

How to Find Small Business Funding in PA

Purpose: Use this guide to find sources of small business funding in Pennsylvania.

Business Planning: Prior to applying for funding, a new or expanding business should complete a comprehensive business plan. A comprehensive business plan includes financial projections, cash flow and industry analysis, research of competitors and other market conditions, etc. Although plans differ in some content elements depending on the industry, the business plan template available on the Business One-Stop Shop's [Writing a Business Plan webpage](#) should provide a solid framework for creating a comprehensive business plan. For one-on-one business planning assistance, contact your nearest [Small Business Development Center](#).

Business Funding: Once you've completed your business plan you will be ready to look for funding. Click the links below for more information about the programs offered by our various resource partners. If you are interested in a specific program, reach out to the partner that administers that program to apply or to learn more information.

- **DCED Administered Programs:** You can find a list of all available programs administered by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development on their [Programs and Funding webpage](#). If you find a program in which you are interested, click the program link and review the PDF guidelines on the *Overview* page for eligibility information and how to apply.
- **Certified Economic Development Organizations (CEDO):** The state partners with regional lenders called Certified Economic Development Organizations. To view a list of your CEDO(s), select your county on the Department of Community and Economic Development's [CEDO webpage](#). Then, visit their website(s) to learn more about specific programs they offer.
- **Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI):** This network of mission-driven financial institutions works in all 67 counties in the Commonwealth to provide the small business community with access to financing and technical assistance. This first-of-its kind statewide collaboration leverages shared resources and mobilizes its extensive local networks to ensure economic prosperity for all Pennsylvanians. To view a list of your CDFIs, filter by your county on the Department of Community and Economic Development's [Small Business Credit Initiative webpage](#). Then, visit their website(s) to learn more about specific programs they offer.
- **County and Local Resources:** Reach out directly to your county and municipality to see if there are any economic development initiatives in your area. You should be able to find your county and municipal website by conducting an internet search. Most counties have an economic development office and/or partner with other economic development organizations to assist businesses in their region. Municipalities will also often have economic development offices you can reach out to for more information about potential local funding programs.

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- **SBA Backed Funding:** At a federal level, the Small Business Administration provides loan guarantees to local banks to make it easier for small businesses to obtain funding. Use the [SBA Lender Match tool](#) to find SBA-backed lenders who may be interested in funding your project. After submitting information about your business and your project, interested lenders will reach out to you directly.
- **Grants:** A regular retail/service business will not typically qualify for any type of grant program. Grants are typically tied to very specific industries and/or projects. Many are concentrated in the health and science fields to assist with conducting research. There are also grants associated with clean energy and other projects with an environmental or community impact. Grants are highly competitive and eligible projects will typically require a substantial community and/or economic impact. For more information about grant programs in PA, review the following resources:
 - [PA Grants](#)
 - [PA Department of Environmental Protection](#)
 - [Grants.gov](#)
 - [Federal Small Business Administration](#)
 - [Pennsylvania First Program](#)
 - [PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#)

There are often private grant opportunities through businesses/organizations not affiliated with any government agency. These grant programs are just as, and often more, competitive than government sponsored grants. A business owner should conduct their own research to find and evaluate private grant opportunities.

- **Small Diverse Business Resources:** There are specific opportunities and resources open to small diverse businesses in Pennsylvania on the local, state, and federal levels. In Pennsylvania diverse businesses include minority-owned, woman-owned, veteran-owned, disabled-owned, and LGBT-owned businesses. To learn more about diverse business funding opportunities, review the following resources:
 - [Certifying as a Small Diverse Business](#)
 - [Small Diverse Business Capital Access Program](#)
 - [Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority](#)
 - [Business Opportunities Fund](#)