

ENTREPRENEURSHIP PARTNER GRANT PROGRAM



SUPPORTING THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURS

Even the best business ideas can wither on the vine without the right kinds of support and encouragement. In Wisconsin, we are dedicated to creating an ecosystem that ensures those promising ideas don't go to waste. The **Entrepreneurship Partner Grant Program** helps support the organizations that, in turn, support startups and entrepreneurs throughout the state, so aspiring business owners can connect with the resources they need to launch new companies.

How it works

This program from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) provides grants to eligible nonprofits so they can, in turn, provide funding support and technical assistance to startups. The program has grants available for new or pilot projects and for established projects with demonstrated results. The program operates on a competitive basis and will have multiple application cycles throughout the year.

Partner requirements

Entities eligible for Entrepreneurship Partner Grant funds include communities, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions and other entities that operate a nonprofit entrepreneurship assistance program in Wisconsin. Programs that focus on underserved populations are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants are generally required to demonstrate a minimum of one year of program results for the traditional grant. Those with a new program will generally apply through a competitive application process. Please reach out to WEDC to discuss your project and determine how WEDC can best support entrepreneurs in your community.

Program requirements

Eligible applicants will provide information on program management, operating plans, entrepreneurship resources and use of funds. Applicants will identify matching funds to funding provided by WEDC according to amount requested.

Entrepreneurship Partner Grant recipients may provide funding to companies participating in the assistance program. WEDC must approve the type of funding being provided to participating companies and individuals. Loan repayments and/or investment returns to the recipient may only be used to

APPLYING FOR
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
PARTNER GRANT FUNDING

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support direct program costs or to provide capital to companies participating in a current or future cohort of the assistance.

Recipients will be required to match WEDC funds 1:1 with cash funds or eligible expenses. Matching funds may be from cash or valid program expenses and may be dedicated to operating expenses.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for FY25 include:

- Project alignment and feasibility
 - The extent to which the work plan is feasible, including project range, duration, and impact
 - The extent to which the applicant and project collaborators may have relevant experience and historical performance in program administration (including previous WEDC awards, if applicable)
- Financial viability
 - The extent to which matching resources are available and are utilized within the project budget
 - The project budget's balance of support for entrepreneurs and funding for operating costs, considered in the context of the project's overall intensity, duration, and rigor
 - The extent to which WEDC funds impact the applicants' ability to assist individuals and/or companies
- Outcome and impact
 - The extent to which the applicant demonstrates and plans to track impact within measurable, feasible, and impactful project outcomes
 - The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a unique position to meet community need for the target population or location
- Innovation and sustainability
 - The extent to which the program model can be replicated and/or sustained in other areas of Wisconsin
- Additional considerations
 - Presence of partnering and collaborating organizations and the extent of community support
 - Use of novel and innovative approaches to supporting individuals and/or companies
 - Alignment with WEDC priorities for industry sectors, local economic factors, geography, and target populations