmo.com/business/small-business-grant](https://venmo.com/business/small-business-grant)

Ran in 2022, 2023, and 2024 with May application windows. Was not offered in 2025. No 2026 cycle has been announced as of March 2026. When active: open to businesses with a complete Venmo business profile, under \$50K in annual revenue, and 10 or fewer employees. Begin building your Venmo business profile now so you are ready if a 2026 cycle is announced.

▫ Caution: Do not plan around this grant. Track it as a bonus opportunity only.

## FedEx Small Business Grant Contest

Status uncertain — verify at [fedex.com](https://fedex.com) | Up to \$50,000 | [fedex.com/smallbusinessgrants](https://fedex.com/smallbusinessgrants)

Ran annually from 2012 through at least 2024, with February–March application windows and grants up to \$50,000. One recent source indicates the program was retired after 2024; another cites a Feb–March 2026 window. Status for future cycles is unconfirmed. When active: requires a FedEx shipping account open at least 6 months, 99 or fewer employees, and at least 6 months in business. Nonprofits are not eligible.

▫ Action: Verify current status directly at [fedex.com](https://fedex.com) before investing any application time.

---

— UNIVERSAL PREP: BEFORE YOU APPLY TO ANYTHING

- Registered business with a valid EIN
- Active business bank account, separate from personal
- Business website or active, professional social media — judges use this to verify your application
- A clear 2–3 sentence business description ready to paste
- A specific answer to: 'What will you do with this money?' — vague answers lose every time
- Your community impact story in writing with real numbers, not general claims
- For Intuit: identify and brief your nominator before the deadline
- For Brevva and Mona: know your impact metrics before you open the application