

Microenterprise Assistance Program for New or Existing Microenterprises in Cattaraugus County

Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism and the Cattaraugus County Economic Sustainability and Growth Corporation have been awarded funds from the Office of Community Renewal to establish a grant fund for Microenterprises in Cattaraugus County.

A microenterprise is defined as having five or fewer employees, one or more of whom own the business. Microenterprise status with respect to ownership and the number of employees is determined at the time of the Program application. Not-for-profit corporations or similar nonprofit entities are not eligible for the program. This program is available to existing as well as startup micro-businesses. A startup is defined as a business having filed structure documentation no more than 6 months prior to submitting their application for grant funding. Applicants will be required to submit a completed application as well as business plan.

The business must either be:

- Owned by a low- or moderate-income person(s) as defined by HUD- applicants will be required to submit proof of income and family size by providing most recent tax returns or
- The assisted business activity to be undertaken with assistance from the Program must directly result in the creation of employment positions consistent with the low- and moderate-income benefit provisions of the Federal regulations governing the CDBG program. Proof of job creation and income and family size of the employee(s) will be required before grants funds are paid out.

Low-or-moderate income status will be determined based on income (as determined from the business owner's most recent Federal income tax return) and family size, using the most current income limits adopted by HUD.

Eligible uses of funds include:

- Fixed assets including machinery and equipment
- Personal property including furnishings and fixtures
- Operating expenses and working capital
- Current Assets including inventory and receivables

Note that projects that enhance the long-term viability of the business such as rent, insurance, creation of a website or ecommerce site, purchase of a point of sale or CRM system, will be encouraged.

The business must be located in Cattaraugus County and must meet the Program objectives. Funds cannot be used to fund any construction or related costs including rehabilitation, renovation, leasehold improvements, and demolition or clearance activities. Ineligible activities are those that consist of investing, speculation, or realty ownership held primarily for sale or investment; any activity which is illegal; and any activity which does not further the objectives of the Program will be ineligible for Program financing. Applicants must be current on any taxes or loans owed to

Cattaraugus County.

Program grants may not be used to reimburse costs that were paid for with funding from any other business assistance program or relief benefits from any other source, including, but not limited to, any program funded under the CARES Act or other COVID-19 relief legislation, such as the Paycheck Protection Program or Economic Injury Disaster Loans.

The Program is a reimbursable grant of \$10,000 with a 10% match by the awardee. Larger grant amounts *may* be considered. Funds are limited.

Awardees will also be required to complete six entrepreneurship training courses. Some exceptions may be made on the course requirements with consideration and approval by the CCESGC Board. The courses will be completed individually with a small business counselor and can be scheduled at the convenience of the awardee. The courses are customizable to the needs of the business rather than a generic information session. Courses available:

- Start Up of A Small Business (this course is required for all startup applicants)
- Accounting for Small Business
- Human Resources for a Small Business
- Marketing and Branding Your Small Business (recommended for all applicants)
- Cost Accounting and Product Pricing for a Small Business
- Customer Relations (recommended for all applicants)
- Sustaining Your Business
- Website and Ecommerce (this course is required if your application indicates you will be using funds in order to create a website or ecommerce site for your business)

The deadline for completed applications and all required documentation is April 22, 2022 at 3:00 pm. Completed applications can be submitted via email to CMUrf@cattco.org or by mail:

Cattaraugus County EDPT/CCESGC
Attn: Christine Urf
303 Court St.
Little Valley, NY 14755

For any questions regarding this program or to receive an application and a template to create a business plan please contact Christine Urf at (716) 938-2311 or CMUrf@cattco.org