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## **Downtown Alliance Creates Downtown Digital Innovation Grant for Storefronts in Lower Manhattan**



*Storefront businesses along Fulton Street in 2015*

**NEW YORK (February 20, 2018)** – The Alliance for Downtown New York is now seeking applications for its inaugural Downtown Digital Innovation Grant, which will award one Lower Manhattan storefront business with \$10,000 of services to improve their online presence or the digital tools within their stores.

Apply Here: <http://twn.nyc/DigitalGrant18>

According to TimeTrade's The State of Retail Report 2017, today's consumers want a hybrid shopping experience that combines the convenience of online shopping with the customer service focus of in-store shopping. The report shows that while 75 percent of consumers prefer to make their purchases in a physical store, 90 percent are researching online first. Once in the store, 57 percent of shoppers report feeling more confident about the purchases they make when their store associates were using mobile devices to assist them.

This grant will give businesses the opportunity to invest in digital and/or technological enhancements including but not limited to everything from digital advertising and social media

strategy to outfitting in-store employees with mobile tools and smarter checkout capabilities — any combination of which could help improve their bottom line.

"Our storefront businesses are the lifeblood and character of our neighborhood and we want to help them succeed," said Jessica Lappin, President of the Alliance for Downtown New York. "Digital innovations are key in the changing retail landscape which is why we created this grant as a way to empower our stores to grow their businesses."

In addition to the grant, the Alliance has also hired Director of Storefront Business Engagement Heather Ducharme. Heather joins the team as an advocate for local businesses and is out in the neighborhood to help shop owners navigate the sometimes complex and confusing issues their businesses face.

Applications are now open for all store front businesses within the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District. The deadline to apply is March 20, 2018 at 11:59 pm. Additional terms and conditions are noted in the application.

*The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to provide service, advocacy, research and information to advance Lower Manhattan as a global model of a 21st century Central Business District for businesses, residents and visitors. The Downtown Alliance manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street. For more information visit [www.downtownny.com](http://www.downtownny.com)*

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