



SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT FAQ

When can I apply for a Small Business Development Grant?

The Small Business Development Grant is a competitive program that runs once per WEDC fiscal year. Typically, applications are accepted and reviewed in the fall, with awards being contracted and announced in the winter. The exact dates for the application period may vary from year to year, so visit wedc.org to stay up to date on announcements.

How do I apply for a Small Business Development Grant?

Municipalities, counties, Tribal governments, and economic development organizations are eligible to apply for a Small Business Development Grant. To request an application, please email your **Regional Economic Development Director** or the Project Manager, Dana Foley, at dana.foley@wedc.org. Please share the name of the entity to be listed as the applicant along with the name(s) and email(s) of who should receive the application.

Can a small business apply for WEDC's small business development grant?

No, a small business cannot apply directly for WEDC's Small Business Development Grant. Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties, Tribal governments, and economic development organizations. The Small Business Development Grant is a pass-through program in which eligible applicants that receive funds from WEDC then pass the funds on to small business within their service areas. Small business owners should find out whether a local municipality, county, Tribal government, or economic development organization has received a Small Business Development Grant and, if so, should contact that entity directly to learn about their program.

What is the start date/end date? How long should my project run?

The project start date and project end date may vary depending on your project and when your award is contracted. An eligible project should ideally have a duration of about two years (24 months).

How are applications evaluated? What are scorers looking for?

Applications are reviewed by a scoring committee that considers the evaluation criteria listed below. Evaluation criteria can also be found within the program guidelines.

- The extent to which the proposed effort provides a model to maintain grant funding for long-term use in the applicant's service territory

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- The extent to which the applicant's program provides customized business advising and technical assistance follow-up to small businesses in the applicant's service territory in conjunction with business financing
- The extent to which the applicant's program will address a local economic challenge (e.g. number of localities served, geography, businesses served, etc.)
- The extent to which the problem has been approached through regional collaboration with other economic development groups and other local jurisdictions
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates community demand/support/need for program
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the critical need for WEDC financial support
- The extent to which the program as proposed will support local, small business growth
- The extent to which the project will provide an impact to economically distressed communities or rural areas of Wisconsin
- The extent to which the project will impact historically underserved populations
- The extent to which the proposed effort can be replicated throughout Wisconsin
- The extent to which the applicant budget is complete and displays how funds will support small businesses. Funds cannot be used to cover administrative costs or the provision of technical assistance
- The extent to which the applicant has secured match funds (a match is not required)
- The extent to which the applicant has demonstrated experience administering loan/grant funds
- If a Revolving Loan Fund is proposed, then objectives; financing strategy including terms, eligibility, and use of funds; operational procedures including application process, underwriting, disbursement, loan monitoring, and marketing plans; and a full summary of the applicant's organizational capacity to run an RLF must be provided)
- The extent to which the applicant has a plan to disburse grant funds within the first 18 months of the project window
- The extent to which an applicant has received SBDG funds in the past (applicants who have not previously received SBDG funds may be prioritized)

If awarded a Small Business Development Grant, can I retain any of the funds for an administration fee, to cover employee salaries, pay for reporting expenses, etc.?

No. Entities that receive a Small Business Development Grant from WEDC may not keep any of the funds for their use. 100% of funds awarded *must* be passed through to small businesses.

Are there any reporting requirements if I am awarded a Small Business Development Grant?

Yes. All entities that receive a Small Business Development Grant are required to submit an annual performance report. For awards of \$100,000 or more, Wisconsin state statute also requires an annual Schedule of Expenditures to be submitted which must be completed by an independent, third-party certified public accountant. If awarded a Small Business Development Grant, you will receive more information regarding reporting requirements and schedule during the contracting stage.

How long will it take to find out if my application was successful?

Notifications regarding whether your application is moving forward for contracting are typically sent out two to three months after the application period ends, although timing may vary.

What is the attestation for eligibility statement?

The applicant certifies that neither its business operations nor the project or program for which assistance is sought uses any protected class as an eligibility criterion or factor in participation or evaluation. For purposes of this certification, "protected class" includes classifications recognized under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, including: race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy), legitimacy, and, where applicable, alienage, religion, and disability.

For more information, visit the Small Business Development Grant website at [**https://wedc.org/programs/small-business-development-grant/**](https://wedc.org/programs/small-business-development-grant/)