



U.S. Small Business
Administration

Small Business

MINNESOTA EDITION 2020

RESOURCE GUIDE



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Minnesota Edition 2020



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District Director Letter

Welcome to the 2020 edition of the U.S. Small Business Administration Minnesota Small Business Resource Guide. The SBA helps make the American dream of small business ownership a reality. We are the only federal agency dedicated to helping our 30 million small businesses start, grow, expand, or recover after a disaster. The SBA Minnesota District Office works with an extensive network of business advisers and lenders to help our state's 515,000 small businesses at every stage of development.

To get started, visit an SBA office or one of our SBA Resource Partners. Starting on pg. 9 you will find listings for free or low-cost business advisers, which includes Small Business Development Centers, SCORE mentors, Women's Business Centers, and the Veterans Business Outreach Center. Interested in small business financing? Find out if SBA-backed financing is right for you by consulting with an SBA specialist at one of our partner lending institutions, listed in the green Funding Programs section. This guide also details SBA disaster assistance loans and SBA-backed loans exclusively for small business exporting. If you're interested in getting started in government contracting, read about SBA certifications and our business development programs. SBA programs and services help you better compete in the public marketplace.

We're also helping create economic possibility in low-income communities. The SBA works with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs to increase investments in Opportunity Zones located in our district, often expanding from Historically Underutilized Business Zones, HUBZones. Stay up to date on SBA events near you and get valuable local business information by following us on Twitter at @SBA_Minnesota. Register for email updates at sba.gov/updates. Use our Small Business Resource Guide to power your dream of starting, growing, or expanding your small business in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

The SBA Minnesota District Office

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LOCAL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

How We Did It

Made to Last

Joyce and Jerado Reynolds used SBA support to succeed.

WRITTEN BY MICAELA MORRISSETTE



Reynolds Welding & Fabrication has grown steadily, building a loyal customer base, since Jerado Reynolds founded the company in 2005.

“At first the company was just Jerado,” recalls his wife and co-owner, Joyce Reynolds. “Then it was him and me part time.” During the day she worked as a nurse and spent her evenings doing all the company’s paperwork. The Reynolds sank everything they earned into the business—money, time, and energy. She remembers with pride helping Jerado weld a stair railing at a local school. Her son later attended that same school, and she watched her child and others using the rail, benefiting from the hard work the couple did together. It was then Joyce decided as much as she loved her day job, she wanted to devote herself full time to the family business in Windsor, Connecticut. She wanted to work side-by-side with her husband, fully focused on administration and business growth. As they both hoped, word of mouth spread; clients made referrals. Joyce was soon overwhelmed with paperwork. They brought on two employees—doubling up in the busy seasons. They were able to maintain four full-time employees by 2009. After this, Joyce says, they saw that “things were not moving.” She wanted to scale up.

Challenge

The company wasn’t growing in part because it wasn’t certified with the state department of transportation or prequalified with the Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services, Joyce says. She decided to tackle the certification problem full time, leaving her nursing career. This was the change she’d been wanting to make, but since her background was in health care, Joyce didn’t feel fluent in the languages of construction or business. Joyce wanted to learn, and she had incentive: they needed the certifications to bid on bigger jobs. “Never be afraid to ask questions,” she says. Joyce needed to find people with answers.

Solution

She and Jerado connected with the University of Hartford Entrepreneurial Center & Women’s Business Center, an



SBA Resource Partner, where “from day one it was, Eureka! Everyone wanted to see us win.” Women entrepreneurs receive essential business counseling and training from this national network of community-based centers. Most helpful was the detailed personal attention available through free one-on-one business counseling. Joyce also learned about workshops offered by providers like the Metropolitan District, a Connecticut nonprofit municipal corporation offering water and sewer services. At a meet-and-greet, Joyce understood how much the SBA could help her business. An SBA professional walked Joyce through the extensive paperwork and, crucially, helped her register the company in the System for Award Management (sam.gov), positioning the company for new federal contracts.

“Resources like the Entrepreneurial Center and the SBA will train you from bottom to top,” Joyce says. “They have finance classes that open your eyes regarding taxes. You’ll learn how to register your business. They’ll help with a contract or your website or accountability statements. Everything!”

Before the SBA, Reynolds Welding attempted the DOT certification on five separate occasions, always falling short because the process was so complicated. Joyce secured the certification with SBA guidance on the first attempt.

Benefit

Reynolds Welding now employs more than 15 workers, constructing stairs, rails, structural beams, and columns throughout the region. Jerado is working

5 Tips for Success

Find a great business mentor.

To find your local SBA office and resource partners in your area, visit sba.gov/localresources.

Have a healthy view of competition.

We’re not always competing. We’re a competitor, but if a similar business has extra work, they’ll send it to us and vice versa. That’s the relationship to have.

Record everything you do.

Navigating business relationships in this age means keeping an email record of everything you do. Leave a clear paper trail.

Sacrifice to ensure quality.

We don’t cut corners. Sometimes you have to lose money to do quality work—it’s rough, but nothing is more important.

Seek SBA assistance to see if you qualify for business certifications.

We used to look for jobs. Now that we’re on the SBA Subcontracting Network database, SubNet, and sam.gov, we have a continuous flow of contractors reaching out to us.

on two bridges—a lifelong dream. Joyce continues to move forward, getting Reynolds qualified for the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, which provides free business development education to small businesses so they can better compete in the public sector. “When I came on full time, I set a goal for what I would like for the company, and I’ve achieved 80% of that,” Joyce says. When she secures 8(a) certification for Reynolds, she’ll have hit all her objectives. Then, she admits, she’ll probably come up with some new ones.

SBA Resource Partners

No matter your industry, location, or experience, if you have a dream, the SBA is here to help you achieve it. Our SBA Resource Partners offer mentoring, counseling, and training to help you startup and thrive at all stages of the business life cycle. These independent organizations operating across the United States and U.S. territories are funded through SBA cooperative agreements or grants.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

950+

**Small Business
Development Centers**

Achieve your dream of business ownership and remain competitive in an ever-changing global economy with assistance from your local SBDC. Access free counseling and free or low-cost training on topics like regulatory compliance, technology development, and international trade. Find an SBDC adviser at sba.gov/sbdc.

SCORE

300+

SCORE chapters

Join the ranks of other business owners who have experienced higher revenues and increased growth thanks to SCORE, the nation's largest network of volunteer business mentors. Experienced executives share real-world knowledge to fit your busy schedule. SCORE mentors are available for free as often as you need, in person, via email or over video chat. Find a mentor at sba.gov/score.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS

100+

**Women's Business
Centers**

Women entrepreneurs receive essential business counseling and training from this national network of community-based centers. Each center tailors its services to help you navigate the challenges women often face when starting or growing a business. To learn about SBA resources for women visit sba.gov/women.

VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS

20+

**Veterans Business
Outreach Centers**

Veteran and military entrepreneurs receive business training, counseling, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, sba.gov/vboc. Receive procurement guidance to better compete for government contracts. VBOCs also serve active duty service members, National Guard or Reserve members, veterans of any era, and military spouses.

Our Local SBA Resource Partners

SBA's Resource Partners are independent organizations funded through SBA cooperative agreements or grants.

Small Business Development Centers

Northwest Region

Northwest Minnesota Foundation
Bemidji
(218) 755-4255
nwsbdc.org

Northeast Region

Northland Foundation
Duluth
(218) 726-7298
nesbdc.org

West Central Region

Concordia College
Moorhead
(218) 299-3037
westcentralmnsbdc.com

North Central Region

Central Lakes College
Brainerd
(218) 855-8140
clcmn.edu/small-business-development-center

Central Region

St. Cloud State University
St. Cloud
(320) 308-4842
stcloudstate.edu/sbdc

Southwest Region

Southwest Minnesota State University
Marshall
(507) 537-7386
sbdassistance.com

South Central Region

Minnesota State University-Mankato
Mankato
(507) 389-8875
myminnesotabusiness.com

Southeast Region

Rochester Community and Technical College
Rochester
(507) 285-7536
rochestersbdc.com

Twin Cities Metro

University of St. Thomas
Minneapolis
(651) 962-4500
stthomas.edu/sbdc

Lead Center St. Paul

Department of Employment and Economic Development
(877) 653-8333
mn.gov/deed/business/help/sbdc



Adelle Starin is growing Babies on Broadway in Little Falls, MN thanks to guidance from the Women's Business Alliance, an SBA Resource Partner.

Women's Business Centers

Entrepreneur Fund

Women's Business Alliance
entrepreneurfund.org/womens-business-alliance
Duluth (218) 623-5730
Little Falls (218) 735-6033

WomenVenture

Serving the twin cities metro area
(612) 224-9540
womenventure.org

SCORE

Visit sba.gov/score to start working on your business goals. Contact your local office to schedule an appointment.

Central MN-St. Cloud

(320) 240-1332

centralminnesota.score.org

Minneapolis

(952) 938-4570

minneapolis.score.org

Southeast MN-Rochester

(507) 200-0760

seminnesota.score.org

South Central-Owatonna

(507) 455-3215 x124

southcentralminnesota.score.org

South Metro-Burnsville

(952) 890-7020

southmetro.score.org

St. Paul

(651) 632-8937

stpaul.score.org



SBA-backed financing helped Christine Lantinen scale up Maud Borup Inc., a retail candy company in Plymouth, MN. A U.S. Army veteran, Christine focused her business on selling giftable confections wholesale to specialty and mass retailers, including Whole Foods and Target. The SBA Emerging Leaders program helped her create a plan to purchase a manufacturing facility in LeCenter and create sustainable plant-based Easter eggs. She employs over 100.

COURTESY OF MAUD BORUP INC.

Veterans Business Outreach Center

Veteran entrepreneurs or small business owners can receive business training, counseling and mentoring, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, sba.gov/vboc. This is also the place to receive procurement guidance, which can help your business better compete for government contracts.

Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corp.

(414) 395-4560

wwbic.com/veterans



Your Advocates

The SBA offices of advocacy and ombudsman are independent voices for small business within the federal government.

Advocacy

When you need a voice within the federal government for your interests as a small business owner, the SBA's regional advocates are here to assist. The advocates analyze the effects of proposed regulations and consider alternatives that minimize the economic burden on small businesses, governmental jurisdictions, and nonprofits. Find your regional advocate at sba.gov/advocacy.

Your advocate helps with these small business issues:

- » if your business could be negatively affected by regulations proposed by the government
- » if you have contracting issues with a federal agency
- » when you need economic and small business statistics

The SBA's Office of Advocacy also independently represents small business and advances its concerns before Congress, the White House, federal agencies, federal courts, and state policy makers.

Ombudsman

Entrepreneurs who have an issue with an existing federal regulation or policy can receive assistance from the SBA's national ombudsman.

The ombudsman's office can help you:

- » resolve regulatory disputes with federal agencies
- » reduce unfair penalties and fines
- » seek remedies when rules are inconsistently applied
- » recover payment for services done by government contractors

To report how a proposed federal regulation could unfairly affect you, find your regional SBA advocate at sba.gov/advocacy.

To submit a comment about how your business has been hurt by an existing regulation, visit sba.gov/ombudsman/comments.

Make your voice heard by participating in a Regional Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Roundtable or a public hearing hosted by the SBA's national ombudsman. These events are posted periodically on the ombudsman website, sba.gov/ombudsman.

To submit a comment or complaint through the online form, visit sba.gov/ombudsman/comments. Your concerns will be directed to the appropriate federal agency for review. The SBA will collaborate with you and the agency to help resolve the issue.



Urban Growler Brewing Co. co-owners Jill Pavak and Deb Loch opened the first woman-owned microbrewery in Minnesota with an SBA-backed loan. The SBA guarantees loans for entrepreneurs who are eligible and can't find traditional financing. Jill and Deb bought beer canning equipment to expand production thanks to a second SBA-backed loan.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

How to Start a Business in Minnesota

Thinking of starting a business? Here are the nuts & bolts.

The Startup Logistics

Even if you're running a home-based business, you will have to comply with many local, state, and federal regulations. Do not ignore regulatory details. You may avoid some red tape in the beginning, but your lack of compliance could become an obstacle as your business grows. Taking the time to research regulations is as important as knowing your market. Carefully investigate the laws affecting your industry. Being out of compliance could leave you unprotected legally, lead to expensive penalties, and jeopardize your business.

Market Research

Need to do research on your clients and location? View consumer and business data for your area using the Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition, <https://cbb.census.gov/sbe>. Filter your search by business type and location to view data on your potential customers, including consumer spending, and a summary of existing businesses, available as a map and a report.

Business License & Zoning

Licenses are typically administered by a variety of state and local departments. It is important to consider zoning regulations when choosing a site for your business. Contact the local business

license office where you plan to locate your business. You may not be permitted to conduct business out of your home or engage in industrial activity in a retail district.

- » **Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development**
mn.gov/deed/business > starting a business > legal and regulatory
- » **Minnesota Sales and Use Tax Permits**
revenue.state.mn.us/businesses
- » **Minnesota Department of Commerce-Franchises**
mn.gov/commerce/industries > securities, franchises and subdivided lands

Name Registration

Register your business name with the county clerk where your business is located. If you're a corporation, also register with the state.
sos.state.mn.us

Taxes

As a business owner, you should know your federal tax responsibilities and make some business decisions to comply with certain tax requirements. The IRS Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center, go.usa.gov/xPxYR, offers information on a



Amy Brace grew Amy's Cupcake Shoppe in Hopkins, MN thanks to an SBA-backed 7(a) loan.

variety of topics including: obtaining an Employer Identification Number, paying and filing income tax, virtual workshops, forms, and publications.

As the IRS continues to implement some of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act provisions, your tax obligations may change. Visit the Tax Reform Provisions that Affect Businesses page on [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) for the latest tax reform updates that affect your bottom line.

» IRS Tax Assistance Centers

(844) 545-5640 to schedule an appointment

Bloomington

1550 American Blvd. E., suite 700
(763) 347-7509

Duluth

515 W. First St.
(218) 626-1624

Mankato

1921 Excel Drive
(507) 513-6990

St. Cloud

1010 W. Saint Germain St.
(320) 251-9261

St. Paul

430 N. Wabasha St.
(651) 312-8082

» State Taxes

Minnesota Department of Revenue
revenue.state.mn.us

Social Security

If you have any employees, including officers of a corporation but not the sole proprietor or partners, you must make periodic payments, and/or file quarterly reports about payroll taxes and other mandatory deductions. You can contact the IRS or the Social Security Administration for information, assistance, and forms, at (800) 772-1213 or visit [socialsecurity.gov/employer](https://www.socialsecurity.gov/employer). You can file W-2s online or verify job seekers through the Social Security Number Verification Service.

Employment Eligibility Verification

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires employers to verify employment eligibility of new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service offers information and assistance through uscis.gov/i-9-central. For forms call (800) 870-3676. For the employer hotline call (888) 464-4218 or email I-9central@dhs.gov.

E-Verify, operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration, electronically verifies the Social Security number and employment eligibility information reported on Form I-9. It's the quickest way for employers to determine the employment eligibility of new hires. Visit e-verify.gov, call (888) 464-4218 or email e-verify@dhs.gov.

Health & Safety

All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees, visit [dol.gov](https://www.dol.gov) for information. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides information on the specific health and

safety standards used by the U.S. Department of Labor. Call (800) 321-6742 or visit [osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov).

- » **Minnesota Department of Public Safety**
dps.mn.gov/pages/default.aspx
- » **Minnesota Department of Health**
health.state.mn.us/index.html
- » **Minnesota Unemployment Insurance**
uimn.org
- » **Workers Compensation in Minnesota**
dli.mn.gov/business/workers-compensation-businesses
- » **Minnesota OSHA**
dli.mn.gov/business/safety-and-health-work
- » **Department of Labor**
443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul
(800) 342-5354
- » **Vocational Rehabilitation**
616 America Ave. NW, suite 300, Bemidji
(888) 234-1116
- » **Minnesota OSHA and Workers' Compensation**
525 Lake Ave. S., suite 330, Duluth
(218) 733-7810
- » **Minnesota OSHA and Vocational Rehabilitation**
Mankato
12 Civic Center Plaza, suite 1650
(877) 470-6742
Rochester
Atrium Professional Building
401 16th St. SE
(877) 470-6742
St. Cloud
3400 First St. N., suite 405
(877) 470-6742

Employee Insurance

Check with your state laws to see if you are required to provide unemployment or workers' compensation insurance for your employees. For health insurance options, call the Small Business Health Options Program at (800) 706-7893 or visit healthcare.gov/small-businesses/employers.

Department of Labor Association Health Plans allow small businesses, including self-employed workers, to band together by geography or industry to obtain healthcare coverage as if they were a single large employer. For information, visit dol.gov/general/topic/association-health-plans.

- » **Minnesota Commerce Department**
mn.gov/commerce/industries > Insurance > small businesses

Environmental Regulations

State assistance is available for small businesses that must comply with environmental regulations under the Clean Air Act. State Small Business Environmental Assistance programs provide free and confidential assistance to help small business owners understand and comply with complex environmental regulations and permitting requirements. These state programs can help

businesses reduce emissions at the source, often reducing regulatory burden and saving you money. To learn more about these free services visit nationalsbeap.org/states/list.

Free and confidential services from the Minnesota Small Business Environmental Assistance Program help businesses comply with environmental rules, reduce wastes and emissions, and reduce regulatory obligations. Learn more at pca.state.mn.us/smallbizhelp or by calling (800) 657-3938.

Accessibility & ADA Compliance

For assistance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call the ADA Center at (800) 949-4232 or the Department of Justice at (800) 514-0301. Direct questions about accessible design and the ADA standards to the U.S. Access Board at (800) 872-2253, TTY (800) 993-2822, ta@access-board.gov or visit access-board.gov.

Child Support

Employers are essential to the success of the child support program and are responsible for collecting 75% of support nationwide through payroll deductions. The Office of Child Support Enforcement at Health and Human Services offers employers step-by-step instructions for processing income withholding orders for child support. Download the fact sheet about the Employer's Role in the Child Support Program at the Office of Child Support Enforcement's website at acf.hhs.gov/programs/css/employer-responsibilities. You can also find information about other employer responsibilities and tools that can make meeting those responsibilities easier, such as electronic income withholding orders and the Child Support Portal. Send questions to employerservices@acf.hhs.gov.

Intellectual Property

Patents, trademarks, and copyrights are types of intellectual property that serve to protect creations and innovations. The United States Patent and Trademark Office is the federal agency that grants U.S. patents and registers trademarks. For information and resources about U.S. patents and federally registered trademarks consult uspto.gov. Call the patent and trademark office help center at (800) 786-9199 or visit your nearest office at Elijah J. McCoy Midwest Regional Office in Detroit, Michigan, uspto.gov/detroit.

A patent for an invention is the grant of a property right to an inventor, issued by the U.S. patent office. The right conferred by the patent grant is the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention in the United States or importing the invention into the country. For information visit uspto.gov/inventors.

There are three types of patents:

- Utility patents may be granted to anyone who invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement.
- Design patents may be granted to anyone who invents a new, original, and ornamental design for an article of manufacture.
- Plant patents may be granted to anyone who invents or discovers and asexually reproduces any distinct and new variety of plant, other than a tuber propagated plant or a plant found in an uncultivated state.

A trademark or service mark includes any word, name, symbol,



Mohamed Haji, owner of Haji's Towing Service, received assistance and help purchasing his first tow truck from SBA participating microlender African Development Center.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

device, or any combination, used or intended to be used to identify and distinguish the goods/services of one seller or provider from those of others and to indicate the source of the goods/services. Trademarks and service marks may be registered at both the state and federal level. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office only registers federal trademarks and service marks. Federally registered trademarks may conflict with and supersede those registered only at the state level. Visit [uspto.gov/trademarks](https://www.uspto.gov/trademarks).

State Trademarks

Registering your trademark or service mark with the Minnesota Secretary of State's office does not copyright your mark, it only registers it to ensure it is officially recognized with the state of Minnesota.

sos.state.mn.us > **how to register trademarks and service marks**

Copyrights protect original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical and artistic, and certain other intellectual works. Copyrights do not protect facts, ideas, and systems, although they may protect the way they are expressed. For general information contact:

» U.S. Copyright Office

U.S. Library of Congress
James Madison Memorial Building
101 Independence Ave. SE
Washington, DC
(202) 707-3000 or toll free (877) 476-0778
copyright.gov

Chambers of Commerce

For a listing of Minnesota chambers, visit mnchamberexecutives.com

Minnesota Chamber
mnchamber.com

Minnesota Black Chamber
mnblackchamber.org

Minnesota Hmong Chamber
mnhmongchamber.org

Latino Chamber
latinochambermn.com

Minnesota American Indian Chamber
maicc.org

Quorum-Minnesota LGBTQ Chamber
twincitiesquorum.com

Grow Minnesota is a partnership of 80 chambers conducting comprehensive one-on-one site visits with businesses each year, tracking business conditions, collecting data on what it takes for businesses to stay and grow in Minnesota and identifying areas where they can provide solutions to business concerns. Learn more at mnchamber.com.

Minneapolis restaurateur Hector Ruiz opened Don Raul, his fourth concept, thanks in part to business guidance he received in the SBA Emerging Leaders program. This seven-month program provides practical tools to pursue new paths for business success through training and networking opportunities.



COURTESY OF THE SBA

Economic Development

Better Business Bureau
bbb.org

For state assistance with business expansion, international trade, workforce and community development, visit Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development at **mn.gov/deed**.

Entrepreneurs can receive free, confidential business counseling from the Open for Business programs, available throughout the twin cities metro area. Go to **mccdmn.org/open-to-business** to learn more.

Low-income small business owners can receive free assistance in non-litigation business law from LegalCORPS. Find clinic locations and information on setting up a 30-minute consultation time at **legalcorps.org**. Business owners who qualify can receive longer one-on-one representation.

The Minnesota SBIR/STTR Assistance Office is the state's resource to provide free and confidential assistance to Minnesota firms with R&D needs. It focuses on innovation, technology transfer, investments and commercialization, visit **mhta.org/mnsbir**.

Exporting Assistance

Minnesota U.S. Export Assistance Centers

Carlos Sosa
(612) 348-1642
carlos.sosa@sba.gov
sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/eac

Minnesota Trade Office
mn.gov/deed/business/exporting

Minnesota Commerce Department
mn.gov/commerce

U.S. Commercial Service
export.gov/minnesota

Export-Import Bank of the United States
Minneapolis Regional Office
(612) 348-1213
exim.gov



▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Margot Adam Langstaff, left, and Elisa Hamill, right, sought assistance from their local Veterans Business Outreach Center, which helped them better compete for government contracts. LifeHealth of Littleton, CO has expanded to more than 30 states with offices in Washington, DC and San Antonio, TX. Their clients include the Department of Defense, the National Guard, and the Indian Health Service. They also expanded their business using an SBA-backed line of credit for \$350,000. Margot started her career as an Army medic, eventually running one of the largest outpatient clinics in the Northeast at Ft. Devens, MA.



Opportunities for Veterans

Members of the military community can start and grow their small businesses with the help of SBA programs.

Need entrepreneurship training?

In Boots to Business, you explore business ownership and other self-employment opportunities while learning key business concepts. You will walk away with an overview of entrepreneurship and applicable business ownership fundamentals, including how to access startup capital using SBA resources. Boots to Business is conducted on all military installations as part of the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program.

Who's eligible?

Service members transitioning out of active duty and military spouses. Are you a veteran or member of the National Guard or Reserve or a military spouse? Boots to Business: Reboot teaches this entrepreneurship curriculum off base and in local communities. Register for either B2B program at <https://sbavets.force.com>.

For women veterans

Receive entrepreneurial training geared toward women veterans, service members, and spouses of service members through these SBA-funded programs:

- » Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship in Syracuse, New York
- » LiftFund in San Antonio, Texas

For service-disabled veterans

Learn how to start and grow a small business using these SBA-funded programs:

- » Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities in Syracuse, New York
- » Veterans Entrepreneurship Program at the Riata Center for Entrepreneurship, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma
- » Veteran Entrepreneurship Jumpstart at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- » Dog Tag Inc., affiliated with Georgetown University in Washington, DC

Need financing?

Loan Fee Relief

To encourage lending to members of the military community who want to start or grow their business, the SBA reduces upfront guarantee fees on select loans. That means the cost savings will be passed down to you, the eligible veteran or qualifying military member. Ask your local SBA district office or SBA Lender about the Veterans Advantage program.

Have an employee who was called to active duty?

You may receive funds that enable your business to meet ordinary and necessary operating expenses when an essential employee is called up to active duty in the military reserve. Ask your local SBA district office or SBA Lender about the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

Interested in contracting?

Veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses interested in federal contracting receive training from the Veteran Institute for Procurement, which offers a platform with three training programs to assist veterans. Visit nationalvip.org.

VIP Start

Enter the federal market and become ready for procurement. Nearly 200 veteran-owned businesses from 29 states plus Washington, DC have graduated from the program.

VIP Grow

Strategize to expand and operate within the federal marketplace. More than 700 veteran-owned businesses from 42 states plus DC and Guam have graduated from this program.

VIP International

Enter or expand your federal and commercial contracting opportunities overseas.

Get certified

Learn about the service-disabled veteran-owned small business certification program on page 65.

For more assistance

Veteran and military entrepreneurs receive business training, counseling, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, sba.gov/vboc. For veterans business information visit sba.gov/veterans.

Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Regional Innovation Clusters

Create jobs and grow the economy through an SBA Regional Innovation Cluster.

Who should join

Small businesses driving innovation in one of these tech industries:

- advanced composites
- agTech
- bioscience
- food processing
- data sciences
- medical sciences
- power and energy
- unmanned aerial systems
- water tech
- wood products

How it works

Each industry cluster is based in a geographic region. Your small business must be located in or near that region in order to join the cluster. For example, the AgLaunch Initiative cluster, which focuses on agricultural technology, is located in the Tennessee area. A small agTech business in or near Tennessee will connect with other agTech suppliers, service providers, and related institutions through that innovation cluster.

How it benefits you

Network with other industry innovators and connect with resources that will help your small business find funding. You'll also receive guidance on how to better compete for government contracts and other opportunities so you can grow and expand. Receive free technical and legal assistance to develop your tech and get it to market for government and industry buyers.

Get involved

Find an SBA Regional Innovation Cluster near you by visiting sba.gov/localassistance. Select the regional innovation clusters on the drop-down menu.

Online Resources

Find free short courses and learning tools to start and grow your small business at sba.gov/learning. The free SBA Online Learning Center is a great resource for every entrepreneur, especially rural business owners looking for easy access to vital business training.



Courses include:

- writing your business plan
- buying a business
- financing options
- digital and traditional marketing to win customers
- disaster recovery
- understanding your customer

Native American Workshops

Tribal enterprises and business organizations can receive training at an SBA Entrepreneurial Empowerment Workshop. These workshops cover business concepts important for starting, growing, or expanding a small business. RedWind instructors identify and help participants avoid common pitfalls. Learn how to prepare a business plan, gain access to capital, and basic book keeping. Request a workshop in your area by visiting nativesmallbusiness.org.

SBA Regional Innovation Clusters



1 Autonomous & Unmanned Systems Cluster – Emerging Tech Ventures

2 The Ozarks Cluster – Startup Junkie
(Industry focus: Food processing, supply chain, & logistics)

3 The Water Council Cluster

4 Marine Industry Science & Technology Cluster

5 BioSTL: St. Louis Biosciences Cluster

6 Oklahoma-South Kansas Unmanned Aerial Systems Cluster

7 The Appalachian Ohio Wood Products Cluster

8 Conductor RIC in Healthcare, Education & Data/Decision Sciences – Startup Junkie Consulting

9 Integrative Business Services Inc.
(Industry focus: Optics)

10 Great Plains Technology & Manufacturing Cluster

11 Montana Bioscience Cluster – Montana Technology Enterprise Center

12 AgLaunch Initiative

13 Utah Advanced Material Manufacturing Initiative

14 Defense Alliance - LSI Business Development Inc. (Industry focus: Advanced Power and Energy)

How Do I Find an EIN?



No doubt, there are probably quite a few regulatory and administrative items on your new business checklist, like getting a permit and registering your business name.

One of the key requirements for most new businesses (or businesses that are restructuring) is obtaining an Employer Identification Number, or EIN, from the IRS.

Here's what you need to know about EINs and how to go about getting one for your business.

What is an EIN?

An EIN is a unique nine-digit number that identifies your business for tax purposes. Think of it as the business equivalent of a social security number (although it shouldn't be used in place of it).

As a business owner, you'll need an EIN to open a business bank account, apply for business licenses, and file your tax returns. It's a good idea to apply for one as soon as you start planning your business. This will ensure there are no delays in getting the appropriate licenses or financing that you need to operate.

Who needs an EIN?

An EIN is needed by any business that retains employees. However, non employers are also required to obtain one if they operate as a corporation or partnership.

Answering yes to any of the questions in the list on the right means you need one for your business.

How to apply for an EIN

The easiest way to apply for your EIN is online via the IRS EIN Assistant. As soon as your application is complete and validated, you'll be issued an EIN. There is no charge for this service (beware of internet scams that will try to sell you their EIN application services).

You can also apply by mail or fax using Form SS-4, available at [irs.gov/formss4](https://www.irs.gov/formss4).

Changing your business structure? Get a new EIN

As your business grows and matures, you may choose to change its legal or ownership structure. For example, a sole proprietor may decide to incorporate, or a partnership may be taken over by one of the owners to then operate as a sole proprietorship. In instances such as these, your business will need a new EIN.

There are other scenarios that require a new EIN, such as bankruptcy, a change in a corporation's name or location, or reorganization of a corporation. Check out "Do You Need a New EIN" on [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

Using your EIN to make tax deposits

If you have employees, you will have been automatically enrolled in the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (eftps.gov) when you applied for your EIN. This allows you to make tax deposits, including federal employment and corporate taxes, online or by phone.

Lost your EIN?

If you lost or misplaced your EIN, you can retrieve it in the following ways:

- Reference the original notice issued by the IRS when you received your EIN, or call the IRS Business & Specialty Tax Line at (800) 829-4933.
- If you used it to open a bank account or get a license, contact these organizations.

Not sure whether you need an EIN?

Check out this guide from the IRS. Answering yes to any of the questions in the list means you need one for your business.

Do you have employees?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you operate your business as a corporation or a partnership?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you file any of these tax returns: employment, excise, or alcohol, tobacco and firearms?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you withhold taxes on income, other than wages, paid to a non-resident alien?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you have a Keogh plan?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Are you involved with any of the following types of organizations?

- Trusts, except certain grantor-owned revocable trusts, IRAs, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Returns
- Estates
- Real estate mortgage investment conduits
- Nonprofit organizations
- Farmers' cooperatives
- Plan administrators

☐ YES ☐ NO

They should be able to retrieve your number.

- Find an old tax return. Your EIN should be on it.

WRITTEN BY **Caron Beesley**, CONTRIBUTOR

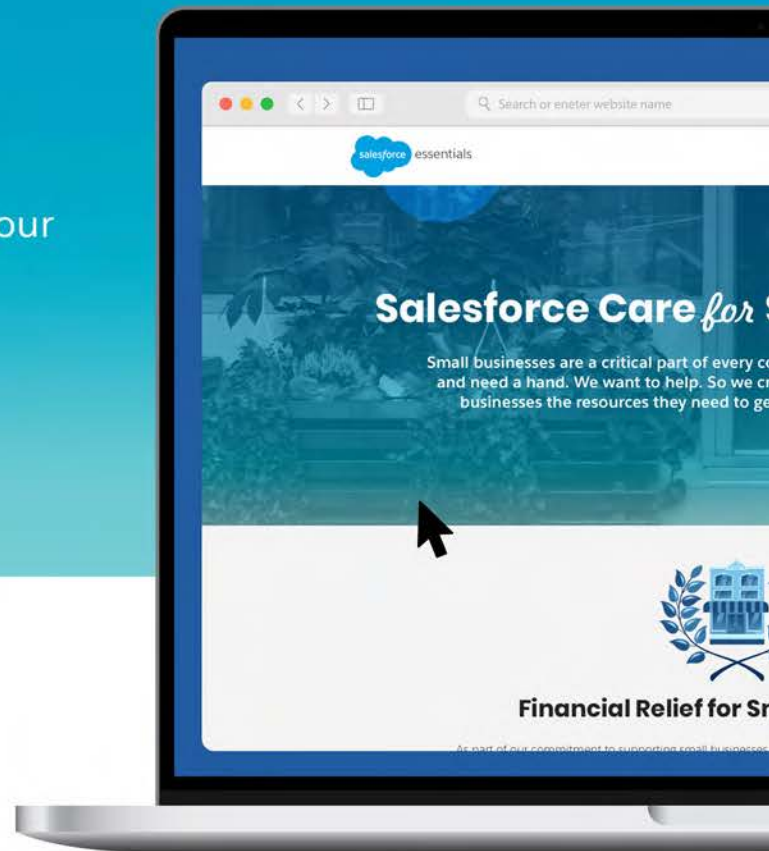
Free Solutions for Small Businesses

We can get through this together.

Small businesses are the heart of our communities. In these uncertain times, we want to help. So we created Salesforce Care to provide free resources, tips, and support.

- Stay connected to every customer with Salesforce Essentials – now free for 90 days.*
- Turn data insights into confident decision-making with analytics tool Tableau – free for 90 days.*
- Get the guidance you need to keep your business going with free workshops, webinars, and more.

Learn more:
salesforce.com/careforsmallbusiness



*New customers only. Restrictions apply.

Write your Business Plan

Your business plan is the foundation of your business. Learn how to write a business plan with the help of an SBA Resource Partner.



Business plans help you run your business.

A good business plan guides you through managing your business. You'll use your business plan as a roadmap for how to structure, run, and grow your new business.

Business plans can help you get funding or bring on new business partners. Investors want to see a return on their investment. Your business plan is the tool you'll use to convince people that working with you—or investing in your company—is a smart investment. Brain storm with a business counselor (visit one of our SBA Resource Partners detailed on page 10) and write a **traditional business plan**, which uses a standard structure and detailed sections. Once you've got it all down, you can then condense it to a lean startup business plan, which typically contains key points on only one page.

TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN FORMAT

When you write your business plan, you don't have to stick to the exact business plan template. Instead, use the sections that make the most sense for your business and your needs.

Executive Summary

Briefly summarize your company and why it will be successful. Include your mission statement, your product or service, and basic information about your company's leadership team, employees, and location. You should also include financial information and high-level growth plans if you plan to ask for financing.

Company Description

Go into detail about the problems your business solves. Be specific as to audience and location. List out the consumers, organizations, or businesses your company plans to serve.

Explain the competitive advantages you have that will make your business successful. Are there experts on your team? Have you found the perfect location? Your company description is the place to boast about your strengths.

Market Analysis

Demonstrate a solid understanding of your industry outlook and target market. This is where it pays to partner with an experienced business counselor from your local Small Business Development Center, SCORE, Women's Business Center, or Veterans Business Outreach Center—all these SBA Resource Partners provide free or low-cost business assistance. Competitive research will show what other businesses are doing and their strengths. In your market research, look for trends and themes. What do successful competitors do? Why does it work? Can you do it better? Now's the time to answer these questions.

Organization and Management

Explain how your company will be structured and who will run it.

Describe the legal structure of your business. State whether you have or intend to incorporate your business as a C or an S corporation, form a general or limited partnership, or if you're a sole proprietor or limited liability company.

Want to see an example of a business plan?

View examples of business plans at [sba.gov/business-guide/plan/write-your-business-plan-template](https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan/write-your-business-plan-template)

TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN CHECKLIST

- ☐ Executive summary
- ☐ Company description
- ☐ Market analysis
- ☐ Organization and management
- ☐ Service or product line
- ☐ Marketing and sales
- ☐ Funding request
- ☐ Financial projections
- ☐ Appendix

Use an organizational chart to show the hierarchy. Explain how each person's experience will contribute to the success of your venture. Consider including CVs of key members.

Service or Product Line

Describe what you sell or what service you offer. Explain how it benefits your customers and the product lifecycle. Share your plans for intellectual property, like copyright or patent filings. If you're doing research and development for your service or product, explain it.

Marketing and Sales

Your marketing strategy should evolve and change to fit your needs in each context.

Describe how you'll attract and retain customers. Show how a sale will actually happen. You'll refer to this section later when you make financial projections, so be thorough.

Funding Request

If you're asking for funding, outline your funding requirements. Specify whether you want debt or equity and the terms you'd like. Your goal is to clearly explain how much funding you'll need over the next five years and how the investment will be used.

Specify if you need funds to buy equipment or materials, pay salaries, or cover specific bills until revenue increases. Explain how you'll pay off the debt.

Financial Projections

Supplement your funding request with a prospective financial outlook for the next five years. Show how your business will be a financial success.

If your business is already established, include income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements for the last three to five years. List collateral you could put against a loan.

Include forecasted income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets. For the first year, be even more specific and use quarterly—or even monthly—projections. Make sure to clearly explain your projections and match them to your funding requests.

Use visual organization tools--graphs and charts—to tell your business's financial story.

Appendix

Here you'll attach supporting documents or other requested materials. Common items to include are credit histories, CVs, product pictures, letters of reference, licenses, permits, patents, legal documents, and other contracts.

LEAN STARTUP PLAN FORMAT

Write a lean startup plan if requested from an investor, or if your business is relatively simple or you plan to regularly change and refine as you go.

Lean startup plans use more visual organization tools and only a handful of elements to describe your company's value proposition, infrastructure, customers, and finances. They're useful for visualizing your company's fundamental facts. Your business counselor can help you edit down into the Business Model Canvas, used here—the most well known style, or another lean startup template.

Key Partnerships

Note the other businesses you'll work with--suppliers, manufacturers, subcontractors, and similar strategic partners.

Key Activities

List the ways your business will gain a competitive advantage. Will you sell direct to consumers or use technology to tap into the sharing economy?

Key Resources

List resources you'll leverage to create value for your customer. Your most important assets include staff, capital, or intellectual property. Leverage business resources that might be available to women, veterans, Native Americans, and HUBZone-certified businesses.

Value Proposition

Make a clear and compelling statement about the unique value your company brings to the market.

Customer Relationships

Describe how customers will interact with your business. Think through the customer experience from start to finish. Is it automated or personal? In person or online?

Customer Segments

Name your target market. Your business won't be for everybody; it's important to have a clear sense of who you serve.

Channels

List the most important ways you'll talk to your customers.

Cost Structure

Will your company focus on reducing cost or maximizing value? Define your strategy, then list the most significant costs you'll face.

Revenue Streams

Explain how your company makes money: direct sales, memberships fees, selling advertising space? If your company has multiple revenue streams, list them all.

LEAN STARTUP PLAN CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Key partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer segments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Key activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Channels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Key resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Value proposition | <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue streams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer relationships | |

Niles Deneen

PRESIDENT, DENEEN POTTERY

St. Paul, MN

Deneen Pottery started in Peter and Mary Deneen's garage nearly 50 years ago. Since then it has expanded to a 50,000-square foot production facility employing over 90. With SBA assistance, their son, Niles, is taking over the business, ensuring the same level of quality in their hand-thrown coffee mugs.

- **What challenge did you have?** I started at an entry-level shipping position here 20 years ago. I needed to transition our business from one generation to the next and that comes with challenges. As my parents are stepping away, I need to step up.
- **What was the SBA solution?** In the SBA Emerging Leaders program, I received business training and networking opportunities with peers, local leaders, and lenders that profoundly affected my small businesses. In the class, you create a three-year growth plan, which became our transition plan. I committed to the seven-month program because I wanted to develop date specific initiatives, while also getting a solid training in business management. I also gained confidence to move forward, and my parents gained confidence in me. Deneen Pottery was created by my family, and I'm excited to see it evolve and grow into a new era.
- **What benefit did this have for you?** If you're an aspiring entrepreneur, there has never been a better time in history to own and operate a small business. Our sales are up 10% from the previous year. Since graduating from the Emerging Leaders program, I've added four full-time employees. We have over 64 skilled craftspeople producing about 2,800 mugs every day, which can be found in retail stores at our nation's monuments and parks and over 400 restaurants and coffee shops. The help from the SBA has been just incredible.



Business President Niles Deneen, left, and potter Enoch Wilson.



**“
The help
from the
SBA has
been just
incredible.”**

Niles Deneen
President, Deneen Pottery

FUNDING PROGRAMS

Financing Your Small Business

How We Did It

Crafting a Business

SBA-backed financing helped Superstition Meadery expand into a multimillion dollar enterprise.

WRITTEN BY BECKY BOSSHART

Jennifer and Jeff Herbert's home-based brewing has expanded into a global, multimillion dollar enterprise thanks to SBA assistance. Using Arizona honey and ingredients they've sourced from around the world (such as Tahitian vanilla and Moroccan saffron), the Herberts are selling nearly 30,000 gallons annually of their honey-based fermented beverage. They operate a downtown Prescott, Arizona tasting room and state-of-the-art production facility, creating jobs and building a local craft industry. The Herberts, founding members of the American Mead Makers Association, have traveled around the world hosting pairing events and pouring at craft beverage festivals.

Challenge

The Herberts wanted to scale up their meadery while also staying true to their values of quality ingredients and craft process. It is often difficult for new entrepreneurs or unique concepts like a meadery to get traditional financing, even though they knew they had a great idea, the backing wasn't there to expand. They say that choosing to do something new breaks the mold, which can be uncomfortable for traditional lenders.

Solution

Thanks to guidance from an SBA Resource Partner, the Small Business Development Center at Yavapai Community College, Jennifer and Jeff learned about financing that worked for them. The SBA guarantees loans made by lending institutions to small business that would not otherwise be able to obtain financing. Their small business qualified for two SBA-backed loans totaling more than \$600,000. The Herberts' first SBA-backed loan allowed them to acquire commercial property to design and build their mead production facility. Their second SBA-backed loan provided the funding for professional brewing equipment to complete their 7,450-square-foot production space. The Herberts recently purchased a historic building in downtown Phoenix, Arizona to open a mead-pairing restaurant.

Benefit

The Herberts started with two employees and now have over 20 producing 29,000 gallons this year. From a homegrown setup, Jennifer and Jeff are now charting revenue in excess of \$2.6 million and distributing to 37 states, across Europe and Southeast Asia. They have plans for another expansion, including a shipping warehouse to manage their online retail and wholesale orders.



Jeff & Jennifer Herbert, owners of Superstition Meadery, completed their 7,450-square-foot production space and opened a tasting room in Prescott, AZ with the assistance of SBA-backed financing. See their story on YouTube by searching for the 2019 National Small Business Persons of the Year.

5 Tips for Success

Get guidance.

Develop a working relationship with an SBA Resource Partner (see page 10) to help you find the funding that works best for you.

Define your lending needs.

Determine if a loan is right for you. Is this the right time? How much do you need? What are you going to use it for?

Talk to multiple lenders.

See who best matches you and your business. Has the lender successfully worked with other businesses in your industry?

Check all options.

Consult with your lender to see if you're eligible for SBA financing programs, determined by your industry & experience; collateral; credit score; and the relationship & transparency you develop with the lending agent.

Be ready for the ups and downs.

Your entrepreneurial endeavor will be a roller coaster ride filled with challenges and successes. The path is all consuming so make sure that you love what you do. Passion is the price of admission.

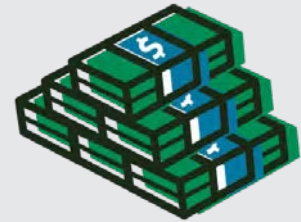
Lender Match

Find a lender interested in working with you at sba.gov/lendermatch. This matching tool connects entrepreneurs with SBA Lenders in your area.



SBA-backed Loans

help small business owners and entrepreneurs who are creditworthy but don't qualify for conventional financing. If you cannot obtain a business loan with reasonable rates and terms, contact your local SBA Lender to see if you are eligible for SBA programs. The SBA works with participating lenders to reduce their risk, increasing the likelihood your loan will be approved with the terms that work best for you. The guarantee is conditional on the lender following SBA program requirements. Just like with any other loan, you make your loan payments directly to your lender in accordance with your terms.



AMBITION,
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MBFC

Minnesota Business Finance Corporation

#1 SBA 504 Lender in Minnesota

- Fixed Asset Financing
- Certified by the U.S. Small Business Administration for SBA 504 Loan Program Projects
- Serving all of Minnesota as well as western Wisconsin and eastern North Dakota

SBA Lenders

Our participating SBA Lenders serve all Minnesota unless otherwise noted. To find more bank locations, visit the lender's website.

ADA

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

ADAMS

United Farmers State Bank
unitedfsb.com

ADRIAN

Adrian State Bank
adrianstatebank.com

AITKIN

Members Cooperative Credit Union
membersccu.org

Neighborhood National Bank
neighborhood.bank

Security State Bank
ssbm.com

AKELEY

First National Bank North
fnbnorth.com

ALBANY

Central Minnesota Credit Union
mycmcu.org

ALBERT LEA

Farmers State Bank
fsbm.bank

Home Federal
justcallhome.com

Security Bank Minnesota
securitybankmn.com

ALBERTVILLE

Financial Security Bank
financialsecuritybank.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

ALDEN

Security Bank Minnesota
securitybankmn.com

ALEXANDRIA

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

American National Bank
anbm.com

Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

Neighborhood National Bank
neighborhood.bank

Viking Bank
vikingbankmn.com

AMBOY

Community Bank
cbfg.net

ANDOVER

Central Minnesota Development Corp.
cmdcbusinessloans.com

Minnco Credit Union
minnco.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

SharePoint Credit Union
sharepointcu.com

ANNANDALE

Star Bank
starbank.net

ANOKA

Anoka Hennepin Credit Union
ahcu.coop

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

First National Bank of Elk River
elkriver.bank

APPLE VALLEY

First Resource Bank
myfrbank.com

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Royal Credit Union
rcu.org

Sterling State Bank
sterlingstatebank.com

Think Mutual Bank
thinkbank.com

APPLETON

Farmers and Merchants State Bank of Appleton
farmers-merchants.com

ARDEN HILLS

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

SPEDCO
spedco.com

ARGYLE

United Valley Bank
uvbank.net

ASHBY

First State Bank of Ashby
fsbashby.com

ASKOV

Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

ATWATER

Harvest Bank
harvestbankmn.com

AURORA

Northern State Bank
nsbashland.com

AUSTIN

Farmers & Merchants State Bank
fmbankmn.com

First Farmers & Merchants State Bank
ffmbank.com

Home Federal
justcallhome.com

Sterling State Bank
sterlingstatebank.com

AVON

American Heritage National Bank
logbank.com

Central Minnesota Credit Union
mycmcu.org

BACKUS

First National Bank North
fnbnorth.com

BADGER

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

BAGLEY

Bank Forward
bankforward.com

First National Bank
fnbezbanking.com

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

BARNUM

Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

BARNESVILLE

Midwest Bank
m.midwestbank.net

BARRETT

Star Bank
starbank.net

BATTLE LAKE

First National Bank
fnbhenning.com

BAUDETTE

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

BAXTER

American National Bank
anbm.com

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

First National Bank North
fnbnorth.com

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

Members Cooperative Credit Union
membersccu.org

Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union
mmfcu.org

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

BAYPORT

First State Bank & Trust
fsbt.com

BECKER

Sherburne State Bank
sherburnestatebank.com

BELGRADE

Central Minnesota Credit Union
mycmcu.org

North American State Bank
nasbank.com

BELLCHESTER

First Farmers & Merchants State Bank
ffmbank.com

BEMIDJI

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

Bank Forward
bankforward.com

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

First National Bank of Bemidji
fnbbemidji.com

Northwest Minnesota Foundation
nwmf.org

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

Security Bank USA
securitybankusa.com

TruStar Federal Credit Union
trustarfcu.com

Ultima Bank
ultimabank.com

BENSON

First Security Bank
firstsecuritybanks.com

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

BERTHA

Star Bank
starbank.net

BIG LAKE

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

BIGFORK

First State Bank of Bigfork
fsbbigfork.com

BIRD ISLAND

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

BIWABIK

American Bank
ambnk.com

BLAINE

21st Century Bank
21stcb.com

Boundary Waters Bank
mybwbank.com

CorTrust Bank
cortrustbank.com

Financial One Credit Union
financialonecu.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

Village Bank
villagebankonline.bank

BLACKDUCK

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

Farmers & Merchants State Bank
fmbankmn.com

BLOOMINGTON

Bridgewater Bank
bridgewaterbankmn.com

Choice Financial
choicefinancialgroup.com

Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

Highland Bank
highland.bank

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

RBCU
rbcu.org

SharePoint Credit Union
sharepointcu.com

Unity Bank
ubmn.unitybanking.com

Western Bank
western-bank.com

BLOOMKIST

Concorde Bank
concordebanks.com

BLUE EARTH

First Bank Blue Earth
firstbankblueearth.com

BLUFFTON

Wadena State Bank
wadenastatebank.com

BOWLUS

Pine Country Bank
pinecountrybank.com

BRAHAM

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

BRAINERD

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

American National Bank of Minnesota
anbm.com

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

Initiative Foundation
ifound.org

Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union
mmfcu.org

Neighborhood National Bank
neighborhood.bank

Randall State Bank
randallstatebank.com

BRECKENRIDGE

Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

BREEZY POINT

Pine River State Bank
pineriverstatebank.com

BROOKLYN PARK

CorTrust Bank
cortrustbank.com

Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

BROOTEN

Bonanza Valley State Bank
onlinebanking.bvsvb.net

BROWERVILLE

**American Heritage
National Bank**
logbank.com

BROWNSDALE

**First Farmers & Merchants
State Bank**
ffmbank.com

BROWNTON

Security Bank & Trust
security-banks.com

BUFFALO

Bankwest
bankwestmn.com

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

BUFFALO LAKE

CenBank
cenbank.com

BUHL

First National Bank of Buhl
fnbob.com

BURNSVILLE

Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

SharePoint Credit Union
sharepointcu.com

BYRON

First Alliance Credit Union
firstalliancecu.com

First Security Bank
fsbbyron.com

CALEDONIA

ESB Banking & Insurance
esbbanking.com

CALLAWAY

Midwest Bank
m.midwestbank.net

CAMBRIDGE

**Affinity Plus Federal
Credit Union**
affinityplus.org

Cambridge State Bank
cambridgestatebank.com

Minnco Credit Union
minnco.com

CANBY

Co-op Credit Union
co-opcreditunion.com

First Security Bank
firstsecuritybanks.com

CANNON FALLS

Community Resource Bank
community-resource
bank.com

**First Farmers & Merchants
State Bank**
ffmbank.com

CASS LAKE

Western Bank
wbduluth.com

CASTLE ROCK

Castle Rock Bank
castlerockbank.net

CHAMPLIN

**Anoka Hennepin
Credit Union**
ahcu.coop

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

Maple Bank
maple-bank.com

CHANDLER

State Bank of Chandler
statebankofchandler.bank

CHANHASSEN

**Americana
Community Bank**
americanafinancial.com

Charter Bank
charterbank.bank

Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

CHASKA

BankVista
bankvista.com

Charter Bank
charterbank.bank

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Security Bank & Trust
security-banks.com

CHATFIELD

F & M Community Bank
fmcommunity.com

CHISAGO LAKES

**Security State Bank
of Marine**
themarinebank.com

CHISHOLM

American Bank
ambnk.com

CIRCLE PINES

**Anoka Hennepin
Credit Union**
ahcu.coop

CLARA CITY

Citizens Alliance Bank
citizensalliancebank.com

CLARISSA

Unity Bank
ubmn.unitybanking.com

CLEARBROOK

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

CLEARWATER

**American Heritage
National Bank**
logbank.com

CLEVELAND

HomeTown Bank
htbmn.com

CLINTON

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

CLOQUET

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

**Members Cooperative
Credit Union**
membersccu.org

North Shore Bank
northshore.bank

Woodlands National Bank
woodlandsnationalbank.com

COBORN

**Neighborhood
National Bank**
neighborhood.bank

COHASSET

Woodland Bank
woodlandbank.com

COKATO

**First National Bank
of Cokato**
fnbcokato.com

Kensington Bank
kensington.bank

COLD SPRING

**Central Minnesota
Credit Union**
mycmcu.org

Granite Community Bank
granitecommunitybank.com

COLERAINE

**First National Bank
of Coleraine**
colerainebank.com

COLOGNE

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Security Bank & Trust
security-banks.com

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

Financial One Credit Union
financialonecu.com

COMFREY

Choice Financial
choicefinancialgroup.com

COOK

American Bank
ambnk.com

COON RAPIDS

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

Anoka Hennepin Credit Union
ahcu.coop

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

Financial One Credit Union
financialonecu.com

Northeast Bank
nebankmn.com

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

CORCORAN

Farmers State Bank of Hamel
fsboh.com

COSMOS

Home State Bank
hsbofmn.com

COTTONWOOD

United Southwest Bank
unitedswbank.com

COURTLAND

Alliance Bank
alliancebanks.com

CROMWELL

Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

CROOKSTON

Northern Sky Bank
northernskybank.com

CROSBY

Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union
mmfcu.org

Unity Bank

unitybanking.com

CROSSLAKE

First National Bank North
fnbnorth.com

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

DALTON

Midwest Bank
m.midwestbank.net

DEER CREEK

Wadena State Bank
wadenastatebank.com

DEER RIVER

Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

Woodland Bank
woodlandbank.com

DEERWOOD

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

DELANO

CorTrust Bank
cortrustbank.com

Minnesota Lakes Bank
mnlakesbank.com

DENT

United Community Bank
ucbankmn.com

DETROIT LAKES

American National Bank
anbmnn.com

Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

First Security Bank
firstsecuritybanks.com

Midwest Bank
m.midwestbank.net

Minnesota Business Finance Corp.
mbfc.org

DILWORTH

Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

Northwestern Bank
nwbanks.com

DULUTH

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

Entrepreneur Fund
entrepreneurfund.org

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

Members Cooperative Credit Union
membersccu.org

Northland Foundation
northlandfdn.org

North Shore Bank
northshore.bank

Northwestern Bank
nwbanks.com

Republic Bank
bankrepublic.com

Western Bank
wbduluth.com

DUNDAS

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

EAGAN

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

Choice Financial
choicefinancialgroup.com

City & County Credit Union
cccu.com

Home Federal
justcallhome.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Prime Security
primesecurity.com

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

Think Mutual Bank
thinkbank.com

EAGLE BEND

Star Bank
starbank.net

EAST BETHEL

Village Bank
villagebankonline.bank

EAST GRAND FORKS

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

Ultima Bank Minnesota
ultimabank.com

ECHO

Citizens Alliance Bank
citizensalliancebank.com

EDEN PRAIRIE

Alerus Financial
alerus.com

Flagship Bank
flagshipbanks.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

Star Bank
starbank.net

EDEN VALLEY

Farmers and Merchants Bank
fmpierz.com

EDINA

Alerus Financial
alerus.com

Crown Bank
crown-bank.com

Fidelity Bank
fidelitybankmn.com

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

Gateway Bank
gateway-banking.com

Minnesota Bank & Trust
mnbankandtrust.com

Royal Credit Union
rcu.org

RBCU
rbcu.org

Think Mutual Bank
thinkbank.com

Tradition Capital Bank
tradition.bank

Unity Bank
unitybanking.com

EITZEN
ESB Banking & Insurance
esbbanking.com

EMILY
Pine River State Bank
pineriverstatebank.com

EMMONS
Security Bank Minnesota
securitybankmn.com

ELBOW LAKE
Eagle Bank
eaglebankmn.com

Star Bank
starbank.net

ELK RIVER
Bank of Elk River
thebankofelkriver.com

**First National Bank
of Elk River**
elkriver.bank

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

ELKO NEW MARKET
New Market Bank
newmarketbank.com

ELROSA
North American State Bank
nasbank.com

ELY
Boundary Waters Bank
mybwbank.com

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

ELYSIAN
Elysian Bank
elysianbank.net

ERSKINE
American State Bank
asbgrygla.com

ESKO
Republic Bank
bankrepublic.com

EVANSVILLE
First Security Bank
firstsecuritybanks.com

EVELETH
Entrepreneur Fund
entrepreneurfund.org

Miners National Bank
mnbeveleth.com

EXCELSIOR
Alerus Financial
alerus.com

FAIRFAX
First National Bank of Fairfax
fnbf.com

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

FAIRMONT
Bank Midwest
bankmidwest.com

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Profinium Financial Inc.
profinium.com

FALCON HEIGHTS
Spire Federal Credit Union
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FARIBAULT
1 st United Bank
1stunited.com

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Credit Union**
affinityplus.org

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

Reliance Bank
reliancebankmn.com

State Bank of Faribault
tsbf.com

FARMINGTON
Castle Rock Bank
castlerockbank.net

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

Roundbank
roundbank.com

FERGUS FALLS
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Credit Union**
affinityplus.org

American National Bank
anbm.com

Bell Bank
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**Security State Bank
of Fergus Falls**
ssbfergus.com

FLOODWOOD
Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

FOLEY
Falcon National Bank
falconnational.com

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FOREST LAKE
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Credit Union**
ahcu.coop

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Lake Area Bank
lakeareabank.com

**Security State Bank
of Marine**
themarinebank.com

FOSSTON
First National Bank
fnbezbanking.com

Ultima Bank
ultimabank.com

FRANKLIN
Franklin State Bank
franklinstatebank.com

FRAZEE
United Community Bank
ucbankmn.com

FREEBORN
Farmers State Bank
fsbm.com

FREEPORT
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Credit Union**
mycmcu.org
Freeport State Bank
freeportstatebank.com

FRIDLEY
Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

FULDA
First National Bank
firstnationalbanks.bank

GARRISON
Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

Security State Bank
ssbm.com

GAYLORD
First National Bank
fnbm.com

ProGrowth Bank
progrowth.com

GILBERT
**First National Bank
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gilbertbank.com

GLENCOE
First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

Security Bank & Trust
security-banks.com

GLENWOOD
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Eagle Bank
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Glenwood State Bank
glenwoodstate.bank

GOLDEN VALLEY
BNC National Bank
bncbank.com

Choice Financial
choicefinancialgroup.com

TruStone Financial
trustonefinancial.org

GOODHUE
First Farmers & Merchants
State Bank
ffmbank.com

GRACEVILLE
Star Bank
starbank.net

GRAND RAPIDS
Affinity Plus Federal
Credit Union
affinityplus.org

American Bank
ambnk.com

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

Entrepreneur Fund
entrepreneurfund.org

Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

Woodland Bank
woodlandbank.com

GRAND MARAIS
Entrepreneur Fund
entrepreneurfund.org

Grand Marais State Bank
grandmaraisstatebank.com

Security State Bank
ssbm.com

GRAND MEADOW
First Farmers & Merchants
State Bank
ffmbank.com

GRAND RAPIDS
American Bank
ambnk.com

Entrepreneur Fund
entrepreneurfund.org

Grand Rapids State Bank
grsb.com

Members Cooperative
Credit Union
membersccu.org

GRANITE FALLS
Citizens Alliance Bank
citizensalliancebank.com

Granite Falls Bank
granitefallsbank.com

GREENBUSH
Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

GREENWALD
Freeport State Bank
freeportstatebank.com

GREENWOOD
Bridgewater Bank
bridgewaterbankmn.com

GREY EAGLE
Central Minnesota
Credit Union
mycmcu.org

GROVE CITY
First State Bank
of Grove City
bankofgrovecity.com

GRYGLA
American State Bank
asbgrygla.com

HACKENSACK
First National Bank North
fnbnorth.com

HALLOCK
United Valley Bank
uvbank.net

HALSTAD
Red River State Bank
redriverbank.com

HAM LAKE
21st Century Bank
21stcb.com
Falcon National Bank
falconnational.com

HAMEL
Farmers State Bank
of Hamel
fsboh.com

HANCOCK
Community
Development Bank
comdevbank.com

HANLEY FALLS
United Southwest Bank
unitedswbank.com

HANOVER
Bankwest
bankwestmn.com

HANSKA
Alliance Bank
alliancebanks.com

HARTLAND
Farmers State Bank
fsbm.com

HASTINGS
Affinity Plus Federal
Credit Union
affinityplus.org

First National Bank
firstnationalbanks.bank

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

North American
Banking Co.
nabankco.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

HAWLEY
Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

Valley Premier Bank
valleypremierbank.com

HAYFIELD
Citizens State Bank
of Hayfield
csbankmn.com

HECTOR
Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

HENDERSON
First State Bank
fsblecenter.com

HomeTown Bank
htbm.com

HENDRUM
Northwestern Bank
nwbanks.com

HERMAN
Kensington Bank
kensington.bank

HERMANTOWN
North Shore Bank
northshore.bank

HIBBING
American Bank
ambnk.com
Entrepreneur Fund
entrepreneurfund.org

Republic Bank
bankrepublic.com

HILL CITY
Woodland Bank
woodlandbank.com

HINCKLEY
Northview Bank
northviewbank.com
Woodlands National Bank
woodlandsnational
bank.com

HOFFMAN
Farmers State Bank
of Hoffman
fsbhoffman.net

HOLDINGFORD

**Central Minnesota
Credit Union**
mycmcu.org

HOLMEN

Coulee Bank
couleebank.net

HOPKINS

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

HOWARD LAKE

Citizens Alliance Bank
citizensalliancebank.com

HUGO

Lake Area Bank
lakeareabank.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

HUTCHINSON

Citizens Bank & Trust
cbhutch.com

Home State Bank
hsbofmn.com

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

**Southpoint Financial
Credit Union**
southpointfinancial.com

**Southwest Initiative
Foundation**
swifoundation.com

INTERNATIONAL FALLS

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

**TruStar Federal
Credit Union**
trustarfcu.com

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Deerwood Bank
deerwoodbank.com

Heartland Credit Union
heartlandcu.com

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

ISANTI

Minnco Credit Union
minncoco.com

Falcon National Bank
falconnational.com

Flagship Bank
flagshipbanks.com

**Members Cooperative
Credit Union**
membersccu.org

JACKSON

Bank Midwest
bankmidwest.com

United Prairie Bank
unitedprairiebank.com

JANESVILLE

Janesville State Bank
janesvillestatebank.com

JORDAN

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

Riverland Bank
riverlandbank.com

KANDIYOHI

Harvest Bank
harvestbankmn.com

KARLSTAD

Prime Security
primesecurity.com

KASSON

Home Federal
justcallhome.com

KENSINGTON

Kensington Bank
kensington.bank

KERKHOVEN

Financial Security Bank
financialsecuritybank.com

KERRICK

Northview Bank
northviewbank.com

KIESTER

First State Bank of Kiester
fsbkiester.com

KIMBALL

Harvest Bank
harvestbankmn.com

LA CRESCENT

ESB Banking & Insurance
esbbanking.com

Home Federal
justcallhome.com

LAFAYETTE

Citizens Bank Minnesota
citizensmn.bank

LAKE BENTON

First Security Bank
firstsecuritybanks.com

LAKE CITY

Alliance Bank
alliancebanks.com

LAKE CRYSTAL

MinnStar Bank
minnstarbank.com

LAKE ELMO

City & County Credit Union
cccu.com

Lake Elmo Bank
lakeelmobank.com

LAKEFIELD

First National Bank
firstnationalbanks.bank

LAKE LILLIAN

Citizens Alliance Bank
citizensalliancebank.com

LAKE PARK

State Bank of Lake Park
statebankoflakepark.com

LAKEVILLE

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Credit Union**
affinityplus.org

Citizens Bank Minnesota
citizensmn.bank

Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

Lakeview Bank
lakeview-bank.com

New Market Bank
newmarketbank.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

Sterling State Bank
sterlingstatebank.com

LAMBERTON

First Security Bank
firstsecuritybanks.com

LANCASTER

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

United Valley Bank
uvbank.net

LAPRAIRIE

**First National Bank
of Coleraine**
colerainebank.com

LA SALLE

Citizens Bank Minnesota
citizensmn.bank

LE CENTER

**First National Bank
of Le Center**
fnblecenter.com

First State Bank
fsblecenter.com

LEROY

First National Bank
firstnationalbanks.bank

First State Bank Minnesota
fsbminnesota.com

LE SUEUR

**First Farmers & Merchants
State Bank**
ffmbank.com

HomeTown Bank
htbm.com

LEWISVILLE
Pioneer Bank
 bankwithpioneer.com

LILYDALE
21st Century Bank
 21stcb.com

LINDSTROM
Lake Area Bank
 lakeareabank.com

LINO LAKES
First Resource Bank
 myfrbank.com
SMW Federal Credit Union
 smwfcu.com

LITCHFIELD
Center National Bank
 centernationalbank.com
Home State Bank
 hsbofmn.com
MidCountry Bank
 midcountrybank.com

LITTLE FALLS
Central Minnesota Credit Union
 mycmcu.org
Entrepreneur Fund
 entrepreneurfund.org
Initiative Foundation
 ifound.org
Pine Country Bank
 pinecountrybank.com

LITTLE FORK
TruStar Federal Credit Union
 trustarfcu.com

LONG LAKE
Lake Community Bank
 lcbankmn.com

LONG PRAIRIE
American Heritage National Bank
 logbank.com
Central Minnesota Credit Union
 mycmcu.org

Mid-Central Federal Savings Bank
 midcentralbank.com

Minnesota National Bank
 mn-bank.com

LONGVILLE
First National Bank North
 fnbnorth.com

LONSDALE
Frandsen Bank & Trust
 frandsenbank.com

LORETTO
21 st Century Bank
 21stcb.com

LUVERNE
First Farmers & Merchants State Bank
 ffbank.com

LYLE
Sterling State Bank
 sterlingstatebank.com

MADELIA
Alliance Bank
 alliancebanks.com

MADISON
Old National Bank
 oldnational.com
United Prairie Bank
 unitedprairiebank.com

MAHNOMEN
United Valley Bank
 uvbank.net

MAHTOMEDI
First State Bank & Trust
 fsbt.com

MANKATO
504 Corp.
 504corporation.com
Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
 affinityplus.org
BankVista
 bankvista.com

Community Bank
 cbfg.net

First National Bank
 fnbm.com

Frandsen Bank & Trust
 frandsenbank.com

MinnStar Bank
 minnstarbank.com

Old National Bank
 oldnational.com

Pioneer Bank
 bankwithpioneer.com

Profinium Financial Inc.
 profinium.com

ProGrowth Bank
 progrowth.com

United Prairie Bank
 unitedprairiebank.com

MAPLE GROVE
Americana Community Bank
 americanafinancial.com
Eagle Community Bank
 eaglecommunitybank.com

Highland Bank
 highland.bank

Firefly Credit Union
 fireflycu.org

Great Southern Bank
 greatsouthernbank.com

Old National Bank
 oldnational.com

Spire Credit Union
 myspire.com

MAPLE LAKE
Star Bank
 starbank.net

MAPLETON
Pioneer Bank
 bankwithpioneer.com

MAPLEWOOD
City & County Credit Union
 ccu.com

Premier Banks
 premierbanks.com
SMW Federal Credit Union
 smwfcu.com

Western Bank
 western-bank.com

MARINE ON SAINT CROIX
Security State Bank of Marine
 themarinebank.com

MARSHALL
United Southwest Bank
 unitedswbank.com

MAYER
First Minnesota Bank
 firstmnbank.com

Security Bank & Trust
 security-banks.com

MAYNARD
Citizens Alliance Bank
 citizensalliancebank.com

MCGREGOR
Grand Timber Bank
 grandtimberbank.com
Members Cooperative Credit Union
 membersccu.org

MCINTOSH
First National Bank of McIntosh
 fnbmcmintosh.com

MELROSE
Central Minnesota Credit Union
 mycmcu.org
Freeport State Bank
 freeportstatebank.com

MENAHGA
TruStar Federal Credit Union
 trustarfcu.com

MENDOTA HEIGHTS
Deerwood Bank
 deerwoodbank.com
Gateway Bank
 gateway-banking.com

MIDDLE RIVER

Border State Bank
borderstatebank.com

MILACA

First National Bank of Milaca
fnbmilaca.com

MILLER HILL

Republic Bank
bankrepublic.com

MINNEAPOLIS

21st Century Bank
21stcb.com

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

African Development Center
adcmnnesota.org

Alerus Financial
alerus.com

Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

Bridgewater Bank
bridgewaterbankmn.com

CIT Group
cit.com

City National Bank
cnb.com

Community Reinvestment Fund
crfusa.com

Crown Bank
crown-bank.com

Firefly Credit Union
fireflycu.org

First Children's Finance
firstchildrensfinance.org

Hiway Federal Credit Union
hiway.org

Minnesota Business Finance Corp.
mbfc.org

Meda
meda.net

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

North American Banking Co.
nabankco.com

Northeast Bank
nebankmn.com

RBCU
rbcu.org

Riverland Bank
riverlandbank.com

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

Sunrise Banks
sunrisebanks.com

Union Bank & Trust Co.
ubtmn.com

Western Bank
western-bank.com

WomenVenture
womenventure.org

Woodlands National Bank
woodlandsnationalbank.com

MINNETONKA

Alerus Financial
alerus.com

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

First Minnetonka City Bank
fmcbank.com

Flagship Bank
flagshipbanks.com

Highland Bank
highland.bank

MidCountry Bank
midcountrybank.com

Minnesota Bank & Trust
mnbankandtrust.com

MONTROSE

Citizens State Bank
bankwaverly.com

MONTEVIDEO

Co-Op Credit Union
co-opcreditunion.com

Old National Bank
oldnational.com

MONTGOMERY

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

MONTICELLO

First Minnesota Bank
firstmnbank.com

Premier Banks
premierbanks.com

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

Sherburne State Bank
sherburnestatebank.com

MOORHEAD

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
affinityplus.org

Bell Bank
bellbanks.com

Central Minnesota Credit Union
mycmcu.org

Northwestern Bank
nwbanks.com

Valley Premier Bank
valleypremierbank.com

MOOSE LAKE

First National Bank of Moose Lake
firstmooselake.com

Members Cooperative Credit Union
membersccu.org

MORA

Spire Credit Union
myspire.com

Neighborhood National Bank
neighborhood.bank

MORGAN

F&M Bank
fmb-ebank.com

MORRIS

RiverWood Bank
riverwoodbank.com

MORRISTOWN

Lake Country Community Bank
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MOTLEY

Unity Bank
ubmn.unitybanking.com

MOUND

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Minnesota Lakes Bank
mnlakesbank.com

MOUNDS VIEW

Western Bank
western-bank.com

MOUNTAIN IRON

1st National Bank of Buhl
fnbob.com

American Bank
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MOUNTAIN LAKE

United Prairie Bank
unitedprairiebank.com

MURDOCK

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NASHWAUK

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NAVARRE

Regions Bank
regions.com

NERSTRAND

Lake Country Community Bank
lccbank.com

NEVIS

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NEW AUBURN

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NEW BRIGHTON

Northeast Bank
nebankmn.com

NEW GERMANY

Security Bank & Trust
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NEW HOPE

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NEW LONDON

Lake Region Bank
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alliancebanks.com

Citizens Bank Minnesota
citizensmn.bank

Frandsen Bank & Trust
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southpointfinancial.com

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Farmers & Merchants State Bank
fmbanknym.com

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ProGrowth Bank
progrowth.com

NISSWA

American National Bank of Minnesota
anbm.com

Frandsen Bank & Trust
frandsenbank.com

NORTH BRANCH

Members Cooperative Credit Union
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Community Resource Bank
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Norwood Young America
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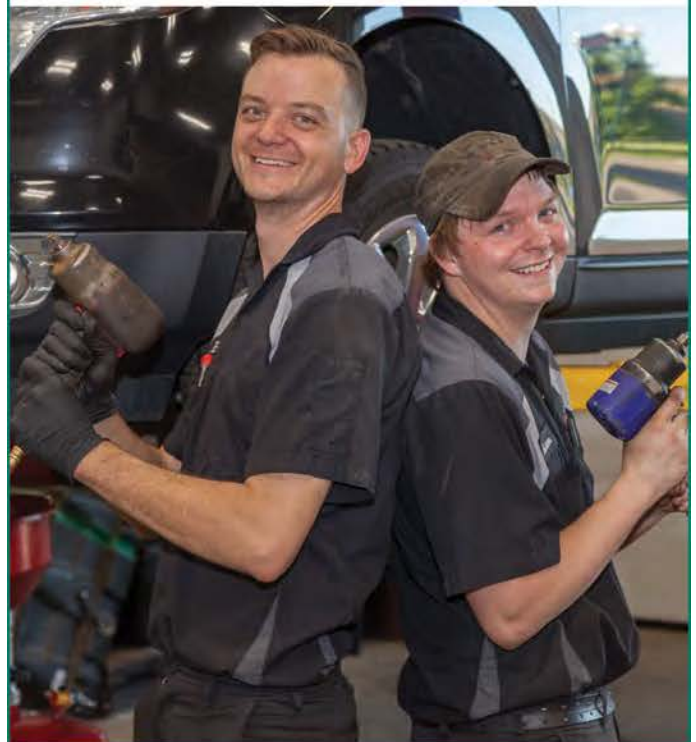
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- Revolving credit/working capital for day-to-day expenses
- Export a product or service



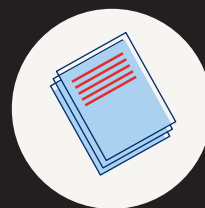
I need investors.

Look into SBICs.



I need to research and develop a business idea for commercialization.

Research the SBIR or STTR programs.



I'm bidding on a contract that requires me to be bonded.

Ask for information on SBA surety bonds.

2 Do you need help with your business plan or loan package?

If so, SBA Resource Partners can help. Find a list at your local SBA district office.



3 Now that you have your business plan and loan package ready, contact an SBA Lender to see if you qualify. There are two options...

A. Check out Lender Match (sba.gov/lendermatch) to find an SBA Lenders who may specialize in your industry or type of project.

B. Visit your local SBA district office for a list of local SBA Lenders.

Be prepared to discuss:

- size and purpose of your loan
- how long your business has operated
- your credit history
- collateral
- financial projections
- technical assistance/mentoring needs



Need Financing?

Visit your local SBA office or lender to learn about these funding options.

The 7(a) Loan, the SBA's Largest Financing Program

If you cannot get conventional financing and you meet the eligibility requirements, you can use a 7(a) loan to buy real estate, equipment, or inventory for your small business. It may also be used for working capital, to refinance business debt or purchase a small business.

MAX LOAN AMOUNT: \$5 million

INTEREST RATE: generally prime + a reasonable rate capped at 2.75%

TERMS: loan term varies according to the purpose of the loan, generally up to 25 years for real estate, 10 years for other fixed assets and working capital

GUARANTEE: 50 to 90%

CAPLines

Meet your revolving capital needs with lines of credit. CAPLines can be used for contract financing, seasonal lines of credit, builders line of credit, or for general working capital lines.

SBA Express Loan

Featuring a simplified process, these loans are delivered by experienced lenders who are authorized to make the credit decision for the SBA. These can be term loans or revolving lines of credit.

MAX LOAN AMOUNT: \$350,000

INTEREST RATE: for loans less than \$50,000, prime + 6.5%; for loans of \$50,000 and greater, prime + 4.75%

TERMS: loan term varies according to the purpose of the loan, generally up to 25 years for real estate and 10 years for other fixed assets and working capital

GUARANTEE: 50%

Community Advantage

A financing program for women, veterans, low-income borrowers, and minority entrepreneurs just starting up or in business for a few years. Receive free business counseling as you work with a community-based financial institution.

INTEREST RATE: prime + 6%

TERMS: up to 25 years for real estate, 10 years for equipment and working capital

GUARANTEE: 75 to 90%



Microloans

Eligible businesses can startup and grow with working capital or funds for supplies, equipment, furniture and fixtures. Borrow from \$500 to \$50,000 and access free business counseling from microlenders.

INTEREST RATE: loans less than \$10,000, lender cost + 8.5%; loans \$10,000 and greater, lender cost + 7.75%

TERMS: lender negotiated, no early payoff penalty

504 Certified Development Company Loan

If you do not qualify for traditional financing, but would like to purchase or renovate real estate or buy heavy equipment for your business, ask about the 504 loan. It provides competitive fixed-rate mortgage financing through a lender and a Certified Development Company.

MAX LOAN AMOUNT (UP TO 40% OF THE TOTAL PROJECT): up to \$5 million; \$5.5 million for manufacturing or energy public policy projects

INTEREST RATE: below market fixed rates for 10, 20 or 25 year terms

TERMS: 20 or 25 years for real estate or long-term equipment, 10 years for general machinery and equipment

GUARANTEE: the lender provides a senior loan for 50% of the project cost (with no SBA guarantee); the CDC finances up to 40% in a junior lien position (supported by the SBA guarantee)

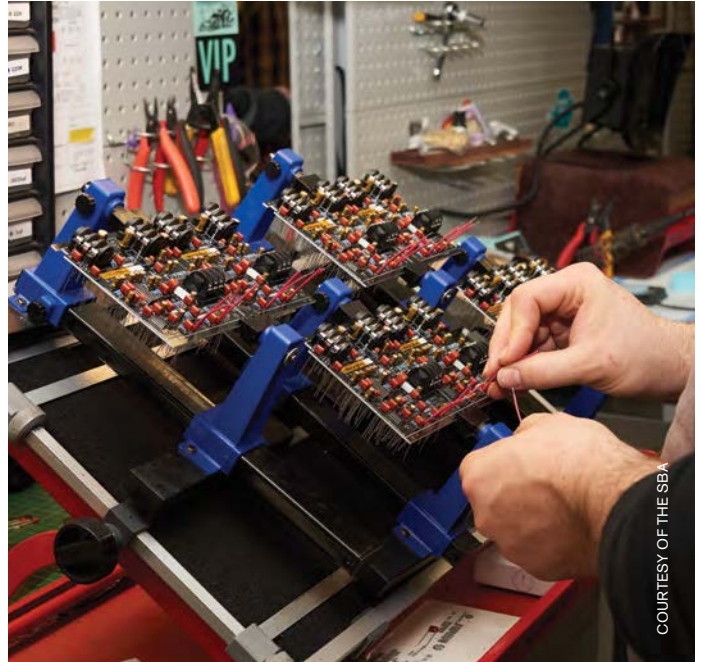
SPECIAL CONDITION: a minimum borrower contribution, or down payment, is required, amounts vary by project but are usually 10%

Go Global with International Trade

Businesses that export are more resilient—they are less dependent on any one market. Exporting also stabilizes sales for those who make seasonal products.



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Expand your Market

Small businesses can enter and excel in the international marketplace using State Trade Expansion Program grants and training. Visit sba.gov/internationaltrade to find out if your state is participating.

You can:

- learn how to export
- participate in foreign trade missions and trade shows
- obtain services to support foreign market entry
- translate websites to attract foreign buyers
- design international marketing products or campaigns

Financing for International Growth

Having trouble securing capital to meet your small business exporting needs? Use SBA international trade programs to cover short or long-term costs necessary to sell goods or services abroad. Loan proceeds can be used for working capital to finance foreign sales or for fixed assets, helping you better compete globally. You can apply for lines of credit prior to

finalizing an export sale or contract, so adequate financing is in place by the time you win your contract. If you've been in business for at least a year, ask your area SBA regional finance manager about the Export Working Capital program. The International Trade Loan program also helps exporters who have been adversely affected by foreign importing competition, helping you better compete globally.

Max loan amount: \$5 million

Interest rate: for Export Working Capital, the rate is negotiated between borrower and lender. For the International Trade Loan, it also cannot exceed prime + 2.75% for loan amounts over \$50,000 and maturity of seven years or more

Terms: For Export Working Capital, typically one year, cannot exceed three years. For International Trade Loans, up to 25 years for real estate, up to 10 years for equipment

Guarantee: up to 90%

Export Express uses a streamlined process that expedites the SBA guarantee—what small businesses need most when preparing to export or ramping up international trade on a fast timeline.

Max loan amount: \$500,000

Interest rate: typically not to exceed prime + 6.5%

Terms: up to 25 years for real estate, up to 10 years for equipment, up to seven years for lines of credit

Guarantee: up to 90%

Approval time: 36 hours or less

Expert Advice on Exporting

Find an SBA professional in one of the 21 U.S. Export Assistance Centers, sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/eac, located in most major metro areas. The centers are also staffed by the U.S. Department of Commerce and, in some locations, the Export-Import Bank of the United States and other public and private organizations. Visit your local Small Business Development Center (see page 10) for exporting assistance from professional business counselors.



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▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Small businesses that qualify for the SBA State Trade Expansion Program use grant proceeds to bolster their international market presence, which EarthQuaker Devices has done in a seismic way. A manufacturer of guitar special effects pedals in Akron, OH, EarthQuaker has built an international social media fanbase delivering content in seven languages, generating millions of website page views.

EarthQuaker owners Julie Robbins & Jamie Stillman developed their global marketing strategy and multilingual promo materials with the SBA State Trade Expansion Program. The couple also received global marketing counseling and research assistance from the Ohio Small Business Development Center Export Assistance Network.

Help with Trade Barriers

If you need assistance with international trade regulations, the SBA can be your advocate in foreign markets. Call toll free (855) 722-4877 or email your contact information and trade issue to international@sba.gov.

R&D Opportunities for High Growth Startups

Engaged in high-risk research and development? Compete for funding to develop your cutting-edge technology.



Do you work in one of these areas?

- » advanced materials
- » agTech
- » artificial intelligence
- » biomedical
- » cybersecurity
- » energy
- » first response
- » national security
- » space exploration

The Small Business Innovation Research and the Small Business Technology Transfer programs, also called America's Seed Fund, provide more than \$3.5 billion in early stage capital through a competitive awards process.

How it works

Every year, participating federal agencies announce topical areas that address their R&D needs. Eligible businesses submit proposals to win either grants or contracts.

There are three phases:

- » The proof-of-concept stage typically lasts from 6-12 months, and ranges from \$100,000-\$225,000.
- » The full R&D period lasts about 24 months and typically provides \$600,000-\$1.5 million.
- » The commercialization stage is when you seek public or private funds for your venture.

How your startup benefits

The funding agency does not take an equity position or ownership of your business. The federal government also protects data rights and the ability to win sole-source phase III contracts.

Participating agencies:

- » Department of Agriculture
- » Department of Commerce

▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Killer Snails brings science out of the laboratory and into classrooms and living rooms with award-winning educational games, such as BioDive, Assassins of the Sea, and Biome Builder. The Brooklyn, NY-based business gained access to startup funding thanks to the Small Business Innovation Research program. Dr. Mandë Holford, left, Jessica Ochoa Hendrix, right, and Dr. Lindsay Portnoy envisioned how venomous marine snail research could be used in extended reality and digital learning to engage students and meet educators' needs. The business has raised more than \$1.2 million to support a team of full-time employees. Killer Snails's tabletop, digital, augmented and virtual reality games have won national and international awards.

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- › National Institute of Standards and Technology
- › National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- » Department of Defense
- » Department of Education
- » Department of Energy
- » Department of Health and Human Services
- » Department of Homeland Security
- » Department of Transportation
- » Environmental Protection Agency
- » NASA
- » National Science Foundation

Visit **sbir.gov** to find funding opportunities and helpful program tutorials, as well as past award winners, such as Qualcomm, iRobot, Illumina, and Symantec.

SBIR Road Tour

Visit **sbirroadtour.com** to learn about national events connecting entrepreneurs working on advanced tech to the country's largest source of early stage funding. Each SBIR Road Tour stop introduces participating federal agency program managers, who oversee over 5,000 new awards annually.

Investment Capital

Looking for investors? For mature, profitable businesses with sufficient cash flow to pay interest, a Small Business Investment Company can help scale up your small business.

How an SBIC works

Investment companies with financing expertise in certain industry sectors receive SBA-guaranteed loans, which means the federal government is responsible in case of default. These investment companies then use the SBA-guaranteed capital and private funds to invest in qualifying small businesses. Each SBIC has its own investment profile in terms of targeted industry, geography, company maturity, the types and size of financing they provide.

To be eligible

The majority of your employees and assets must be within the United States. Some ineligible small businesses and activities include relenders, real estate, project financing, and foreign investment.

Visit **sba.gov** and click on Funding Program and then Investment Capital.

Advertise your company here.

**Reach an unparalleled audience of small business owners
with the U.S. Small Business Administration's
*Small Business Resource Guide.***

contactinfo@newsouthmediainc.com



How I Did It

Smiling After the Storm

With SBA assistance, Stephanie Vitori rebuilt her Miami Beach, FL restaurant after Hurricane Irma.

WRITTEN BY JESS WALKER

If you ask Stephanie Vitori, the person who coined the term “bittersweet” must have run a business. In the 15 years Stephanie has owned Cheeseburger Baby, the Florida burger joint has endured recessions, multiple hurricanes, and competition from corporate franchises. She has grown along with Cheeseburger Baby, changing with each stage of the business lifecycle.

Vitori worked as a delivery driver before purchasing the business in 2004. Since then, she’s expanded by purchasing two food trucks. She runs an open kitchen, which means customers can watch their 100% Angus

beef cheeseburgers sizzle on the flat-top grill. Burgers are kept classic, no extra frills. “People feel at home,” Stephanie says. “You’re not just another table somebody has to serve.” Here, everybody feels like somebody, she says. So many people love a good cheeseburger, which is why all kinds of people are attracted to her restaurant. Cheeseburger Baby’s handcrafted patties have been featured on the Food Network and consumed by celebrities such as



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Jay-Z and Kanye West. Stephanie has met famous chefs “all through a cheeseburger.” But just as special to her is the Vietnamese couple who came in one day, speaking little English. They were eager to meet Stephanie and show her a napkin with “Cheeseburger Baby” scrawled on it. On the other side of the world, a friend had told them to come, so they did. It all just goes to show you, Stephanie says, people come together for a great cheeseburger.

Challenge

Despite these sweet moments, there have also been bitter ones. Hurricane Irma struck in 2017, and Cheeseburger Baby lost equipment and food supplies. Thirty percent of sales blew away with the wind. “It was a zombie zone in South Beach. People were scared to come since they thought everything was destroyed,” Stephanie says. “It was the roughest road I’ve ever traveled.”

Solution

An SBA disaster assistance loan aided Cheeseburger Baby’s recovery. The SBA provides direct low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters to repair damage or replace property not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance. SBA disaster assistance loans can also be used to rebuild stronger, protecting your home or business against future damage caused by a disaster. The SBA also introduced Stephanie to her local Small

When you're affected by a disaster the SBA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other organizations work together to provide assistance. Once immediate safety and security needs are met, the SBA helps get you and your community back to where you were before the disaster. Since low-interest SBA disaster assistance loans are government aid, creditworthiness and the ability to repay are taken into consideration before a loan is awarded.

What to do after a Disaster Declaration

After a disaster is declared by the President



Register with FEMA at

disasterassistance.gov, or call (800) 621-3362, TTY 800-462-7585, or visit a Disaster Recovery Center. Locations can be found at **fema.gov/drc**. Businesses are automatically referred to the SBA. Most homeowners and renters will be referred by FEMA to the SBA to apply for disaster loan assistance. You must complete the SBA application to be considered for assistance. If the SBA cannot help you with a loan for all your needs, the SBA will in most cases refer you back to FEMA. If you do not complete an SBA application, you may not be considered for assistance from other agencies.

Express Bridge Loan Pilot Program

Businesses affected by a Presidential disaster declaration are eligible to receive expedited financing through an SBA Express lender. These funds may be used for disaster-related purposes while the business waits for long-term financing through the SBA’s direct disaster loan program.

Loan Amount: \$25,000

Terms: up to seven years

Guarantee: 50%

After a disaster is declared by the SBA

Businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters are eligible to apply for an SBA disaster assistance loan. Visit a Business Recovery Center or Disaster Loan Outreach Center in your area or visit **disasterloan.sba.gov/ela** to apply for a loan. You can also call the SBA customer service center at (800) 659-2955, TTY (800) 877-8339, and ask for an application package. FEMA grant assistance for homeowners or renters is not available under an SBA declaration.



Information you need to get started:

- address of damaged residence or business and contact information
- insurance information, including type of insurance, policy numbers, and amount received
- household and/or business income
- description of disaster-caused damage and losses



Business Development Center, which provided assistance with financing options and marketing. She continues to meet with SBDC advisers every month to remain competitive in an ever-changing economy.

During disasters, the responsibility falls on the owner's shoulders. But one lesson Stephanie has learned is the value in reaching out to others for assistance and counsel. While her brick-and-mortar restaurant was being rebuilt, she sold from a food truck. When the restaurant was operational again, she advertised that with spray paint on the plywood covering the broken windows. Stephanie and her wife, Gabriele Vitori, rebuilt Cheeseburger Baby by depending on each other and SBA assistance. See their story on YouTube by searching for the 2019 Phoenix Award for Small Business Disaster Recovery. "You've got to have resiliency. You've got to swallow your pride sometimes," Stephanie says. "But you also have to believe in your product."

Benefit

For Cheeseburger Baby, that product will continue satisfying the burger hankerings of locals, celebrities, and tourists alike. Vitori sees expansion in her future—she'd like to have a brick-and-mortar restaurant and food truck in each growing town in South Florida. "My whole life is this. I've always felt a love for business ownership," Vitori says. "That drive keeps you going."

The SBA provides direct low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters to repair or replace damaged property not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance.

SBA disaster assistance loans can also be used to rebuild stronger, protecting your home or business against future damage caused by a disaster. For information visit **sba.gov/disaster**.

Keep in mind

Since an SBA disaster assistance loan is a direct loan from the government, other organizations may reduce or not award you a grant if you have received an SBA loan or other assistance for your disaster loss. Be sure to check with the organization offering assistance to see how an SBA loan might affect your eligibility for their program. In general, recovery expenses covered by insurance, FEMA or other forms of assistance may reduce the amount provided by your SBA disaster assistance loan.

Get Ready

The Ready Business program, ready.gov/business, gives step-by-step guidance on how to prepare your business for a disaster. The series includes preparedness toolkits for earthquakes, hurricanes, inland flooding, power outages, and severe winds/tornadoes. Spanish materials are available.



Getting Back to Business:

Six essential preparedness steps for creating a continuity plan

The financial and emotional cost of rebuilding a business after a disaster can be overwhelming. With a business continuity plan in place, you can recover more quickly. Your plan also puts you in a better position to contribute to the economic recovery of your community.



Establish a communications plan

- Test your calling tree or communications list to reach employees to ensure they and their families are safe.



Protect your documents

- Keep copies of vital business documents in a digital format or in an accessible, protected off-site location.



Review insurance coverage

- Contact your insurance agent to find out if your coverage is right for your business; make sure you understand the policy limits and deductibles.
- Ask about business interruption insurance, which compensates you for lost income and covers operating expenses if your company has to temporarily shut down because of a disaster.



Establish a solid supply chain

- If your vendors and suppliers are local and the disaster is widespread, you will all be in the same situation—struggling to recover. Put a disaster response plan in place to get key supplies from companies outside your area. Create a contact list of contractors and vendors you plan to use.



Plan for an alternative location

- Identify several places to relocate your operations in case you must close your primary location for an extended time.
- Consider creative options for available office space, including sharing space and resources with other businesses.
- Allow employees to telecommute until your location reopens.



Practice your plan with your staff

Based on your location, assess your risk for every type of emergency.

- Discuss as a group how your plan would be affected by different types of disasters, such as an earthquake, tornado, flood, mudslide, or hurricane.

Surety Bonds

SBA-backed surety bonds help small businesses succeed.

Eligible small businesses in the construction, supply, and service sectors better compete for contracting and subcontracting jobs using SBA-backed surety bonds.

How you benefit

Surety bonds help small businesses receive the bonding assistance they need to win contracts by providing the customer with a guarantee the work will be completed.

How surety bonds work

Many contracts require surety bonds, which are offered by surety companies. The SBA guarantee provides an incentive for surety companies to work with small businesses that would normally not be able to obtain the bond.

Is the program right for you?

Small businesses that often come to the SBA for surety bonds:

- » startups and firms in business less than three years
- » businesses with credit issues or internally prepared financial statements
- » those who cannot secure bonding through regular commercial channels
- » subcontractors with a desire to establish their own bonding as a prime contractor
- » those wishing to increase their current bonding limits



▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

With SBA-backed surety bonds, Frank Spencer III has been able to better compete for commercial and government contracts. Aztec Contractors of El Paso, TX received the bonding support it needed to compete for construction contracts with the General Services Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command. Frank acquired Aztec in 2006 with no capital and only two employees. Now he employs 25 full time and provides internship opportunities. Sales have grown to about \$30 million annually. Aztec now qualifies for bonding in the standard surety market without SBA support.

For all contracts and subcontracts up to \$6.5 million, the SBA guarantees bid, payment, performance, and ancillary bonds issued by surety companies. For federal contracts up to \$10 million, the SBA makes a guarantee if it's in the best interest of the government.

The SBA reimburses surety companies in case of default 90% of losses sustained for veteran & service-disabled veteran, minority, 8(a), and HUBZone-certified small businesses; all projects up to \$100,000 and 80% for all other small businesses.

Need a surety bond guarantee fast?

For contracts under \$400,000, the process is streamlined using the SBA's QuickApp program.

- » easy application
- » no need to submit financials to the SBA
- » online applications submitted to SBA authorized agents approved within hours



Ready to start?

The SBA partners with 36 surety companies and hundreds of bonding agents. Find authorized agents at sba.gov/osg.

Do you want to discuss the advantages of the SBA's Surety Bond Guarantee program? Contact a bonding specialist:

Tamara E. Murray
Denver, CO
(303) 927-3479

Kevin Valdes
Seattle, WA
(206) 553-7277

Jennifer C. Bledsoe
Washington, DC
(202) 205-6153

CONTRACTING

Doing Business with the Government



How I Did It

Taking the Helm

Jennifer Rahn steers Admiral Engineering and Manufacturing to success as a government subcontractor.

WRITTEN BY MICAELA MORRISSETTE

COURTESY OF THE SEA



5 Tips for Success

Find a mentor.

I had a great mentor in my company, and I reached for opportunity when it was in front of me.

Always move forward.

The SBA has educational resources to improve your business know-how. To learn more about government contracting and SBA certification programs, call your local SBA district office or procurement center representative.

Compete smart.

See if your company can use the SBA Subcontracting Network database, https://eweb1.sba.gov/subnet/client/dsp_Landing.cfm. SubNet connects businesses with subcontractors & small businesses with contract opportunities.

Know your industry.

I see everything; I have my hands in everything. I don't want to expand to where I can't do that anymore.

Build a team.

Everybody feels like this is our work family. My employees are as big a part of my company as I am, so I make sure they know that.

major government contractors. She's grateful prime contractors have incentive to subcontract with small business, and that helps businesses like Admiral.

Rahn has plans to grow, but not in the typical ways. She's investing in replacing equipment, enhancing efficiency and productivity while leading Admiral into new arenas like 3D printing. Because of the stability provided by being a government subcontractor, she's able to do all of this.

Jennifer Rahn was first hired as an office assistant at Phoenix, Arizona-based Admiral Engineering and Manufacturing Co. Rising to the top in a sector dominated by men, Rahn's career sounds a lot like the classic American success story. She got there with the help of a mentor and business growth earned as a federal government subcontractor.

For 16 years, Rahn worked side-by-side with then-owner David Schlosser, who became her mentor. Rahn says she learned "everything it takes to run a machine shop. I naturally just picked it up and wanted it."

The learning curve was steep—Admiral specializes in complex machined parts for industries including aerospace and communications—and Schlosser expected as much as he gave. "When I did something wrong, he told me, and I didn't do that again," Rahn

said, laughing.

One of their largest clients, aerospace and defense company L3 Technologies, nominated Admiral for the SBA Subcontractor of the Year award. As a subcontractor for L3 Technologies, Rahn said she gets great satisfaction from knowing soldiers are able to communicate with their leaders because of parts her company has made.

When Schlosser decided to retire, he asked Rahn to purchase Admiral.

"He did not want to sell to a corporation that would bring in their own people or end up foreclosing," Rahn says. "Then all your hard work is gone. I agreed because it was everything I had spent my life working on, too."

In September 2017, she took over as owner and president. Ownership transition poses a unique set of challenges. Rahn wanted to maintain relationships with her existing clients, which include






How to do business with the government

- 1** Consult your local Small Business Development Center (see page 8) or Procurement Technical Assistance Program adviser. Find your closest center at **aptac-us.org**.
- 2** Search **<https://beta.sam.gov>** to see if any federal agencies are looking for your product or service. Search the SBA SubNet database for subcontracting opportunities.
- 3** Attend an SBA district office contracting workshop. Visit **sba.gov/localassistance** to find your local office.
- 4** Identify your product or service number at **naics.com**.
- 5** Obtain a free DUNS number at **fedgov.dnb.com/webform**. A Unique Entity ID managed by Ernst & Young will replace DUNS in late 2020.
- 6** Register with the System for Award Management (**sam.gov**).
- 7** Research SBA certification programs like the 8(a), woman-owned small business, and HUBZone programs. If eligible, upload all required documents to **certify.sba.gov** before you submit an offer on a contract.



Government Contracting

Is it right for you? Government contracting can be a valuable tool to grow your small business, but it isn't for everyone. Complete the following readiness assessment to help you decide whether your company can successfully compete for government contracts.



1 Does the government buy the product or service that you sell?

-  Continue to question 2.
-  Government contracting may not be for you at this time.
-  Start with your local SBA district office. If you can't identify at least three federal agencies that might buy what you sell, contracting might not be right for you.



2 Are you capable of fulfilling a government contract (e.g., time, staffing, and materials)?

-  Continue to question 3.
-  Your local SBA district office can help you gauge ramp-up time and other factors that contribute to government contracting success.



3 Confirm your answer to all of the following:

- Is the majority owner(s) a U.S. citizen?
 - Does your company have a place of business in the U.S.?
 - Is your business organized for profit?
 - Does your business generate revenue?
-  Continue to question 4.
 -  These are requirements for participation in government contracting programs.




6 Do you have cash on hand to purchase working inventory, if needed?

-  Continue to question 7.
-  Talk to an SBA Lender about getting a line of credit or a loan to do business with the government.



5 Do you have an accounting system that produces financial statements, such as profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and cash flow projections?

-  Continue to question 6.
-  Before you get into government contracting, make sure your accounting system is compatible with the government's requirements.



4 Are you credit worthy?

-  Continue to question 5.
-  Visit an SBA Resource Partner for tips on repairing your credit.
-  Talk to an SBA Lender about how to build credit.



7 Do you already have federal/state/local government contracting experience?

-  Continue to question 8.
-  If you don't yet have contracting experience, you won't reap the full benefit of opportunities like the 8(a) Business Development Program. You can participate in the 8(a) program once, so make sure it's the right time for you.

8 Do you know where to find contracting opportunities?

-  Continue to question 9.
-  Ask an SBA business opportunity specialist for help.

9 Make sure you have:

- a DUNS number
 - the NAICS codes and size standards for your industry
 - SAM registration
-  Continue below.
 -  This is a requirement for participation in some government contracting programs.

It sounds like you may be a good fit for government contracting!
Visit your local SBA district office or sba.gov/contracting for more information.

SBA Certification Programs

Your business could earn profit and gain valuable work experience by providing goods or services to the government.



COURTESY OF THE SUNDANCE CONSULTING

◀ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

September Myres knew that becoming a government contractor would empower herself and other native peoples, while also growing her small business to the next level. She sought business development assistance from the SBA, qualifying for the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, which helps small disadvantaged businesses compete in the federal marketplace. This program helped September strategically grow her company to become a competitive force in the environmental services industry. Sundance Consulting of Pocatello, ID has won contracts from the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service. She has continually secured Department of Defense contracts to improve Native American lands adversely affected by past department activities. September often assists Native American tribes and Alaska Native villages with developing projects and community plans.

American Indians, Alaska Natives, and native Hawaiians seeking entrepreneurial development training can start, grow, and expand their business with the help of the SBA, [sba.gov/naa](https://www.sba.gov/naa). The Office of Native American Affairs also consults with tribal governments prior to finalizing SBA policies affecting tribes.

Socially disadvantaged: those subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias without regard to their individual qualities because of their identity as members of certain groups. The following groups often fit this status: Black Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. A person who is not a member of one of these groups must establish that it is more likely than not that he or she has suffered social disadvantage.

Economically disadvantaged: those whose ability to compete in the marketplace has been impaired because they have not had as much capital and credit opportunities compared to others in the same or similar line of business.

The benefits of the 8(a) program:

- » You are assigned an SBA professional to help coordinate business development assistance.
- » You could be awarded an 8(a) sole-source contract up to \$4 million for goods and services, \$7 million for manufacturing, exceptions apply.

8(a) small business that can provide the needed services. This is an accelerated process saving time for both you and the government agency or office.

All Small Mentor-Protege Program

Looking for an opportunity to partner with a more experienced firm for mentorship? That effort can be rewarded in the All Small Mentor-Protege Program, [sba.gov/allsmallmpp](https://www.sba.gov/allsmallmpp). At the same time you're gaining invaluable direction and experience, you and your mentor can compete for government contracts, further growing your business. To qualify for this program:

- » Proteges must have a mentor prior to applying for the program. Visit your local SBA office for guidance. Ask about the SBA's Resource Partners and the Procurement Technical Assistance Program for help in connecting you with a mentor business.

Contracting certification programs are designed to help you better compete for and win federal contracts set aside for small businesses. Visit [sba.gov/contracting](https://www.sba.gov/contracting) to learn more about set-asides and whether one or more of these government certification programs is right for your business. To see if you are eligible and then certify as a woman-owned, HUBZone, 8(a), or All Small business, visit [certify.sba.gov](https://www.certify.sba.gov).

8(a) Business Development Program

If you're an entrepreneur who is socially or economically disadvantaged, you may be eligible to receive business training and government contracting assistance through the 8(a) Business Development Program, [sba.gov/8a](https://www.sba.gov/8a). It includes free business development

education, training workshops, and match-making opportunities with federal buyers. Firms owned by Alaska Native Corporations, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Community Development Corporations are also eligible for 8(a) business development assistance.

To be eligible for the 8(a) program, your small business must:

- » be owned and controlled by U.S. citizens who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged
- » demonstrate at least a two-year track record and have potential for continued success
- » have a net worth and adjusted gross income of less than \$250,000 and assets under \$4 million

- » You must be certified as a small business within your NAICS industry classification (naics.com).
- » Mentors and proteges must be organized for profit or as an agricultural cooperative.
- » Mentors cannot own more than 40% equity in the protege's business.
- » An SBA determination of affiliation must not exist between the mentor and the protege. All Small-approved partnerships receive an exclusion of affiliation for contracting purposes.

HUBZone

Businesses located in Historically Underutilized Business Zones, sba.gov/hubzone, can gain special access to federal contracts. To qualify for the certification, your small business must:

- » be owned and controlled by U.S. citizens, a Community Development Corporation, an agricultural cooperative, Indian tribal government, Alaska Native Corporation, or a Native Hawaiian organization
- » have a principal office located in a HUBZone, which includes Indian reservations and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act. Enter your address in our interactive map, maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map, to see if you qualify.
- » have at least 35% of your employees living in a HUBZone



Service-Disabled Veterans

If you're a service-disabled veteran looking to enter the federal marketplace, you may be eligible for this small business certification. To determine your eligibility, contact a veterans business development officer at your local SBA office, or the SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development, sba.gov/ovbd. After you have set up to do business with the government in sam.gov, update your status as a service-disabled veteran business. Keep in mind, the SBA does not officially certify this designation, so when a contract awarded based on this eligibility is protested, the SBA will determine if your business meets the eligibility status, ownership, and control requirements.

Women-Owned Small Business Certification

If you're a woman proprietor looking to sell to the federal government, you may be eligible for the Women-Owned Small Business certification, sba.gov/wosb.

Here's how to get certified:

1. Make sure you're eligible

- Your business must be at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more women who are U.S. citizens. The ownership must be direct and unconditional.
- A woman must hold the highest officer position and have managerial experience required to run the business.
- One or more women must manage the daily business operations on a full-time basis and conduct long-term decision making and planning.

To qualify as an economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business, your company must meet these criteria and the business owner and/or manager must meet certain income and asset requirements.

2. Register

- Register with the System for Award Management (sam.gov) to start doing business with the government.

3. Certify

Self-certify as a woman-owned small business or an economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business for free, or obtain certification from one of the SBA's approved third-party certifiers (which costs a fee):

- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- National Women Business Owners Corporation
- U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce
- Women's Business Enterprise National Council

All required documents must be uploaded to certify.sba.gov prior to submitting an offer on a contract set aside for the program.

4. Update your status

- Update your status as a woman-owned small business in sam.gov.

5. Search the database

- Search the FedBizOpps database (fbo.gov) for your new business opportunity.

Get Expert Contracting & Certification Help

Federal contracting can be complex, but you don't have to do it alone. A Procurement Technical Assistance Center adviser can help you determine if your business is ready for government contracting. An adviser can also help you register in the System for Award Management (sam.gov), and see if you're eligible for any small business certifications and/or programs. One-on-one counseling is free or low cost. Visit sba.gov/localassistance to find your local SBA office or an SBA Resource Partner near you (see page 8).

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

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An O'Fallon Casting Inc. employee at work in O'Fallon, MO. Owner Vince Gimeno grew his business thanks to expert SBA business counseling.

Regional/State Contracting Programs

Central Certification Programs

For Hennepin and Ramsey counties, cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul
cert.smwbe.com

MN Unified Certification Program

For the city of Minneapolis, Metropolitan Airports Commission, Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Transportation
mnucp.org

North Central Minority Supplier Development Council
northcentralmsdc.net

Office of State Procurement
sbcp.mn.gov



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