

Small Business Start-Ups: National Resources

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

www.sba.gov

SDA Direct: <http://www.sba.gov/sba-direct>
US Small Business Administration
409 3rd St, SW
Washington DC 20416

SBA Answer Desk: answerdesk@sba.gov
SBA Answer Desk: (800) 827-5722

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. We recognize that small business is critical to our economic recovery and strength, to building America's future, and to helping the United States compete in today's global marketplace.

How do I get a small business loan?

You should prepare a business plan, including your loan proposal, and submit it to a local lender. If the lender is unable to approve your loan, you may request that your application be submitted, by the lender, to the SBA. The SBA can guarantee up to 80% of a small business loan; however, the lender must agree to loan the money with the SBA guarantee. The lender will then forward your loan application and a credit analysis to the nearest SBA District Office. If the lender needs SBA applications and/or guidance it may contact the nearest SBA District Office by going to SBA. Upon SBA approval, the lending institution closes the loan and disburses the funds. For further information and eligibility requirements, please go to: <http://www.sba.gov/financialassistance/borrowers/resources/basics/index.html>

How do I get a small business grant?

At this time, Congress has not set aside any monies for grants to start and/or expand a small business. SBA does provide a loan guarantee program for loans made by your local lender. The SBA guarantees loans that the lender could not normally approve. However, all funding is handled through your local lender. For basic information visit: <http://www.sba.gov/financialassistance/borrowers/index.html>

How do I get started in a business?

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) provides a wealth of information on starting a business at the SBA home page [sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) under "Small Business Planner." You will find information on writing a business plan as well. You may take advantage of SBA's resource partners. The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free one-on-one counseling to those interested in starting and expanding a business.

This includes critiquing your business plan, legal requirements, marketing, and licenses needed for your business. To find the location nearest you, please visit us at SBA and click on your state.

How do I get a business license?

Licensing is generally handled through your state or local government. You will need to consult your local telephone directory in the "Government" section for an office that will assist you with a license or permit. See: <http://www.business.gov/register/licenses-and-permits/>

For FREE one-on-one counseling, please go to SBA's home page sba.gov and select "Local Resources" for an area local contact nearest you. The Service Corps of Retired Executives and the Small Business Development Center can assist you with your business venture.

How do I write a business plan?

If you go to SBA's home page sba.gov and select "Writing a Business Plan" under "Small Business Planner." You will find information on starting a business and writing a business plan. Under "SBA local resources" you can find local contacts such as the Service Corps of Retired Executives and the Small Business Development Center that provide FREE one-on-one counseling in the area of starting and expanding a small business. They can assist you by critiquing your business plan and your business ideas. You can locate a center by selecting "Local Resources" under sba.gov as well.

What type of collateral do I need for a loan?

Repayment ability from the cash flow of the business is a primary consideration in the SBA loan decision process but good character, management capability, collateral, and owner's equity contribution are also important considerations. All owners of twenty percent (20%) or more of the business are required to personally guarantee SBA loans. The SBA does not deny approval for a SBA Guarantee Loan solely due to lack of collateral; however, it can be used as a reason in addition to other credit factors. For more information on requirements on a SBA Guarantee Loan as well as our guarantee loan programs available, please visit us at SBA.

Is there any business assistance available in my area?

Yes. There are 375 SCORE: Counselors to America's Small Business chapters and approximately 1,000 Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) nationwide. SCORE provides free expert advice based on many years of firsthand experience and shared knowledge on virtually every aspect of business. The SBDC provides a variety of management and technical assistance services to small businesses and potential entrepreneurs. To locate the nearest SCORE or SBDC in your area, please visit us at SBA and click on your state.

Careful planning is fundamental to success. The Small Business Planner includes information and resources that will help you at any stage of the business lifecycle.

Small Business Administration (SBA), Office of Women's Business Ownership Entrepreneurial Development

<http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/onlinewbc>

Office of Women's Business Ownership
Small Business Administration
409 Third Street SW, Sixth Floor
Washington, DC 20416

Phone: (202) 205-6673
Email: owbo@sba.gov

Overview

The Office of Women's Business Ownership (OWBO) exists to establish and oversee a network of Women's Business Centers (WBCs) throughout the United States and its territories. Through the management and technical assistance provided by the WBCs, entrepreneurs, especially women who are economically or socially disadvantaged, are offered comprehensive training and counseling on a vast array of topics in many languages to help them start and grow their own businesses.

Resources

OWBO offers a variety of online services and tools to assist women in starting their own business. The following are a list of some of those services and tools.

Franchises for Women

www.franchisesforwomen.com/

Franchises For Women is dedicated to aiding women find their ideal business opportunity and to promote the involvement of women within the franchise industry. The organization offers a comprehensive directory of franchise offerings and business opportunities. In addition, information regarding home-based businesses, low investment concepts, and hot concepts is provided.

Small Business Start-Ups: State Resources

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

inwisconsin.com

David Volz

Phone: (608)210-6773

“Capital Catalyst”

Highly structured and well-funded business creation partners (organizations or communities) dedicated to stimulating entrepreneurship may be eligible to receive seed grant funding. These funds are then made available to local startups, early stage and innovative businesses in the form of grants, debt and/or equity investments.

How It Works

WEDC provides seed grants typically ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000 to approved organizations or communities (business creation partners) that have existing seed funds in place or the ability to create such funds. These business creation partners may then make grants, debt and/or equity investments in startups, early stage and innovative businesses that operate in their region. Loan repayments and returns on investment stay with the local partners to fund additional startups and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs.

Partner Requirements

Recipients of WEDC Capital Catalyst funds must demonstrate the existence of programming to facilitate the creation of high-growth business startups, as well as the ability to provide training and mentoring to the startups that will benefit from seed grants awarded.

Recipients must match at least 1:1 the amount of seed grant funding provided by WEDC. In addition to providing documentation of this financial match, business creation partners must also provide WEDC annual reports and information on its investment committee and the criteria used to make investment decisions.

Program Requirements

Approved applicants must enter into a contract with WEDC prior to any disbursement of funds. WEDC funds must be dispersed within 18 months to companies operating in Wisconsin. Business creation partners must provide at least one-third of WEDC funds as grants to companies, ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000, but are allowed to make debt or equity investments with the remaining funds.

It is expected that equity and debt investments will develop into an evergreen fund owned and managed by the business creation partner as companies are sold or loans are repaid.

Industry sectors targeted for Capital Catalyst seed grants include, but are not limited to: advanced manufacturing; agriculture or food processing; information systems or software;

medical devices; and biosciences and renewable/green energy. Funds may not be used for investments in real estate, direct consumer retail or hospitality businesses, including restaurants.

Recipients will be required to provide quarterly and annual reports on the number of awards made from the fund, the type and amount of each award, the recipient of each award, the number of jobs created, and the amount of capital investment leveraged.

Reporting by recipients will be required for five years in order to analyze the long-term results of the program.

“Seed Accelerator”

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) provides grants to eligible communities to launch a pre-seed business model program that incorporates training, mentoring and financial assistance for entrepreneurs in their area. Grant funds may be used for costs associated with initiating and sustaining an accelerator program, as well as for seed capital for companies in the accelerator.

How It Works

WEDC's Seed Accelerator Program provides grants to eligible communities and other organizations to support a pre-seed business model program that incorporates training, mentoring and financial assistance to entrepreneurs in their area. Grant funds may be used as seed capital for companies in the accelerator, as well as for costs associated with initiating the accelerator program.

Partner Requirements

An organization receiving WEDC Seed Accelerator Funds must demonstrate that its programs will be managed by an experienced entrepreneur(s) with relevant industry knowledge or commensurate knowledge satisfactory to WEDC. The organization must also provide a detailed plan for accelerator operations, including sustainable funding sources and program marketing.

The recipient must raise a minimum of 1:1 matching funds to support the implementation of its program, which is required to operate in Wisconsin and serve companies located in the state. The application, process and criteria the organization uses to make grants are also subject to WEDC approval.

Program Requirements

Recipients must implement programming that includes the Lean Startup methodology or other curriculum approved by WEDC that reflects similar best practices in business model design, including a process for developing, testing and validating the commercial viability of an idea.

Grant funds may be used as follows:

Operating costs: Up to \$50,000 for accelerator startup costs for operations pre-approved by WEDC. Eligible costs may include program manager training, curriculum development or other expenses related to initiating operations.

Grants for businesses: Up to \$300,000 to recipients to provide direct grants to companies in the accelerator.

Factors determining the level of funding for grants to businesses include the number of companies per class (typically 10–12) and the length of the seed accelerator program for each class (typically three or six months). The amount of grant funding available per company is generally between \$5,000 and \$50,000.

Recipients may be eligible for additional funding cycles based on pre-defined performance metrics and their ability to raise additional matching funds. Recipients will be required to provide periodic reporting on data related to program performance.

Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC)

www.wwbic.com/

WWBIC
South Central Office
Madison, WI

Phone (608) 257-5450
Fax: (608) 257-5454

Overview

WWBIC is a statewide economic development corporation that provides quality business education and financing to Wisconsin's entrepreneurs and small business owners. Our dedicated staff works hard every day to provide top-notch programs and service to help both women and men launch and expand small businesses. You pick the services that your business needs at every stage of growth. Learn more about our programs:

- Small Business Loans
- Business Education & Workshops
- Individualized Business Assistance
- Financial Awareness/Personal Money Management
- Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)
- Wisconsin Saves
- Coffee With A Conscience

How Do I Start? Action Steps For Starting Your Own Business

- Determine if you are ready for entrepreneurship
- Understand the risks & rewards
- Be honest about your personal strengths & weaknesses
- Test the viability of your business idea
- Get experience in your future business field
- Build a group of competent advisors
- Banker, attorney, accountant, experienced entrepreneur, etc.
- Research ~ Research ~ Research
- Develop a written business plan
- Understand the financial needs of the business
- Know who your customers will be & how to attract them

- Understand the legal & tax requirements for your business Learn how to price your products and/or services
 - Recognize the importance of your business location
 - Be willing to be a continual learner
 - Ask for help when needed
 - Assess & strengthen your business skills:
 - Organization & management
 - Accounting/recordkeeping
 - Sales/marketing/promotion Human resources
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UW Extension-Extension's Division of Entrepreneurship & Economic Development: Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network (WEN)

www.wenportal.org

Ashwini Rao, WEN Coordinator
432 N Lake St.
Room 423
Madison, WI 53706-1496

Phone: (608) 262-0398
E-mail: ashwini.rao@uwex.edu

Overview

Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network (WEN) provides entrepreneurs with access to a statewide network of resources and expertise, identifies high-potential entrepreneurs and helps move their businesses forward, facilitates collaboration between entrepreneurs and between organizations that assist entrepreneurs, and helps create and grow minority-owned businesses.

The "Network" consists of four regional offices and more than 400 people from all points of the state who provide programs, resources and services to Wisconsin businesses. The power of the network is demonstrated through partnerships and client successes.

Services

WEN provides the following assistance:

- One-On-One Business Assistance
- Training for Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses
- Peer to Peer Learning
- WEN Grants
- Connect with a Wisconsin Lawyer
- SBIR/STTR Assistance

Minority-Owned Businesses

WEN's Minority Business Director focuses on existing and potential minority-owned businesses. WEN's Minority Business Director has significant experience working with minority entrepreneurs in southeastern Wisconsin and works closely with various WEN partners.

Kamela Goodwyn, WEN Minority Business
Director
2745 N. Martin Luther King Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Phone: (414) 263-5450
Mobile: (414) 550-3372
E-mail: kamela.goodwyn@uwex.edu

Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

www.wisconsinsbdc.org/

Gary Smith, Center Director for SW Wisconsin
1 University Plaza
Platteville, WI 53818

Phone: (608) 342-1038
E-mail: smithga@uwplatt.edu

Phil Jackson, Business Counselor
(Primarily for existing businesses)

Phone: (608) 444-7134
E-mail: phil.jackson@uwex.edu

Overview

Mission - SBA's mission is to help small businesses start, grow, and compete in global markets by providing quality training, counseling, and access to resources.

Financial Assistance - Fiscal Year 2009

The Wisconsin office assists several hundred businesses each year by providing financial assistance through the 7(a) and 504 loan programs. The Wisconsin SBA assisted 1,961 businesses in obtaining over \$417 million in Loans, and we assisted with 48 Micro Loans in the amount of \$755,515 for fiscal year 2009 that ended September 30, 2009.

Services available

Free counseling, advice and information on starting a business are available through SCORE: Counselors to America's Small Business. SBDCs also conduct training events throughout the district - some require a nominal registration fee. Go to:

www.sba.gov/localresources/district/wi/counselingt/

Financial assistance for new or existing businesses through guaranteed loans made by area bank and non-bank lenders. Go to: www.sba.gov/localresources/district/wi/financing/

Special loan programs are available for businesses involved in international trade. Go to: www.sba.gov/services/specialaudiences/

“Wisconsin Business AnswerLine”

Our Wisconsin Business AnswerLine counselors have real-world business management experience. They're available to give free answers to your business start-up or management questions from Monday to Friday, 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. You can call once or on an ongoing basis - SBDC Business AnswerLine counselors will give you personalized attention for as long as you need

it. Call 1-800-940-7232 for a live question-and-answer session with an SBDC expert, **'Click-to-chat'** on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:30 - 4:30, or request assistance at: www.wisconsinsbdc.net/busanswer

"Entrepreneurial Training Program"

The Entrepreneurial Training Program (ETP) is a course offered through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) providing prospective and existing for-profit business owners with expert guidance through business plan development.

"Early Planning Grant"

The Early Planning Grant (EPG) program is designed to help individual entrepreneurs and small businesses throughout Wisconsin obtain the professional services necessary to evaluate the feasibility of a proposed start up or expansion. Under the EPG program, the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network (WEN) – with funding from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce – can provide applicants with a grant to help cover a portion of the cost of hiring an independent third party to develop a comprehensive business plan. In addition to formalizing an entrepreneur's goals and objectives, a well-prepared business plan is critical to the applicant's ability to attract the capital financing necessary for the business to be successful. Eligible EPG project costs are limited to the professional services necessary to obtain a comprehensive business plan. Professional services must be provided by independent third party service providers listed in the WEN Private Sector Service Provider Directory. Providers not listed in the Directory may use the electronic application form to set up an account and create an online profile.

The maximum funding available for Early Planning Grants is 75% of eligible project costs up to \$3,000. There is typically more demand for EPG funds than there are funds available. As a result, the application process is competitive and not all projects can be funded.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

www.wheda.com/root/BusinessPartners/SmallBusinessLenders

WHEDA
201 W. Washington Ave., Ste. 700
Madison, WI 53703

Phone: (608) 266-7884
Toll Free: (800) 334-6873
Fax: (608) 267-1099

Overview

WHEDA works closely with lenders, developers, local government, nonprofits, community groups and others to implement its low-cost financing programs. We provide low-cost, fixed interest rate mortgages to low- and moderate-income individuals and families to purchase their first home. We also work with developers to finance affordable rental housing, and support economic development and agriculture through our small business guarantee programs.

Linked Deposit Loan (LiDL) Subsidy

LiDL provides an interest rate subsidy on lender financing to women or minorities who start-up or expand a business. Some of the features and benefits include:

- Lower Interest Rate—improves profitability
- Use for Start-up, Acquisition or Expansion Costs—meets financing needs
- Use in conjunction with WSBG, SBA or conventional financing—allows you to take advantage of other financing products

Small Business Start-Ups: Local Resources

Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program (SWCAP)

www.swcap.org

Lynn Price, Jobs & Business Development
Coordinator

149 North Iowa Street
Dodgeville, WI 5353

Phone: (608) 935-2326 #222

Toll-Free: (800) 704-8555

E-mail: l.price@swcap.org

Overview

The mission of the Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program's Business Development Program is to help people in Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland counties improve their standard of living through self-employment. For assistance call: (608) 935-2326, ask for 'Business Development'

Business Plan

A written guide to starting and running your business successfully is essential. This plan will encourage loans, promote growth, and provide a map for you to follow.

- Strategic Planning: Learn to strategize in order for your business to succeed.
- Essential Elements Of A Good Business Plan For Growing Companies: Outlines how to write your plan.
- Writing The Business Plan: Detailed, step-by-step explanation to help write your plan.
- Business Plan Workshop: An online workshop to help start and improve your business plan.
- Using The Business Plan: How to get the most out of your plan. Finding A Niche: A small, steady corner of the market could be your success story.
- Finding A Niche: A small, steady corner of the market could be your success story.
- Business Planning FAQs: Answers to the most popular business plan questions.
- A Business Plan: The Roadmap to Success: The SBA's guide to developing a comprehensive business plan.

Writing the Plan

What goes in a business plan? The body can be divided into four distinct sections:

- Description of the business
- Marketing
- Finances
- Management

Agenda should include an executive summary, supporting documents, and financial projections. Although there is no single formula for developing a business plan, some elements are common to all business plans. They are summarized in the following outline:

- Business Start-up Planning: Step-by-step coaching. How to start your new business.
- Small Business Lending: Simple application. Quick approval decisions. Designed for those who need just a few thousand dollars.
- Marketing Support: Specializing in Direct Marketing. Getting the word out about your business.
- Business Expansion Planning: Adding products or services. Another location. Adding staff. How to grow your business.

How It Works

Start by calling SWCAP Business Development at 608-935-2326. We can send you information, or... Even better, we can schedule a meeting that lets us learn how we can best support your business venture. There is **no fee** for this meeting.

If you decide to enroll in one of our programs, we'll set up a work plan that fits in your schedule. There may be a modest fee for our services. We determine that during our first - no cost - meeting.

Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC)

www.swwrpc.org/econodev/business

Ed White, Economic Development Planner
SWWRPC
722 Pioneer Tower
Platteville, WI 53818

Phone: (608) 342-1751
E-mail: whiteed@uwplatt.edu

Overview

The Economic Development (ED) program of SWWRPC works with stakeholders throughout the region for a regional approach to economic development. Projects and services include:

- Business Resources Project: With U.S. Economic Development Administration funding assistance, this project is part of an economic development strategy to help entrepreneurs start businesses and to help existing businesses grow.
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): The CEDS document is a useful document that describes the region's economic situation, notable developments in the past year, and regional goals and objectives to improve the economy.

“Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)”

Funded by the Economic Development Administration, the region's RLF, officially named Southwestern Wisconsin Business Development Fund, Inc. (SWWBDF), targets job-creating business development/expansion projects that address a regional need or a specific unmet need in a community. It is intended to provide gap financing to make business loans bankable. It is not a grant program or intended to compete with banks and its interest rates are typically 1 to 1 ½ percent below prime.

Platteville Business Incubator, Inc.

The Platteville Business Incubator, Inc. (PBII) is a non-profit organization formed for the purpose of promoting business start-ups in the Platteville area. The business incubator building is located at 52 Means Drive in the Platteville Industry Park off of Highway 151. Access to the incubator is now even more convenient using the 4 lane Highway 151 corridor, which opened in 2005. Any new qualifying business would find this facility to be a very attractive location to grow. Affordable lease rates are available for office, manufacturing, distribution and warehouse space.

SCORE-Counselors to America's Small Business

www.scoredbq.org

Dubuque Area SCORE
300 Main Street, Suite 200
Dubuque, IA 52001

Phone: (563) 690-9209

Overview

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" is a non-profit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small businesses nationwide. SCORE will guide a business through all of its start up needs. SCORE is comprised of knowledgeable, experienced, business people, men and women, who are ready and willing to help all kinds of business ventures.

Services

SCORE provides counseling and consulting to small business owners and entrepreneurs in:

- Business Planning
- Finance
- Administration
- Accounting
- Franchising
- Advertising
- Customer Service
- Design
- Distribution
- Purchasing and Acquisition

Grant County Economic Development Corporation (GCEDC)

<http://www.grantcounty.org/business/gcedc.html>

Ron Brisbois, Executive Director
1800 Bronson Boulevard
Fennimore WI 53809
608-822-3501

Phone: (608) 822-3501
Toll-Free: 1-866-472-6894
Fax: (608) 822-6019
E-mail: gcedc@grantcounty.org

Overview

The GCEDC will assist the communities of Grant County in their efforts to promote the growth and retention of business and industry, and to enhance the quality of life for our residents. We will accomplish this mission through aggressive marketing of our assets and facilitating cooperation between state agencies and the communities.

Services

The Grant County Economic Development Corporation, GCEDC, works with the communities of Grant County to promote the growth and retention of business and industry, and to enhance the quality of life for our residents. Contact Ron Brisbois at the Grant County Economic Development Corporation for more information about any of these economic development and business resources.

- Labor force information
- Industrial parks
- Available buildings
- Electric rates by community
- Fiber optic ring network/ telecommunication broadband
- Financing information
 - Revolving loan fund
 - Community development zone tax credit
 - SBA HUBZone
 - New market tax credits
 - Private investor funding
 - Wisconsin Business Advantages
- Community profiles
- Demographic/economic information
- Manufacturing/ industrial support services
- Local businesses assistance and resources