

IGNITE WISCONSIN

CREATING A DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT FOR STARTUPS



Dense, well-connected entrepreneurial ecosystems—where entrepreneurs, institutions, and support organizations collaborate seamlessly and productively—are proven to catalyze innovation, reduce barriers to entry, and accelerate learning. Such ecosystems also elevate regional and sector-based reputations, helping to attract even more talent, capital, and entrepreneurial activity.

To support the goal of increasing Wisconsin's startup and capital density, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) created Ignite Wisconsin, a new program that will offer funding support for consortia based in regions across Wisconsin to support those consortia's efforts to boost entrepreneurship.

IGNITE WISCONSIN: THE DETAILS

We're looking for the best and brightest ideas on how to support the innovative startups and brilliant ideas Wisconsin produces. Since the best ideas are built through collaboration, we're looking for partners to help plan, support, and create new ways of building thriving ecosystems for high-growth startups.

Applicants must collaborate with ecosystem partners in a formal or informal consortium.

Consortia may use the funds for:

- Entrepreneur support and technical assistance
- Direct business funding
- Programmatic and space support
- Marketing, storytelling, and consortium operations

Applicants should clearly identify how their proposed activities will contribute to the goals of:

- Increasing early-stage investment in Wisconsin
- Establishing or expanding incubators, cohorts, and technical assistance for startups
- Launching or expanding entrepreneur-in-residence and fellowship programs
- Enhancing commercialization and innovation activities
- Sharing the stories of Wisconsin's entrepreneurial success



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TO LEARN MORE AND APPLY

WEDC expects to award four to six grants in the first year of this program, with individual grant amounts ranging from \$200,000 to \$2 million.

Application deadline: Oct. 31, 2025

Team members in WEDC's Division of Entrepreneurship and Innovation are available to provide feedback and guidance for anyone considering submitting an application. We encourage reaching out well in advance of the application deadline to ensure adequate time for providing and incorporating the team's input.

Drop in for weekly virtual office hours using Microsoft Teams from 9 to 10 a.m. on Wednesdays, August through October 2025.



QUESTIONS

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OPEN OFFICE HOUR LINKS

Each date is a Wednesday from 9-10 a.m. for Microsoft Teams. Links may be used to both register to attend and to open the meeting at the scheduled time.

SEPTEMBER OFFICE HOURS

Join the Sept. 3
Office Hours



Join the Sept. 10
Office Hours



Join the Sept. 17
Office Hours



Join the Sept. 24
Office Hours



OCTOBER OFFICE HOURS

Join the Oct. 1
Office Hours



Join the Oct. 8
Office Hours



Join the Oct. 15
Office Hours



Join the Oct. 22
Office Hours

