

ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS  
**GUIDE TO GRANTS** THAT  
CAN FUND KEY INITIATIVES

BY GOLDEN SHOVEL AGENCY



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>Executive Summary/Introductory Letter</b> .....	3	<b>Strengthen and Expand Infrastructure through Federal Infrastructure Grants</b> .....	14-16
<b>General Grants</b> .....	4	Infrastructure Grants.....	14-17
<b>Grow Your Workforce &amp; Talent Pool Through Workforce-Specific Grants</b> .....	5-7	Soft-Cost Grants .....	17
<b>Forecasted Grant Opportunities</b> .....	8	<b>Business Expansion Grants Can Support the Growth of Existing Companies</b> .....	18-20
<b>Enhance Your Community's Quality of Life to Attract More Workers &amp; Support Current Residents</b> .....	9-13	Business Development Programs.....	18-20
Quality Of Life Grants.....	9	<b>Out-of-the-Box Funding Solutions</b> .....	21
Healthcare .....	9	Convergent Nonprofit Solutions.....	21
Housing .....	10	National Community Development Services .....	21
Food & Nutrition .....	11-13	<b>Now is the Time to Secure Grant Funding for Your Community</b> .....	22

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Dear Economic Developer,

You wear a lot of hats and are tasked with transforming your community - something that has never been easy. In conversations with hundreds of economic developers over the past couple of years, it has become clear that one of the most significant hurdles is securing the funding necessary to launch campaigns and fund the programs and development required to make an impact. We have been asked about specific funding programs, how to raise money for quality of life, BR&E, workforce and product development needs, among others. This grant-focused whitepaper aims to answer some of these questions and to provide you with the foundation necessary to begin securing funding for initiatives that will positively transform your community.

To our clients - you know we fight for you and with you. We have the privilege of working with economic developers and community leaders as they plan for their community's growth and serving as a partner in implementing those strategies. It's an honor to do so.

When Roseville, Minnesota, wanted to help local businesses recover from COVID, they turned to GSA to develop a Choose Local campaign that integrated BR&E efforts and local marketing in a way that provides businesses with in-person support. As a result of the campaign, businesses that were on the verge of closing have remained open and grown exponentially.

When York County, Nebraska, needed to recruit more companies to rural Nebraska, GSA created a marketing strategy that included marketing available sites using our virtual reality technology. The project has been so successful that they have filled their commercial space and are now in the process of developing new product.

When Burien, Washington, wanted to develop an inclusive economic development marketing strategy, GSA worked with community stakeholders to develop a branding, marketing and advertising strategy that, once implemented, has led to consistent requests from business owner and artists looking for space within the Seattle region - people who were previously unaware of the city and what it has to offer.

These are just a few examples of how GSA is helping economic developers to transform their communities. We believe in you and want to come alongside you and help you achieve your goals. If funding stands in the way, we encourage you to identify the grants within this whitepaper that can be used for your specific needs and then contact us for more information or assistance.

Wishing You the Best,

Bethany Quinn, VP Strategy and Content Development • Golden Shovel Agency

# GENERAL GRANTS

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The majority of available grants have parameters around how they can be used. For example, they will fund specific types of infrastructure projects or workforce development programs serving a certain population. We highlight many of them in the coming pages. First, the below grants offer high flexibility on how funds will be used. **Economic developers with creative or unique ideas should consider applying for one of the below grants and finding ways to use them to further community development goals.**

## [2021-2023 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RNTA](#)

The Department of Commerce is awarding organizations up to \$1,500,000 that can provide cutting-edge ideas to promote job growth, private investment, and overall economic development in regions experiencing economic hardships. Currently, there is no closing date for this grant. However, applicants must submit a viable concept proposal and a fully completed application to be considered for this grant.

## [FY 2021 - 2023 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH AND NATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE](#)

The Economic Development Administration is a branch of the Department of Commerce that focuses on creating jobs and projects to attract investment. This particular grant emphasizes research, evaluation, and technical assistance.

In particular, the EDA is looking for new and creative ways to promote economic prosperity in rural or urban areas that have historically needed more funding for technical and research programs. The award ceiling for this grant is \$1.5 million, and there is no hard deadline for submissions, meaning that applications will continuously be processed until another assistance program is released or funds are exhausted.

# GROW YOUR WORKFORCE & TALENT POOL THROUGH WORKFORCE-SPECIFIC GRANTS

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Talent recruitment and workforce development is top of mind for economic developers looking to meet the needs of growing companies while ensuring their community can support additional business growth and attraction. Those who are fortunate to have strong partnerships with local community colleges may find that programs are already in place to facilitate low or no-cost workforce development programs. Still, augmenting those programs with help from federal grants is a wise strategy when building a talent pipeline.

Golden Shovel Agency is working with economic developers who are actively recruiting in high school, for example, and creating internship and apprenticeship programs designed to engage the community's youth. In York County, Manufacturing Day events turned into recruitment and internship opportunities, something YCDC Executive Director Lisa Hurley is looking to expand upon. **“Internships are part of a holistic workforce development and attraction strategy. While we are actively advertising and promoting York County on the workforce attraction side, we know it is important to build our talent from within as well,” she said.** Fortunately, there are grant programs that can make it easier to create these types of programs, including programs that can be conducted remotely. Rural communities may benefit, for example, by exploring the USDA's Distance Learning Grants that can help to pay for audio/visual and computer equipment, along with broadband.

## WORKFORCE-SPECIFIC GRANTS

### **Distance Learning Grants**

The USDA created this program to assist remote communities in ensuring they are sufficiently equipped with the technology to support their rural economies. The Rural Development department has allocated \$60 million worth of funding to help with this.

- The funds are for some of the following:
  - Audio and video technology
  - Training in the use of this technology
  - Infrastructure upgrades such as cell phone towers or broadband internet hubs

# GROW YOUR WORKFORCE & TALENT POOL THROUGH WORKFORCE-SPECIFIC GRANTS

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## **YouthBuild - FOA-ETA-23-17**

YouthBuild offers funding so the Department of Labor can allocate resources to subsidize pre-apprenticeship opportunities for education, employment services, and occupational skills training to benefit local communities for young adults aged 16-24.

## **DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program - FOA-ETA-22-16**

Through this grant, the Department of Labor is attempting to remove the financial and institutional blockages limiting the number of qualified nurses in the medical sector by increasing the number of educators and actual frontline medical professionals. This grant allows applicants to choose whether to become a frontline nursing professional or a nursing instructor.

## **National Dislocated Worker Grants Program Guidance**

The Department of Labor is offering states anywhere from \$150,000-\$100,000,000 to help provide dislocated workers with employment opportunities following natural and economic disasters. This includes creating temporary jobs related to recovery and clean-up efforts following destructive environmental phenomena and creating new jobs in areas experiencing massive economic contractions or recessions.

## **Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants To Address The Opioid Crisis**

The Department of Labor has earmarked \$100,000,000 for states to provide training and employment to help address the aftermath of the opioid crisis. The aim is to provide opportunities to those affected by this public health epidemic by fostering connections with state and local organizations to create a skilled workforce in addiction therapy, mental health treatment, and pain management services.

## **Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP), Incarcerated Veterans' Transition Program (IVTP), And The Homeless Female Veterans' And Veterans' With Children Program (HFVWC) (Referred To Collectively As HVRP)**

The HVRP aims to give back to military veterans who have fallen on hard times or are a part of historically marginalized populations. It intends to provide veterans who are experiencing homelessness, have been previously incarcerated or those who have children with opportunities to acquire prestigious careers that offer a level of economic opportunity that would otherwise be unattainable.

# GROW YOUR WORKFORCE & TALENT POOL THROUGH WORKFORCE-SPECIFIC GRANTS

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## Tribal College Initiative Grants

These \$250,000 grants are exclusive to Tribal Colleges that want to improve their physical facilities and purchase new equipment. These Tribal Colleges are permitted to buy:

- Schools
- Libraries
- Dormitories
- Educational supplies
- Vehicles and heavy machinery
- Renovations to older facilities



# FORECASTED GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

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The following grants are still in the forecast stage, meaning that the funds are not yet officially available and are pending fiscal approval from the governing agency. These programs are intended to be rolled out in the near future and should be monitored until their official release.

## DOL BUILDING PATHWAYS TO INFRASTRUCTURE JOBS GRANT PROGRAM

- **Purpose:** Training job-seekers in IT, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, transportation, and broadband infrastructure
- **Potential Award Amount:** \$5,000,000
- **Expected Number of Awards:** 25

## WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES (WORC) ROUND 5: A GRANT INITIATIVE FOR THE APPALACHIAN, DELTA, AND NORTHERN BORDER REGIONS

- **Purpose:** To promote sustainable job prospects that provide lasting economic prosperity by operating with local workforce development agencies in areas that have a population of marginalized residents
- **Potential Award Amount:** \$1,500,000
- **Expected Number of Awards:** 35





# ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE TO ATTRACT MORE WORKERS & SUPPORT CURRENT RESIDENTS

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Economic developers focused on quality of life improvements are finding it easier to attract workers to their community. As flexible work arrangements become more common, people are searching for prioritizing communities they will enjoy living in when conducting a job search. There are grants that can help to fund these projects.

In addition, regardless of a community's size, there is always the possibility that some of its members can slip through the cracks where they are unable to receive basic assistance. Utilizing grants that focus on enhancing the quality of life for everyone ensures that no individual, young or old, gets left behind.

**Improving the quality of life in a community is beneficial for economic developers because when an individual's basic needs are met, they become integrated, and therefore productive, within their community.**

## QUALITY OF LIFE GRANTS

### HEALTHCARE

#### Telemedicine Expansion Grants

The USDA created this program to assist remote communities in ensuring they are sufficiently equipped with the technology to support their rural economies and receive comprehensive health care. The Rural Development department has allocated \$60 million worth of funding to help with this.

The funds are for some of the following:

- Audio and video technology that promotes the use of remote learning and telehealth
- Training in the use of this technology
- Infrastructure upgrades such as cell phone towers or broadband internet hubs

# ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE TO ATTRACT MORE WORKERS & SUPPORT CURRENT RESIDENTS

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## HOUSING

### **On-Farm Labor Housing Loans**

The USDA offers loans at a 1% per annum interest rate to farming-related businesses to build new housing or rehabilitate previous housing developments that have become unlivable. The tenants must be farm laborers, meaning this grant aims to stimulate the agricultural industry by offering its workers an ideal housing situation, which is hard to come by for people in this trade.

### **Multifamily Housing Rental Assistance**

The USDA is proud to announce its rental assistance program, which offers funds to owners of multifamily housing developments so that they can help low-income tenants pay their rent and utilities. More specifically, the Rental Assistance Program ensures tenants will not have to pay more than 30% of their income for housing costs.

### **Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants**

The USDA's Rural Development department provides grants to non-profit organizations to fund residential construction projects where residents team up with construction professionals to build houses. This allows low-income families to help construct their own homes, all while taking pride in helping other families do the same, fostering a stronger sense of community in rural areas.

### **Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants**

The Rural Development branch of the USDA offers loans and grants to low-income and elderly homeowners to make improvements or repairs on their property.

Designated loans are for modernizing, restoring, enhancing, or removing safety/health hazards from a property. Awarded grants are for eliminating health and safety hazards. The maximum grant award is \$10,000, and the max loan amount is \$40,000. Homeowners can combine the two for a top total award of \$50,000.

# ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE TO ATTRACT MORE WORKERS & SUPPORT CURRENT RESIDENTS

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## FOOD & NUTRITION

### **FY 2023 Farm To School Grants**

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) department within the USDA is helping to ensure that students have better access to locally sourced foods with multiple grants that surround the Farm to School Program, including:

- [Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act \(NSLA\)](#)
- [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#)
- [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#)
- [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#)
- [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\)](#)

A \$12 million award funds these initiatives, which provide training, equipment, school gardens, partnerships, and the framework for farm-to-school programs in rural communities.

### **FY 2022 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants For School Food Authorities**

Equipment Assistance Grants provide \$30 million annually for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Specifically, they target school food authorities (SFAs), which make up the NSLP, to help with supply chain issues that arose during the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020.

### **Development And Implementation Of Healthy Meals Incentives School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants**

The FNS vests up to four sub-grants to help further establish the Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative within the K-12 school system. SFAs that have taken adequate steps to improve the nutritional value of food provided in schools are eligible to receive these grants.

The intention is to address staff shortages, training accessibility, rising food prices, and obsolete cooking tools. Rural SFAs face significant challenges in these supply chain issues, which is why they are the target of these grants.

# ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE TO ATTRACT MORE WORKERS & SUPPORT CURRENT RESIDENTS

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## **TEFAP Reach And Resiliency 2023**

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) provides the United States emergency food network with much-needed financial help to keep food banks and other food-related community organizations running in the face of the extra strain that the aftermath of COVID-19 left on the network's infrastructure.

The Reach and Resiliency initiative provides an extra \$100 million in aid to help food assistance programs bolster their infrastructure in underserved and rural communities. Specifically, the aim is to expand TEFAP into low-income, Tribal, and remote communities where food programs are most needed.

## **USDA Regional Food Business Centers Program**

This program aims to support smaller food producers by helping them get past common market barriers that would otherwise keep farmers and ranchers from being able to sell their crops. Its main goals are coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building within Regional Food Center networks.

These Regional Food Business Centers function as epicenters where all stakeholders can generate plans for better regional food distribution through capacity building and technical assistance. Smaller-sized farmers and ranchers will receive help distributing their goods while taking advantage of small financial awards to help with planning, staffing, and purchasing specialized equipment.

## **Videos Explaining The Grant**

The USDA created multiple videos to help explain the idea behind these Regional Food Business Centers:

- [USDA Regional Food Business Centers Announcement \(22 min\)](#)
- [USDA Regional Food Business Centers Program Overview \(2 min\)](#)
- [USDA Regional Food Business Centers Overview \(15 min\)](#)

# ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE TO ATTRACT MORE WORKERS & SUPPORT CURRENT RESIDENTS

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## **Denali Commission High Energy Cost Grants**

The Denali Commission is the federal agency tasked with providing remote Alaskan communities with critical infrastructure, utilities, and financial help. Through this grant, they focus on reducing energy costs in areas where they are at least 275 percent of the national average.

Due to the remote locations of many Alaskan communities, energy costs tend to be much higher than the national average. Programs like this help shoulder some of the economic burdens of remote living.



# STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

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Any local community's ability to work toward positive economic development hinges upon the presence of a fully functioning infrastructure to facilitate its basic necessities. This includes hard infrastructure like sufficient roads and highways in addition to a strong electrical grid, sufficient water, and more recently, broadband coverage for all. **Economic developers in communities with an aging or insufficient infrastructure should consider applying for federal grant opportunities as quickly as possible.**

## INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

### **Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program**

This initiative aims to provide funding to help create essential facilities in rural communities of less than 20,000 residents. These funds are allocated for constructing, improving, or paying operating expenses to run:

- Healthcare facilities
- Public facilities
- Community support facilities
- Public safety services
- Educational services
- Utility services
- Local food systems

### **Rural Energy For America Program Energy Audit & Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grants**

The USDA's purpose for this program is to create grants for energy audits and renewable energy development assistance to benefit agricultural producers and small businesses in rural areas.

By improving the efficiency of already existing renewable power sources and increasing the domestic energy supply, Americans will achieve energy independence leading to lower energy costs.

# STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

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## **Rural Energy For America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants**

These loans and grants aim to enable agricultural producers in rural areas with a population of less than 50,000) to obtain funding for new renewable energy systems and improvements to existing systems.

Various supported renewable energy sources include wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, ethanol, and biodiesel. Upgrades to existing systems include high-efficiency HVAC, lighting, insulation, doors & windows, or replacement of any energy-inefficient equipment.

Grants for upgrades to existing systems can be as large as \$500,000, and installing new systems is worth up to one million dollars.

## **Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans & Loan Guarantees**

The USDA's Rural Development department is offering to help pay for the costs associated with telecommunications infrastructure.

These grants help finance construction, maintenance, telephone, and internet infrastructure improvements in rural areas with less than 5,000 residents by providing low-interest rate loans.

Areas with inadequate telecommunications facilities or those without telecommunication infrastructure stand to benefit the most from these loans.

## **Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants**

These grants focus on small communities' ability to provide clean drinking water after a disaster. Awardees can apply for the grant following a disaster or in preparation for potential drought, flood, earthquake, tornado, hurricane, disease, or toxic spill scenarios.

Local governments and nonprofit organizations can use the funds to make extensions and repairs to existing water lines (\$150,000) or build entirely new water sources and treatment facilities (\$1,000,000) in areas with fewer than 10,000 residents.

# STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

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## **Individual Water & Wastewater Grants**

Homeowners of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas that live in communities with less than 10,000 people can receive up to \$5,000 to fix issues relating to lack of potable water, sewage systems, roads, or drainage. In some instances, it makes sense for economic developers to augment community-wide infrastructure projects with programs aimed at empowering individual homeowners to also make upgrades.

Improvements to potentially eligible properties include:

- Extending water lines to a residence.
- Paying for plumbing fixtures.
- Constructing a bathroom.
- Making any improvements to the home's water and waste disposal systems.

To be eligible for this grant, recipients must own their homes, and there cannot be any outstanding delinquent debt or liens on the property.

## **Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program**

This program provides grants and interest-free loans for utility services. Local businesses will create and maintain employment opportunities within the surrounding community as they continue to save money from these interest-free loans.

Three hundred thousand dollars in grants and two million dollars in loans are available through this program. The USDA has designated the funds for business incubators, developing nonprofits, job training facilities, medical facilities, and start-up businesses.

## **Higher Learning Infrastructure And Capacity Building Challenge Grants**

The National Endowment For The Humanities is attempting to reinforce the number of humanities programs nationwide via a multifaceted approach backed up by funding.

Up to one million dollars is awarded to numerous organizations that support humanities. These funds are used to buy anything related to building and maintaining physical or digital infrastructure. The 2022 deadline for this program has passed, but it will be available again in early 2023.



# FLEXIBLE 'SOFT-COST' GRANTS CAN SERVE A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY NEEDS

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There are plenty of grants available that cover the hard costs, or the direct physical costs, of infrastructure development and construction. However, finding grants that can be allocated to cover the soft costs of construction projects is generally much more difficult. These soft costs are the indirect expenses that are involved in construction, such as permits, architectural & engineering costs, and financing fees. Most soft-cost grants are available at the state or hyperlocal level. Below are some examples. We encourage economic developers to use these to spur ideas and see what options exist within their own local communities.

## SOFT-COST GRANTS

### **Ripple Effect Program (Iowa Only)**

The Ripple Effect Program is an Iowa-based institution that fosters partnerships between rural communities and local independent telecommunication companies to promote enterprises encouraging economic development.

These partnerships aim to generate loans and grant funding for common soft costs, including environmental assessments, engineering fees, and architectural costs.

### **Soft Cost Grants in Groton, CT**

In Groton, businesses have multiple ways of funding soft costs. The city, for example, has a program where grant funds are available to reimburse the costs associated with opening or expanding a business in the City of Groton, so long as they have fewer than 25 employees and fit within the city's target industries. Economic Development is rolling out a second grant program - the Town of Groton Business Pivot Program. Designed to help businesses adapt to the pandemic response, this grant program is funded through ARPA and can be used for soft costs such as financial, marketing, and strategic planning, training, software, signage, etc. It can also be used for hiring and benefits, operational expenses, inventory, and equipment - making it extremely versatile.

"Groton is located near Connecticut's manufacturing hubs, close to New York City and Boston, but our economic development team is more approachable than in larger cities. This grant is one of the ways we demonstrate that we care about the success of local businesses and are willing to do what we can to support their sustainability and growth," said Sam Eisenbeiser, AICP, Economic Development Specialist, City of Groton.



# BUSINESS EXPANSION GRANTS CAN SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF EXISTING COMPANIES

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Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) programs have become a larger priority in a post-COVID world. Ensuring that local businesses have the foundation in place to weather economic shifts, and potential disasters, should be top-of-mind as we continue coming out of COVID and face economic and trade uncertainties. Fortunately, **there are federal grant programs available that can be used towards BR&E efforts**. In places like Washington County, Minnesota, economic developers are eager to assist businesses in being successful and prepare for expansion, in addition to making them more resilient. **“We are working with existing established companies with more than 3 employees, but under \$5 million in revenue who are ready to grow by providing the needed tools and resources. Our What’s Next CEO program is designed for their specific needs,”** said Chris Eng, Economic Development Director for the Washington County CDA. **“Business growth is a good thing, but sometimes it creates a whole new set of challenges so we are proactively helping companies to work through that.”**

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

### Rural Business Development Grants

Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG) are a part of the USDA’s Rural Development branch. They aim to help out small businesses that don’t share in the infrastructural benefits to which more urban enterprises are accustomed. These grants are for companies with fewer than 50 employees, generate less than \$1 million in annual gross revenue, and aren’t near any urban areas with a population of at least 50,000.

This program offers two types of grants (enterprise and opportunity) to its awardees, technically neither of which has a cap, but smaller proposals get a higher priority. The majority of proposals range from \$10,000-\$500,000.

Both types of grants allow services like feasibility studies, entrepreneurial training, and business plans; however, enterprise grant funds are designated for newer businesses that need help getting off the ground and include services like training, land acquisition, and construction.

# BUSINESS EXPANSION GRANTS CAN SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF EXISTING COMPANIES

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## **Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program**

This program provides grants, loans, and training for rural startup microenterprises that would not usually have access to this kind of assistance. Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs), like nonprofit organizations and higher education institutions, provide these services.

In this program, rural enterprises are defined as being located outside of a city of at most 50,000 people. The annual maximum grant award is \$205,000, while loans can vary from \$50,000-\$500,000. Funds can be used to refinish debt, purchase equipment, and enhance real estate.

## **Agriculture Innovation Center Program**

The USDA's Rural Development agency created this program so that Agriculture Innovation Centers can further help agricultural producers gain a foothold in larger markets by maximizing their net worth. In addition to grant funding of \$5,000-\$50,000, there are many ways that AICs can aid agricultural producers, including:

- Feasibility studies and business plans
- Marketing plans, branding, and customer identification
- Preparing financial statements and analyzing financial options
- Engineering services, systems development, and scale production analytics
- Organizational assistance, legal, and technical advisory services
- Supply chain coordination and training
- Product development, product testing, and consumer analytics

# BUSINESS EXPANSION GRANTS CAN SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF EXISTING COMPANIES

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## **Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program**

The MPPEP is designed to expand meat and poultry processing capacity, which in turn increases competition, supports producer income, and strengthens the food supply chain to lower costs for working families and create jobs and economic opportunities in rural areas. In addition, \$75 million is being invested in eight projects through the Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program, as well as more than \$75 million for four meat and poultry-related projects through the Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan program.

## **Build To Scale Program**

The Build To Scale Program (B2S) is one of the most well-known programs from the EDA's Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship (OIE), which strives to grow previously distressed economies, starting at a regional level. The hope is that these investments can be easily scaled to produce many skilled and high-paying jobs that will continue to increase in newly developing sectors.

In particular, the OIE supports entrepreneurial efforts in technology-based industries. Two different competitions make up the B2S Venture program, awarding grants to innovative organizations that have the potential to become industry leaders.

### **Venture Challenge**

The Venture Challenge focuses on economic development by emphasizing next-generation technology's importance, including pushing current technology to its boundaries while commercializing it to help promote its evolution.

### **Capital Challenge**

The Capital Challenge concentrates on making capital for emerging businesses more accessible, including emphasizing the need for equity-based capital in fledgling technology startups to help promote growth at the fastest rate possible.

## **2022 Recipients**

In FY 2022, the EDA awarded 51 grants for a total of \$47 million. [Here is a list of the 2022 awardees](#). It includes a wide variety of industries, including, but not limited to, bioscience, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, agricultural technology, and financial technology.

## OUT-OF-THE-BOX FUNDING SOLUTIONS

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Currently, there are a large number of grants available at the federal, state, and local level that economic developers can use to grow and enhance their communities. But, grants are not a fit for everything. And in some cases, grants require matching funds. This can create a need to raise money in order to secure the grant funding that's available.

**There are organizations that will help economic developers raise money for capital campaigns, multi-year strategic initiatives, gap financing, or matching funds.** The below companies specialize in multi-year fundraising campaigns. Golden Shovel Agency and our clients have successfully worked with both.



Convergent Nonprofit Solutions has over 100 years of fundraising experience with for-profit and nonprofit businesses, helping economic development organizations reach their goals and fostering a healthy economy in rural and urban areas. Maximizing investment and securing new revenue streams is what Convergent is most well-known for. Their approach has helped organizations like the Greater Springfield Partnership. "Convergent brought us outside experience and expertise we didn't have. It felt like our project director was a part of our staff. He helped us close the door and solidify large commitments that were crucial to us raising over \$4 million," said Horton Hobbs IV, VP of Economic Development.



National Community Development Services (NCDS) has generated over \$1.8 billion to help economic developers and chamber leaders complete quality of life projects, develop infrastructure and tackle strategic initiatives designed to expand businesses, attract skilled workforce members, promote entrepreneurs, and fix infrastructure through multi-year strategic initiatives. In Jonesboro, Arkansas, for example, NCDS completed a feasibility study and helped the organization to raise \$3.5 million for a variety of initiatives linked to job creation and investment goals. "We have 135 entities that have invested 3.5 million to ensure our successes," said Mark Young, Jonesboro Unlimited CEO - an organization that has done multiple campaigns with NDCS.

# NOW IS THE TIME TO SECURE GRANT FUNDING FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

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Grant funding is available to help communities achieve their goals and make true headway on projects that have been percolating for some time. For example, there is more money for broadband expansion that can help rural communities have access to the same digital tools urban areas do. Funding is available for workforce development and industry growth as well. The challenge for many economic developers will be finding the time to apply for these grants and making the most of the money that's available.

**Golden Shovel Agency can provide direct assistance and guidance. Contact one of our team members to discover how we can help you to achieve your goals.**



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