



**Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
Program Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2021**

Program Name: We're All Innovating Contest

Program Inception: WEDC FY21

Lead Division: Entrepreneurship & Innovation

New **Revised** [Click here](#) to enter a date.

Aid **Pass-thru Aid** **Technical Assistance**

Program Goal:

The goal of the We're All Innovating Contest (WAIC) grant program is to support small and startup businesses to develop innovative responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This program primarily supports the following WEDC Strategic Pillar and Focus Area:

Business Development: Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Program Description:

The program is designed to provide financial support to innovative startup and established small businesses in Wisconsin through a competitive process judged by a review committee of business and industry experts administered in partnership with the Wisconsin Technology Council (WTC). Contest winners will receive grants from WEDC through federal CARES Act funding to support business model and technology innovations that respond to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Eligibility Requirements:

Eligible businesses must be a for profit business and employ 50 or fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. Eligible applicants must fall into three business sizes:

- New businesses and businesses with less than five FTE employees;
- Businesses with between 6 and 20 FTE employees; and
- Businesses with between 21 and 50 FTE employees.

The innovation categories for project applications for each business size are:

- Technical innovation to address COVID-19 health impacts;
- Technical innovations to address COVID-19 business impacts; and
- Operational innovations to address COVID-19 business impacts.

Applicants may only apply in one of the above categories.

The review committee will take the following into account when considering a WAIC proposal:

- Significance of the innovation
- Commitment to the business and innovation
- Ability of the innovation to address the intended impact of COVID-19
- Viability of the innovation



- Quality of the business and implementation plan
- Financial plan and additional resources committed or leveraged
- Near and long-term impact of the innovation
- Experience in areas relevant to proposed innovation
- Need for and impact of grant support
- Progress made on the innovation and work yet to be completed
- Impact of the innovation on rural or ethnically diverse communities

Incentives and Available Funding (FY21): \$3,000,000

The WAIC program offers grants between \$12,000 - \$18,000 for individual contest winners based upon company size in three innovation categories. The top proposal in each category is eligible for an additional \$20,000, with an additional \$30,000 for the overall winning proposal.

Activities and Expected Outcomes:

Assist 195 businesses.

Performance Reporting:

Awardees will be required to complete performance reports at three months and 12 months after receiving WAIC funding documenting project progress and innovation results, as well as any other relevant information.

WEDC may impose additional reporting requirements to evaluate project performance and to ensure compliance with contract deliverables.

WEDC annually selects awards on a sample basis for an audit. All backup documentation to the performance report is required to be maintained.

Application and Awards Process:

The WAIC program has a competitive online application process. The completed applications will be scored by business and industry experts for review and recommendation for award to WEDC. Funds may be disbursed via delegating servicing pursuant to WEDC Procedure C&R 0209.

Revision History:

Effective Date	Description of Change

PROGRAM REVIEW:



This document has been reviewed by the following parties (Check all that apply):

- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Legal Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Other _____

Senior Director of Public Policy: _____

Date _____

Division Vice President: _____

Date _____

AUTHORIZED APPROVAL:

CEO or Designee: _____

Date _____

Board Chair: _____

Date _____