



U.S. Small Business  
Administration

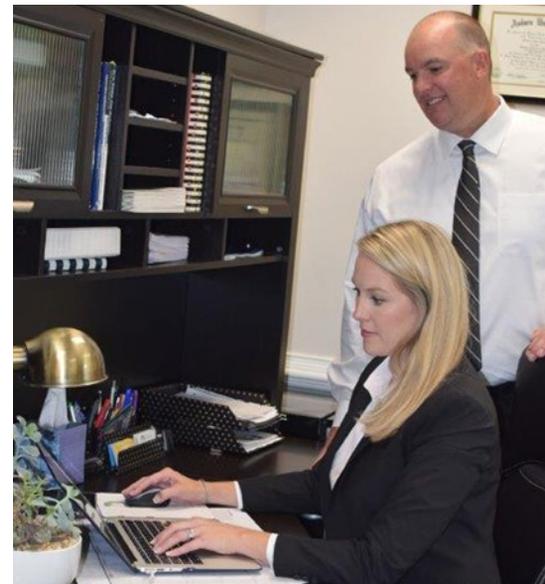
GEORGIA 2020

# Small Business

RESOURCE GUIDE



# GROW YOUR BUSINESS IN GEORGIA





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# CONTENTS



Georgia Edition 2020



## Local Business Assistance

- 8 National Success Story**  
Jerado and Joyce Reynolds know their local landscape for entrepreneurship support.
- 11 Local SBA Resource Partners**
- 13 Your Advocates**
- 14 How to Start a Business**
- 18 Find an EIN**
- 19 Opportunities for Veterans**
- 20 Entrepreneurial Opportunities**
- 22 Write Your Business Plan**
- 24 Local Success Story**  
When it came time for Becky and Jeff Lamont to grow their own small business, they turned to the SBA.

## Funding Programs

- 26 National Success Story**  
Jennifer and Jeff Herbert's meadery has expanded into a multimillion dollar enterprise thanks to SBA assistance.
- 29 SBA Lenders**
- 32 Financing 101**
- 33 Need Financing?**
- 34 Go Global with International Trade**
- 36 R&D Opportunities for High Growth Startups**
- 38 National Success Story**  
Cheeseburger Baby owner Stephanie Vitori persevered through a financial storm and a natural disaster.
- 42 Surety Bonds**

## Contracting

- 44 National Success Story**  
Jennifer Rahn steers the course for Admiral Engineering, succeeding as a small business subcontractor.
- 47 Government Contracting**
- 48 SBA Certification Programs**
- 49 Woman-Owned Small Business certification**

**ON THE COVER** Atlanta skyline from Piedmont Park, photo courtesy of Ralph Daniel courtesy of Explore Georgia; Becky and Jeff Lamont, photo courtesy of Pathways Behavioral Consulting; Talmadge Memorial Bridge in Savannah, photo by TravelingOtter on Flickr

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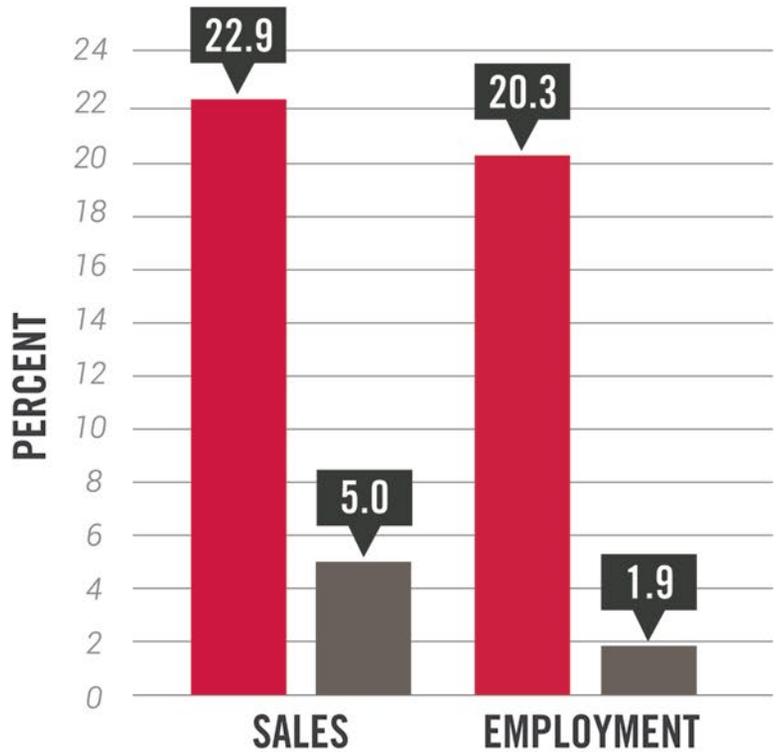
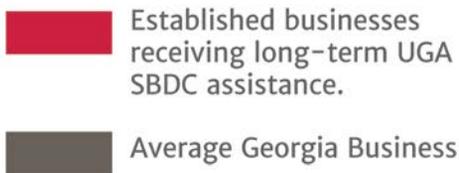
**PROGRESSIVE**  
COMMERCIAL



## WHAT WE DO:

The UGA SBDC's mission is to enhance the economic well-being of Georgians by providing a wide range of educational services for small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

In 2018, the UGA SBDC consulted with **4,091 clients** and conducted training programs attended by **2,971 Georgians**.



## SBDC CLIENT SUCCESS OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS:



New  
Businesses  
Started



New Jobs  
Created



Capital Raised  
Through Loans &  
Equity Financing



Total  
Sales



[WWW.GEORGIASBDC.ORG](http://WWW.GEORGIASBDC.ORG)



A Public Service and Outreach Unit of the University of Georgia, funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

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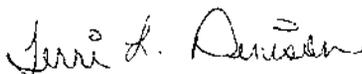
## District Director Letter

**W**elcome to the 2019-2020 edition of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Georgia Small Business Resource Guide. The SBA helps make the American dream of small business ownership a reality. We are the only federal agency dedicated to helping our nation's 30 million small businesses start, grow, expand, or recover after a disaster.

Over the past year, the SBA Georgia District Office has empowered the state's one million small businesses to find an ally or mentor via our network of SBA-funded Resource Partners, which include SCORE, Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, and the Veterans Business Outreach Center. Small business owners and entrepreneurs can access funding by using SBA-guaranteed loans through local banks, credit unions, community-based lenders, and microlenders. Georgia entrepreneurs qualified for about \$1.4 billion in SBA-backed financing in the last year. They were awarded \$7.2 billion in federal contracts, often taking advantage of SBA business development and technical support. Georgians affected by devastating flooding and wind damage received over \$535 million in SBA disaster assistance. At every stage, the SBA is here for you with programs, tools, and resources.

Stay informed about SBA events near you and get valuable Georgia business information by following us on Twitter at @SBA\_Georgia. Register for email updates at [sba.gov/updates](http://sba.gov/updates).

Sincerely,



**Terri L. Denison**  
District Director



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# LOCAL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

**How We Did It**

## Made to Last

Joyce and Jerado Reynolds used SBA support to succeed.

WRITTEN BY MICAELA MORRISSETTE

**R**eynolds Welding & Fabrication has grown steadily, building a loyal customer base, since Jerado Reynolds founded the company in 2005.

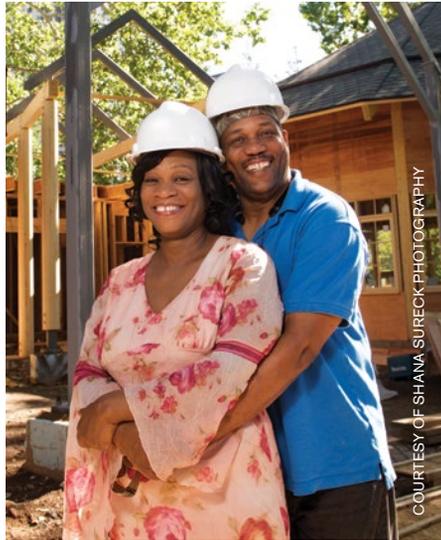
“At first the company was just Jerado,” recalls his wife and co-owner, Joyce Reynolds. “Then it was him and me part time.” During the day she worked as a nurse and spent her evenings doing all the company’s paperwork. The Reynolds sank everything they earned into the business—money, time, and energy. She remembers with pride helping Jerado weld a stair railing at a local school. Her son later attended that same school, and she watched her child and others using the rail, benefiting from the hard work the couple did together. It was then Joyce decided as much as she loved her day job, she wanted to devote herself full time to the family business in Windsor, Connecticut. She wanted to work side-by-side with her husband, fully focused on administration and business growth. As they both hoped, word of mouth spread; clients made referrals. Joyce was soon overwhelmed with paperwork. They brought on two employees—doubling up in the busy seasons. They were able to maintain four full-time employees by 2009. After this, Joyce says, they saw that “things were not moving.” She wanted to scale up.

### Challenge

The company wasn’t growing in part because it wasn’t certified with the state department of transportation or prequalified with the Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services, Joyce says. She decided to tackle the certification problem full time, leaving her nursing career. This was the change she’d been wanting to make, but since her background was in health care, Joyce didn’t feel fluent in the languages of construction or business. Joyce wanted to learn, and she had incentive: they needed the certifications to bid on bigger jobs. “Never be afraid to ask questions,” she says. Joyce needed to find people with answers.

### Solution

She and Jerado connected with the University of Hartford Entrepreneurial Center & Women’s Business Center, an



COURTESY OF SHANA SURECK PHOTOGRAPHY

SBA Resource Partner, where “from day one it was, Eureka! Everyone wanted to see us win.” Women entrepreneurs receive essential business counseling and training from this national network of community-based centers. Most helpful was the detailed personal attention available through free one-on-one business counseling. Joyce also learned about workshops offered by providers like the Metropolitan District, a Connecticut nonprofit municipal corporation offering water and sewer services. At a meet-and-greet, Joyce understood how much the SBA could help her business. An SBA professional walked Joyce through the extensive paperwork and, crucially, helped her register the company in the System for Award Management ([sam.gov](http://sam.gov)), positioning the company for new federal contracts.

“Resources like the Entrepreneurial Center and the SBA will train you from bottom to top,” Joyce says. “They have finance classes that open your eyes regarding taxes. You’ll learn how to register your business. They’ll help with a contract or your website or accountability statements. Everything!”

Before the SBA, Reynolds Welding attempted the DOT certification on five separate occasions, always falling short because the process was so complicated. Joyce secured the certification with SBA guidance on the first attempt.

### Benefit

Reynolds Welding now employs more than 15 workers, constructing stairs, rails, structural beams, and columns throughout the region. Jerado is working

# 5 Tips for Success

## Find a great business mentor.

To find your local SBA office and resource partners in your area, visit [sba.gov/localresources](http://sba.gov/localresources).

## Have a healthy view of competition.

We’re not always competing. We’re a competitor, but if a similar business has extra work, they’ll send it to us and vice versa. That’s the relationship to have.

## Record everything you do.

Navigating business relationships in this age means keeping an email record of everything you do. Leave a clear paper trail.

## Sacrifice to ensure quality.

We don’t cut corners. Sometimes you have to lose money to do quality work—it’s rough, but nothing is more important.

## Seek SBA assistance to see if you qualify for business certifications.

We used to look for jobs. Now that we’re on the SBA Subcontracting Network database, SubNet, and [sam.gov](http://sam.gov), we have a continuous flow of contractors reaching out to us.

on two bridges—a lifelong dream. Joyce continues to move forward, getting Reynolds qualified for the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, which provides free business development education to small businesses so they can better compete in the public sector. “When I came on full time, I set a goal for what I would like for the company, and I’ve achieved 80% of that,” Joyce says. When she secures 8(a) certification for Reynolds, she’ll have hit all her objectives. Then, she admits, she’ll probably come up with some new ones. ■

# SBA Resource Partners

No matter your industry, location, or experience, if you have a dream, the SBA is here to help you achieve it. Our SBA Resource Partners offer mentoring, counseling, and training to help you startup and thrive at all stages of the business life cycle. These independent organizations operating across the United States and U.S. territories are funded through SBA cooperative agreements or grants.

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

# 950+

### Small Business Development Centers

Achieve your dream of business ownership and remain competitive in an ever-changing global economy with assistance from your local SBDC. Access free counseling and free or low-cost training on topics like regulatory compliance, technology development, and international trade. Find an SBDC adviser at [sba.gov/sbdc](https://sba.gov/sbdc).

## SCORE

# 300+

### SCORE chapters

Join the ranks of other business owners who have experienced higher revenues and increased growth thanks to SCORE, the nation's largest network of volunteer business mentors. Experienced executives share real-world knowledge to fit your busy schedule. SCORE mentors are available for free as often as you need, in person, via email or over video chat. Find a mentor at [sba.gov/score](https://sba.gov/score).

## WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS

# 100+

### Women's Business Centers

Women entrepreneurs receive essential business counseling and training from this national network of community-based centers. Each center tailors its services to help you navigate the challenges women often face when starting or growing a business. To learn about SBA resources for women visit [sba.gov/women](https://sba.gov/women).

## VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS

# 20+

### Veterans Business Outreach Centers

Veteran and military entrepreneurs receive business training, counseling, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, [sba.gov/vboc](https://sba.gov/vboc). Receive procurement guidance to better compete for government contracts. VBOCs also serve active duty service members, National Guard or Reserve members, veterans of any era, and military spouses.

# Our Local SBA Resource Partners

SBA's Resource Partners are independent organizations funded through SBA cooperative agreements or grants.



COURTESY ROTORCORP

## ▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

With the help of his local Small Business Development Center, Sean Casey secured his first international trade contract. Rotorcorp, an Atlanta veteran-owned business, now distributes Robinson parts for helicopters to 45 countries. With the business assistance and training Sean received from the SBA Emerging Leaders program, his small business was able to secure \$1 million in SBA-backed lines of credit. This financing package allowed the company to significantly increase inventory and improve customer support. In the last year, sales have more than doubled and Sean plans to bring more jobs to his home state.

## SCORE

Visit [sba.gov/score](http://sba.gov/score) to start working on your business goals. Contact your local office to schedule an appointment.

### Atlanta Chapter

Chair Sileta Hodge  
233 Peachtree St. NE, suite 300  
(404) 331-0121  
[admin.0048@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:admin.0048@scorevolunteer.org)

### Branch offices:

#### Fayetteville

The Bridge Community Center  
225 Willow Bend Road  
Peachtree City  
(678) 577-0685

#### College Park

3724 Main St.  
(404) 331-0135

### North Metro Atlanta Chapter

Co-Chairs Bill Foust and Stan Segal  
1425 Market Blvd., suite 530  
Roswell  
(678) 506-0718  
[northmetroatl@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:northmetroatl@scorevolunteer.org)

### Branch offices:

#### Cobb Chamber of Commerce

240 Interstate North Parkway  
Atlanta  
(678) 506-0718

#### Cobb Switzer Public Library

266 Roswell St.  
Marietta  
(678) 506-0718

#### Cobb Sewell Mill Public Library

2051 Lower Roswell Road  
Marietta  
(678) 506-0718

### Cumming City Hall

212 Kelly Mill Road  
Duluth City Hall  
3167 Main St.  
(678) 506-0718

### Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce

6500 Sugarloaf Parkway  
Duluth  
(678) 506-0718

### Norcross Community Center

10 College St.  
(678) 506-0718

### Snellville Garage Worx

2385 Clower St.  
(678) 506-0718

### Alpharetta-North Atlanta Bank Building

10500 Old Alabama Road Connector  
(678) 506-0718

### Roswell

1875 Old Alabama Road  
(678) 506-0718

### Dunwoody

1200 Ashwood Parkway, suite 155  
(678) 506-0718

### Columbus Chapter

Chairman Marv Lieberman  
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(706) 596-8331  
[score671@bellsouth.net](mailto:score671@bellsouth.net)

### Columbus satellite office

116 First Ave. SE  
Moultrie  
(229) 921-7303  
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Co-Chairs Leo Cortjens and Ralph NeSmith  
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Chairman Matt Mckenna  
305 Coliseum Drive  
Macon  
(478) 621-2000  
[middlegeorgia@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:middlegeorgia@scorevolunteer.org)

### Branch offices:

#### Robins Regional Chamber of Commerce

1228 Watson Blvd.  
Warner Robins  
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**New Town Macon**

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Macon  
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middlegeorgia@scorevolunteer.org

**Savannah Chapter**

Chairman Michael Siegel  
111 E. Liberty St., suite 103  
(912) 652-4335  
info@scoresav70@gmail.com

**Branch offices:**

**Hinesville Chamber of Commerce**

112 N. Main St.  
(912) 368-4445

**Statesboro Business Innovation Group**

58 E. Main St.  
(912) 478-0872

**Brunswick Chamber of Commerce**

1505 Richmond St.  
(912) 265-0620

# Small Business Development Centers

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**Athens**

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(229) 420-1144

**Augusta**

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**Columbus**

Cunningham Conference Center  
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(706) 569-2651

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# Women's Business Centers

**ACE Women's Business Center**

Director Sandra Font  
10 College St. NW  
Norcross  
(678) 335-5600 x3  
acewbc@aceloans.org

**The EDGE Connection Women's Business Center**

Director Dr. Cindy Milligan  
975 Cobb Place Blvd.  
Kennesaw  
(770) 694-6593  
info@theedgeconnection.com

# Veterans Business Outreach Center

**Georgia Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center (VECTR)**

1001 S. Armed Forces Blvd.  
Warner Robins  
(478) 218-3900  
gavectr.org



# Your Advocates

The SBA's offices of advocacy and ombudsman are independent voices for small business within the federal government.

## Advocacy

When you need a voice within the federal government for your interests as a small business owner, the SBA's regional advocates are here to assist. The advocates analyze the effects of proposed regulations and consider alternatives that minimize the economic burden on small businesses, governmental jurisdictions, and nonprofits. Find your regional advocate at [sba.gov/advocacy](https://sba.gov/advocacy).

### Your advocate helps with these small business issues:

- » if your business could be negatively affected by regulations proposed by the government
- » if you have contracting issues with a federal agency

- » when you need economic and small business statistics
- The SBA's Office of Advocacy also independently represents small business and advances its concerns before Congress, the White House, federal agencies, federal courts, and state policy makers.

## Ombudsman

Entrepreneurs who have an issue with an existing federal regulation or policy can receive assistance from the SBA's national ombudsman.

### The ombudsman's office helps you:

- » resolve regulatory disputes with federal agencies
- » reduce unfair penalties and fines

To report how a proposed federal regulation could unfairly affect you, find your regional SBA advocate at [sba.gov/advocacy](https://sba.gov/advocacy).

To submit a comment about how your business has been hurt by an existing regulation, visit [sba.gov/ombudsman/comments](https://sba.gov/ombudsman/comments)

- » seek remedies when rules are inconsistently applied
- » recover payment for services done by government contractors

Make your voice heard by participating in a Regional Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Roundtable or a public hearing hosted by the SBA's national ombudsman. These events are posted periodically on the ombudsman website, [sba.gov/ombudsman](https://sba.gov/ombudsman).

To submit a comment or complaint through the online form, visit [sba.gov/ombudsman/comments](https://sba.gov/ombudsman/comments). Your concerns will be directed to the appropriate federal agency for review. The SBA will collaborate with you and the agency to help resolve the issue.



Labriah “Bree” Holt founded Sweetroots Hair Bar for women with textured hair, using only plant-based, nontoxic products, and socially conscious brands. After securing an SBA-backed 7(a) loan, she was able to buy and renovate a historic Atlanta building. She employs five and regularly brings on local interns and apprentices to learn from her small business success.

COURTESY OF SWEETROOTS

# How to Start a Business in Georgia

Thinking of starting a business? Here are the nuts & bolts.

## The Startup Logistics

Even if you’re running a home-based business, you will have to comply with many local, state, and federal regulations. Do not ignore regulatory details. You may avoid some red tape in the beginning, but your lack of compliance could become an obstacle as your business grows. Taking the time to research regulations is as important as knowing your market. Carefully investigate the laws affecting your industry. Being out of compliance could leave you unprotected legally, lead to expensive penalties, and jeopardize your business.

## Market Research

Need to do research on your clients and location? View consumer and business data for your area using the Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition, <https://cbb.census.gov/sbe>. Filter your search by business type and location to view data on your potential customers, including consumer spending, and a summary of existing businesses, available as a map and a report.

## Business License & Zoning

Licenses are typically administered by a variety of state and local departments. It is important to consider zoning regulations when choosing a site for your business. Contact the local business license office where you plan to locate your business. You may not be permitted to conduct business out of your home or engage in industrial activity in a retail district.

Businesses involved in food processing or grocery sales need a food sales establishment license from the Georgia Department of Agriculture. An inspection is also required and may be requested by phone. Help can be obtained from the Department of Agriculture in preparing for the inspection. It is advised that business owners contact the department before investing in any renovations, equipment or plans.

- » **Georgia Department of Agriculture**  
Consumer Protection & Food Safety Division  
19 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Agriculture Building, room 306  
Atlanta  
(404) 656-3627  
[agr.georgia.gov](http://agr.georgia.gov)

## Name Registration

Register your business name with the county clerk where your business is located. If you're a corporation, also register with the state at [sos.ga.gov](https://sos.ga.gov).

## Taxes

As a business owner, you should know your federal tax responsibilities and make some business decisions to comply with certain tax requirements. The IRS Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center, [go.usa.gov/xPxYR](https://go.usa.gov/xPxYR), offers information on a variety of topics including: obtaining an Employer Identification Number, paying and filing income tax, virtual workshops, forms, and publications.

As the IRS continues to implement some of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act provisions, your tax obligations may change. Visit the Tax Reform Provisions that Affect Businesses page on [irs.gov](https://irs.gov) for the latest tax reform updates that affect your bottom line.

### » IRS Tax Assistance Centers

Atlanta  
Koger  
2888 Woodcock Blvd.  
(404) 338-7962

Summit Building  
401 W. Peachtree St. NW  
(404) 338-7962

## State Taxes

In Georgia, there is a 5% sales and use tax which applies to the retail purchase, retail sale, rental, storage, use or consumption of tangible personal property and certain services. There are exemptions on some sales taxes that cover prescription drugs, eyeglasses and contact lenses. Some counties have local option sales and use taxes to pay for certain projects. Please check with your local county officials on these taxes.

A sales tax number is required for each business before opening. The number plus instructions for collection, reporting and remitting the money to the state on a monthly basis can be obtained from the Georgia Department of Revenue.

### » Sales and Use Tax Division

1800 Century Center Blvd. NE, suite 8214  
Atlanta  
(877) 423-6711  
[dor.ga.gov](https://dor.ga.gov)

## Social Security

If you have any employees, including officers of a corporation but not the sole proprietor or partners, you must make periodic payments, and/or file quarterly reports about payroll taxes and other mandatory deductions. You can contact the IRS or the Social Security Administration for information, assistance, and forms, at (800) 772-1213 or visit [socialsecurity.gov/employer](https://socialsecurity.gov/employer). You can file W-2s online or verify job seekers through the Social Security Number Verification Service.

## Employment Eligibility Verification

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires employers to verify employment eligibility of

new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service offers information and assistance through [uscis.gov/i-9-central](https://uscis.gov/i-9-central). For forms call (800) 870-3676. For the employer hotline call (888) 464-4218 or email [I-9central@dhs.gov](mailto:I-9central@dhs.gov).

E-Verify, operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration, electronically verifies the Social Security number and employment eligibility information reported on Form I-9. It's the quickest way for employers to determine the employment eligibility of new hires. Visit [e-verify.gov](https://e-verify.gov), call (888) 464-4218 or email [e-verify@dhs.gov](mailto:e-verify@dhs.gov).

## Health & Safety

All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees, visit [dol.gov](https://dol.gov) for information. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides information on the specific health and safety standards used by the U.S. Department of Labor. Call (800) 321-6742 or visit [osha.gov](https://osha.gov).

### » DOL Wage and Hour Division

61 Forsyth St. SW  
Atlanta  
(404) 893-4600

### » OSHA Area Offices

Atlanta East  
LaVista Perimeter office Park  
2183 N. Lake Parkway, building 7, suite 110  
  
Tucker  
(770) 493-6644

Atlanta West  
1995 N. Park Place SE, suite 525  
(678) 903-7301

Savannah  
450 Mall Blvd., suite J  
(912) 652-4393

Employers who want to establish a new business in Georgia must fill out an Employer Status Report with the Georgia Department of Labor. All employers must file quarterly reports reporting salaries and wages of employees.

### » Georgia Department of Labor Employer Accounts Office

(404) 232-3220

## Employee Insurance

Check with your state laws to see if you are required to provide unemployment or workers' compensation insurance for your employees. For health insurance options, call the Small Business Health Options Program at (800) 706-7893 or visit [healthcare.gov/small-businesses/employers](https://healthcare.gov/small-businesses/employers).

Department of Labor Association Health Plans allow small businesses, including self-employed workers, to band together by geography or industry to obtain healthcare coverage as if they were a single large employer. For information, visit [dol.gov/general/topic/association-health-plans](https://dol.gov/general/topic/association-health-plans).

» **State Board of Workers' Compensation**

270 Peachtree St. NW  
Atlanta  
(404) 656-3875

**sbwc.georgia.gov**

If you hire employees you may be required to provide unemployment insurance.

» **Georgia Department of Labor**

Adjudication Section, Sussex Place  
148 International Blvd. NE, suite 850  
Atlanta  
(404) 232-3180

**dol.state.ga.us**

## Environmental Regulations

State assistance is available for small businesses that must comply with environmental regulations under the Clean Air Act. State Small Business Environmental Assistance programs provide free and confidential assistance to help small business owners understand and comply with complex environmental regulations and permitting requirements. These state programs can help businesses reduce emissions at the source, often reducing regulatory burden and saving you money. To learn more about these free services visit [nationalsbeap.org/states/list](http://nationalsbeap.org/states/list).

» **Georgia Environmental Protection Division**

2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, suite 1152  
Atlanta  
(404) 656-4713 or toll free (888) 373-5947  
**gaepd.org**

For environmental questions, contact an EPD office:

Cartersville (770) 387-4900  
Brunswick (912) 264-7284  
Atlanta (404) 362-2671  
Athens (706) 369-6376  
Augusta (706) 667-4343  
Macon (478) 751-6612  
Albany (229) 430-4144

## Accessibility and ADA Compliance

For assistance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, call the ADA Center at (800) 949-4232 or the Department of Justice at (800) 514-0301. Direct questions about accessible design and the ADA standards to the U.S. Access Board at (800) 872-2253, TTY (800) 993-2822, [ta@access-board.gov](mailto:ta@access-board.gov) or visit [access-board.gov](http://access-board.gov).

## Child Support

Employers are essential to the success of the child support program and are responsible for collecting 75% of support nationwide through payroll deductions. The Office of Child Support Enforcement at Health and Human Services offers employers step-by-step instructions for processing income withholding orders for child support. Download the fact sheet about the Employer's Role in the Child Support Program at the Office of Child Support Enforcement's website at [acf.hhs.gov/programs/css](http://acf.hhs.gov/programs/css) > **employer responsibilities**. You can also find information about other employer responsibilities and tools that can make meeting those responsibilities easier, such as electronic income withholding orders and the Child Support Portal. Send questions to [employerservices@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:employerservices@acf.hhs.gov).

## Intellectual Property

Patents, trademarks, and copyrights are types of intellectual property that serve to protect creations and innovations. The United States Patent and Trademark Office is the federal agency that grants U.S. patents and registers trademarks. For information and resources about U.S. patents and federally registered trademarks consult [uspto.gov](http://uspto.gov). Call the patent and trademark office help center at (800) 786-9199 or visit U.S. Patent and Trademark headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia.

A patent for an invention is the grant of a property right to an inventor, issued by the U.S. patent office. The right conferred by the patent grant is the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention in the United States or importing the invention into the country. For information visit [uspto.gov/inventors](http://uspto.gov/inventors).

There are three types of patents:

- Utility patents may be granted to anyone who invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement.
- Design patents may be granted to anyone who invents a new, original, and ornamental design for an article of manufacture.
- Plant patents may be granted to anyone who invents or discovers and asexually reproduces any distinct and new variety of plant, other than a tuber propagated plant or a plant found in an uncultivated state.

A trademark or service mark includes any word, name, symbol, device, or any combination, used or intended to be used to identify and distinguish the goods/services of one seller or provider from those of others and to indicate the source of the goods/services. Trademarks and service marks may be registered at both the state and federal level. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office only registers federal trademarks and service marks. Federally registered trademarks may conflict with and supersede those registered only at the state level. Visit [uspto.gov/trademarks](http://uspto.gov/trademarks).

» **State Registration**

## » Special Services Division

Secretary of State Corporations Division

Floyd Building

2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, suite 313 Floyd West Tower

Atlanta

(404) 656-2817

**sos.ga.gov**

Copyrights protect original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical and artistic, and certain other intellectual works. Copyrights do not protect facts, ideas, and systems, although they may protect the way they are expressed.

For general information contact:

» **U.S. Copyright Office**

U.S. Library of Congress

James Madison Memorial Building

101 Independence Ave. SE

Washington, DC

(202) 707-3000 or toll free (877) 476-0778

**copyright.gov**



Reeves Clippard used the business knowledge he acquired in the SBA Emerging Leaders program to grow A/R Solar in Seattle, WA.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

## Chambers of Commerce

### Georgia Chamber

270 Peachtree St. NW  
Atlanta  
(404) 223-2264  
[gachamber.com](http://gachamber.com)

### Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

(404) 312-0524  
[gacce.org](http://gacce.org)

## Economic Development

### Advanced Technology Development Center

Atlanta (404) 894-3575  
Savannah (912) 963-2519  
[atdc.org](http://atdc.org)

### Dekalb Microenterprise Alliance

(678) 904-3465

### Georgia Regional Commissions Atlanta

(404) 463-3100  
[atlantaregional.com](http://atlantaregional.com)

### Central Savannah River area

(706) 210-2000  
[csrarc.ga.gov](http://csrarc.ga.gov)

### Coastal

(912) 262-2800  
[crc.ga.gov](http://crc.ga.gov)

### Georgia mountains

(770) 538-2626  
[gmrc.ga.gov](http://gmrc.ga.gov)

### Heart of Georgia-Altamaha

(912) 367-3648  
[hogarc.org](http://hogarc.org)

### Middle Georgia

(478) 751-6160  
[middlegeorgiarc.org](http://middlegeorgiarc.org)

### Northeast Georgia

(706) 369-5650  
[negrcc.org](http://negrcc.org)

### Northwest Georgia

(706) 272-2300  
[nwgrcc.org](http://nwgrcc.org)

### River Valley

(706) 256-2910  
[rivervalleyrc.org](http://rivervalleyrc.org)

### Southern Georgia

(229) 333-5277  
[sgrc.us](http://sgrc.us)

### Southwest Georgia

(229) 522-3552  
[swgrc.org](http://swgrc.org)

### Georgia Micro Enterprise Network

(678) 515-3346  
[georgiamicrobiz.com](http://georgiamicrobiz.com)

### Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute

(404) 894-2222  
[innovate.gatech.edu](http://innovate.gatech.edu)

### Minority Business Development Agency Business Center

(404) 894-2096  
[mbdabusinesscenter-atlanta.org](http://mbdabusinesscenter-atlanta.org)

### Invest Atlanta

(404) 880-4100  
[investatlanta.com](http://investatlanta.com)

### South Metro Microenterprise Coalition

(678) 519-4404

# How Do I Find an EIN?



No doubt, there are probably quite a few regulatory and administrative items on your new business checklist, like getting a permit and registering your business name.

One of the key requirements for most new businesses (or businesses that are restructuring) is obtaining an Employer Identification Number, or EIN, from the IRS.

Here's what you need to know about EINs and how to go about getting one for your business.

## What is an EIN?

An EIN is a unique nine-digit number that identifies your business for tax purposes. Think of it as the business equivalent of a social security number (although it shouldn't be used in place of it).

As a business owner, you'll need an EIN to open a business bank account, apply for business licenses, and file your tax returns. It's a good idea to apply for one as soon as you start planning your business. This will ensure there are no delays in getting the appropriate licenses or financing that you need to operate.

## Who needs an EIN?

An EIN is needed by any business that retains employees. However, non employees are also required to obtain one if they operate as a corporation or partnership.

Answering yes to any of the questions in the list on the right means you need one for your business.

## How to apply for an EIN

The easiest way to apply for your EIN is online via the IRS EIN Assistant. As soon as your application is complete and validated, you'll be issued an EIN. There is no charge for this service (beware of internet scams that will try to sell you their EIN application services).

You can also apply by mail or fax using Form SS-4, available at [irs.gov/formss4](https://www.irs.gov/formss4).

## Changing your business structure? Get a new EIN

As your business grows and matures, you may choose to change its legal or ownership structure. For example, a sole proprietor may decide to incorporate, or a partnership may be taken over by one of the owners to then operate as a sole proprietorship. In instances such as these, your business will need a new EIN.

There are other scenarios that require a new EIN, such as bankruptcy, a change in a corporation's name or location, or reorganization of a corporation. Check out "Do You Need a New EIN" on [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

## Using your EIN to make tax deposits

If you have employees, you will have been automatically enrolled in the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System ([eftps.gov](https://eftps.gov)) when you applied for your EIN. This allows you to make tax deposits, including federal employment and corporate taxes, online or by phone.

## Lost your EIN?

If you lost or misplaced your EIN, you can retrieve it in the following ways:

- Reference the original notice issued by the IRS when you received your EIN, or call the IRS Business & Specialty Tax Line at (800) 829-4933.
- If you used it to open a bank account or get a license, contact these

## Not sure whether you need an EIN?

Check out this guide from the IRS. **Answering yes to any of the questions in the list means you need one for your business.**

### Do you have employees?

YES  NO

### Do you operate your business as a corporation or a partnership?

YES  NO

### Do you file any of these tax returns: employment, excise, or alcohol, tobacco and firearms?

YES  NO

### Do you withhold taxes on income, other than wages, paid to a non-resident alien?

YES  NO

### Do you have a Keogh plan?

YES  NO

### Are you involved with any of the following types of organizations?

- Trusts, except certain grantor-owned revocable trusts, IRAs, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Returns
- Estates
- Real estate mortgage investment conduits
- Nonprofit organizations
- Farmers' cooperatives
- Plan administrators

YES  NO

organizations. They should be able to retrieve your number.

- Find an old tax return. Your EIN should be on it.

WRITTEN BY **Caron Beesley**, CONTRIBUTOR



COURTESY OF LIFEHEALTH

## ▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Margot Adam Langstaff, left, and Elisa Hamill, right, sought assistance from their local Veterans Business Outreach Center, which helped them better compete for government contracts. LifeHealth of Littleton, CO has expanded to more than 30 states with offices in Washington, DC and San Antonio, TX. Their clients include the Department of Defense, the National Guard, and the Indian Health Service. They also expanded their business using an SBA-backed line of credit for \$350,000. Margot started her career as an Army medic, eventually running one of the largest outpatient clinics in the Northeast at Ft. Devens, MA.

# Opportunities for Veterans

Members of the military community can start and grow their small businesses with the help of SBA programs.

### Need entrepreneurship training?

In Boots to Business, you explore business ownership and other self-employment opportunities while learning key business concepts. You will walk away with an overview of entrepreneurship and applicable business ownership fundamentals, including how to access startup capital using SBA resources. Boots to Business is conducted on all military installations as part of the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program.

### Who's eligible?

Service members transitioning out of active duty and military spouses. Are you a veteran or member of the National Guard or Reserve or a military spouse? Boots to Business: Reboot teaches this entrepreneurship curriculum off base and in local communities. Register for either B2B program at <https://sbavets.force.com>.

### For women veterans

Receive entrepreneurial training geared toward women veterans, service members, and spouses of service members through these SBA-funded programs:

- » Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship in Syracuse, New York
- » LiftFund in San Antonio, Texas

### For service-disabled veterans

Learn how to start and grow a small business using these SBA-funded programs:

- » Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities in Syracuse, New York
- » Veterans Entrepreneurship Program at the Riata Center for Entrepreneurship, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma
- » Veteran Entrepreneurship Jumpstart at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- » Dog Tag Inc., affiliated with Georgetown University in Washington, DC

### Need financing?

#### Loan Fee Relief

To encourage lending to members of the military community who want to start or grow their business, the SBA reduces upfront guarantee fees on select loans. That means the cost savings will be passed down to you, the eligible veteran or qualifying military member. Ask your local SBA district office or SBA Lender about the Veterans Advantage program.

#### Have an employee who was called to active duty?

You may receive funds that enable your business to meet ordinary and necessary operating expenses when an essential employee is called up to active duty in the military reserve. Ask your local SBA district office or SBA Lender about the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

### Interested in contracting?

Veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses interested in federal contracting receive training from the Veteran Institute for Procurement, which offers a platform with three training programs to assist veterans. Visit [nationalvip.org](http://nationalvip.org).

#### VIP Start

Enter the federal market and become ready for procurement. Nearly 200 veteran-owned businesses from 29 states plus Washington, DC have graduated from the program.

#### VIP Grow

Strategize to expand and operate within the federal marketplace. More than 700 veteran-owned businesses from 42 states plus DC and Guam have graduated from this program.

#### VIP International

Enter or expand your federal and commercial contracting opportunities overseas.

#### Get certified

Learn about the service-disabled veteran-owned small business certification program on page 65.

### For more assistance

Veteran and military entrepreneurs receive business training, counseling, and referrals to other SBA Resource Partners at a Veterans Business Outreach Center, [sba.gov/vboc](http://sba.gov/vboc). For veterans business information visit [sba.gov/veterans](http://sba.gov/veterans).

# Entrepreneurial Opportunities

## Regional Innovation Clusters

Create jobs and grow the economy through an SBA Regional Innovation Cluster.

### Who should join

Small businesses driving innovation in one of these tech industries:

- advanced composites
- agTech
- bioscience
- food processing
- data sciences
- medical sciences
- power and energy
- unmanned aerial systems
- water tech
- wood products

### How it works

Each industry cluster is based in a geographic region. Your small business must be located in or near that region in order to join the cluster. For example, the AgLaunch Initiative cluster, which focuses on agricultural technology, is located in the Tennessee area. A small agTech business in or near Tennessee will connect with other agTech suppliers, service providers, and related institutions through that innovation cluster.

### How it benefits you

Network with other industry innovators and connect with resources that will help your small business find funding. You'll also receive guidance on how to better compete for government contracts and other opportunities so you can grow and expand. Receive free technical and legal assistance to develop your tech and get it to market for government and industry buyers.

### Get involved

Find an SBA Regional Innovation Cluster near you by visiting [sba.gov/localassistance](https://www.sba.gov/localassistance). Select the regional innovation clusters on the drop-down menu.

## Online Resources

Find free short courses and learning tools to start and grow your small business at [sba.gov/learning](https://www.sba.gov/learning). The free SBA Online Learning Center is a great resource for every entrepreneur, especially rural business owners looking for easy access to vital business training.



### Courses include:

- writing your business plan
- buying a business
- financing options
- digital and traditional marketing to win customers
- disaster recovery
- understanding your customer

## Native American Workshops

Tribal enterprises and business organizations can receive training at an SBA Entrepreneurial Empowerment Workshop. These workshops cover business concepts important for starting, growing, or expanding a small business. RedWind instructors identify and help participants avoid common pitfalls. Learn how to prepare a business plan, gain access to capital, and basic book keeping. Request a workshop in your area by visiting [nativesmallbusiness.org](https://www.nativesmallbusiness.org).

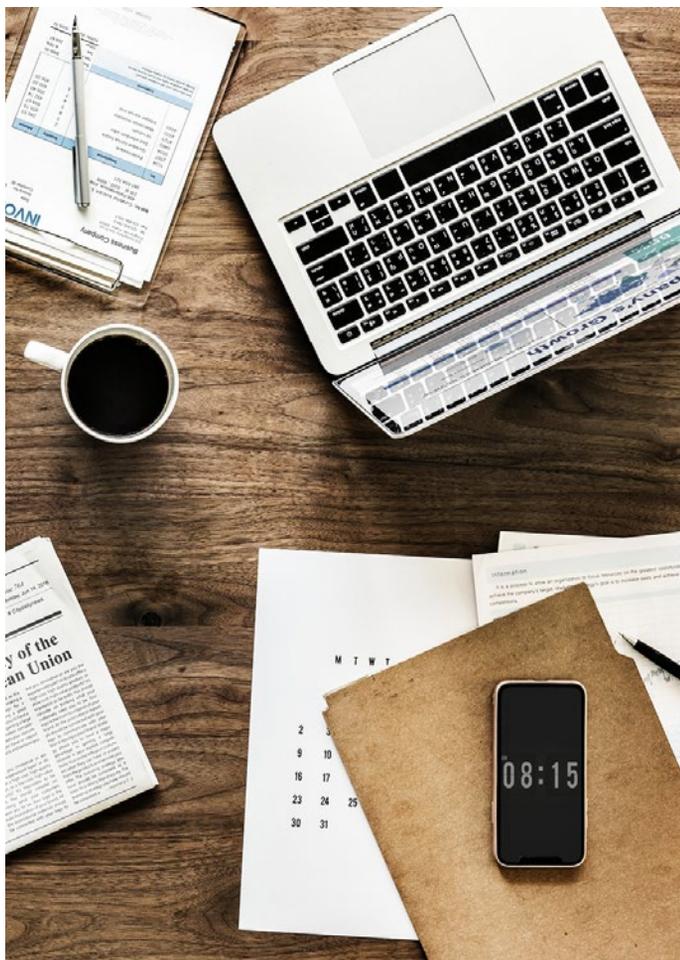
# SBA Regional Innovation Clusters



- 1** Autonomous & Unmanned Systems Cluster – Emerging Tech Ventures
- 2** The Ozarks Cluster – Startup Junkie (Industry focus: Food processing, supply chain, & logistics)
- 3** The Water Council Cluster
- 4** Marine Industry Science & Technology Cluster
- 5** BioSTL: St. Louis Biosciences Cluster
- 6** Oklahoma-South Kansas Unmanned Aerial Systems Cluster
- 7** The Appalachian Ohio Wood Products Cluster
- 8** Conductor RIC in Healthcare, Education & Data/Decision Sciences – Startup Junkie Consulting
- 9** Integrative Business Services Inc. (Industry focus: Optics)
- 10** Great Plains Technology & Manufacturing Cluster
- 11** Montana Bioscience Cluster – Montana Technology Enterprise Center
- 12** AgLaunch Initiative
- 13** Utah Advanced Material Manufacturing Initiative
- 14** Defense Alliance - LSI Business Development Inc. (Industry focus: Advanced Power and Energy)

# Write your Business Plan

Your business plan is the foundation of your business. Learn how to write a business plan with the help of an SBA Resource Partner.



## Business plans help you run your business.

A good business plan guides you through managing your business. You'll use your business plan as a roadmap for how to structure, run, and grow your new business.

Business plans can help you get funding or bring on new business partners. Investors want to see a return on their investment. Your business plan is the tool you'll use to convince people that working with you—or investing in your company—is a smart investment. Brain storm with a business counselor (visit one of our SBA Resource Partners detailed on page 8) and write a **traditional business plan**, which uses a standard structure and detailed sections. Once you've got it all down, you can then condense it to a lean startup business plan, which typically contains key points on only one page.

## TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN FORMAT

When you write your business plan, you don't have to stick to the exact business plan template. Instead, use the sections that make the most sense for your business and your needs.

### Executive Summary

Briefly summarize your company and why it will be successful. Include your mission statement, your product or service, and basic information about your company's leadership team, employees, and location. You should also include financial information and high-level growth plans if you plan to ask for financing.

### Company Description

Go into detail about the problems your business solves. Be specific as to audience and location. List out the consumers, organizations, or businesses your company plans to serve.

Explain the competitive advantages you have that will make your business successful. Are there experts on your team? Have you found the perfect location? Your company description is the place to boast about your strengths.

### Market Analysis

Demonstrate a solid understanding of your industry outlook and target market. This is where it pays to partner with an experienced business counselor from your local Small Business Development Center, SCORE, Women's Business Center, or Veterans Business Outreach Center—all these SBA Resource Partners provide free or low-cost business assistance. Competitive research will show what other businesses are doing and their strengths. In your market research, look for trends and themes. What do successful competitors do? Why does it work? Can you do it better? Now's the time to answer these questions.

### Organization and Management

Explain how your company will be structured and who will run it.

Describe the legal structure of your business. State whether you have or intend to incorporate your business as a C or an S corporation, form a general or limited partnership, or if you're a sole proprietor or limited liability company.

Want to see an example of a business plan?

View examples of business plans at [sba.gov/business-guide/plan/write-your-business-plan-template](https://sba.gov/business-guide/plan/write-your-business-plan-template)

## TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN CHECKLIST

- Executive summary
- Company description
- Market analysis
- Organization and management
- Service or product line
- Marketing and sales
- Funding request
- Financial projections
- Appendix

Use an organizational chart to show the hierarchy. Explain how each person's experience will contribute to the success of your venture. Consider including CVs of key members.

### Service or Product Line

Describe what you sell or what service you offer. Explain how it benefits your customers and the product lifecycle. Share your plans for intellectual property, like copyright or patent filings. If you're doing research and development for your service or product, explain it.

### Marketing and Sales

Your marketing strategy should evolve and change to fit your needs in each context.

Describe how you'll attract and retain customers. Show how a sale will actually happen. You'll refer to this section later when you make financial projections, so be thorough.

### Funding Request

If you're asking for funding, outline your funding requirements. Specify whether you want debt or equity and the terms you'd like. Your goal is to clearly explain how much funding you'll need over the next five years and how the investment will be used.

Specify if you need funds to buy equipment or materials, pay salaries, or cover specific bills until revenue increases. Explain how you'll pay off the debt.

### Financial Projections

Supplement your funding request with a prospective financial outlook for the next five years. Show how your business will be a financial success.

If your business is already established, include income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements for the last three to five years. List collateral you could put against a loan.

Include forecasted income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets. For the first year, be even more specific and use quarterly—or even monthly—projections. Make sure to clearly explain your projections and match them to your funding requests.

Use visual organization tools—graphs and charts—to tell your business's financial story.

### Appendix

Here you'll attach supporting documents or other requested materials. Common items to include are credit histories, CVs, product pictures, letters of reference, licenses, permits, patents, legal documents, and other contracts.

## LEAN STARTUP PLAN FORMAT

Write a lean startup plan if requested from an investor, or if your business is relatively simple or you plan to regularly change and refine as you go.

Lean startup plans use more visual organization tools and only a handful of elements to describe your company's value proposition, infrastructure, customers, and finances. They're useful for visualizing your company's fundamental facts. Your business counselor can help you edit down into the Business Model Canvas, used here—the most well known style, or another lean startup template.

### Key Partnerships

Note the other businesses you'll work with—suppliers, manufacturers, subcontractors, and similar strategic partners.

### Key Activities

List the ways your business will gain a competitive advantage. Will you sell direct to consumers or use technology to tap into the sharing economy?

### Key Resources

List resources you'll leverage to create value for your customer. Your most important assets include staff, capital, or intellectual property. Leverage business resources that might be available to women, veterans, Native Americans, and HUBZone-certified businesses.

### Value Proposition

Make a clear and compelling statement about the unique value your company brings to the market.

### Customer Relationships

Describe how customers will interact with your business. Think through the customer experience from start to finish. Is it automated or personal? In person or online?

### Customer Segments

Name your target market. Your business won't be for everybody; it's important to have a clear sense of who you serve.

### Channels

List the most important ways you'll talk to your customers.

### Cost Structure

Will your company focus on reducing cost or maximizing value? Define your strategy, then list the most significant costs you'll face.

### Revenue Streams

Explain how your company makes money: direct sales, memberships fees, selling advertising space? If your company has multiple revenue streams, list them all.

## LEAN STARTUP PLAN CHECKLIST

- Key partnerships
- Key activities
- Key resources
- Value proposition
- Customer relationships
- Customer segments
- Channels
- Cost structure
- Revenue streams

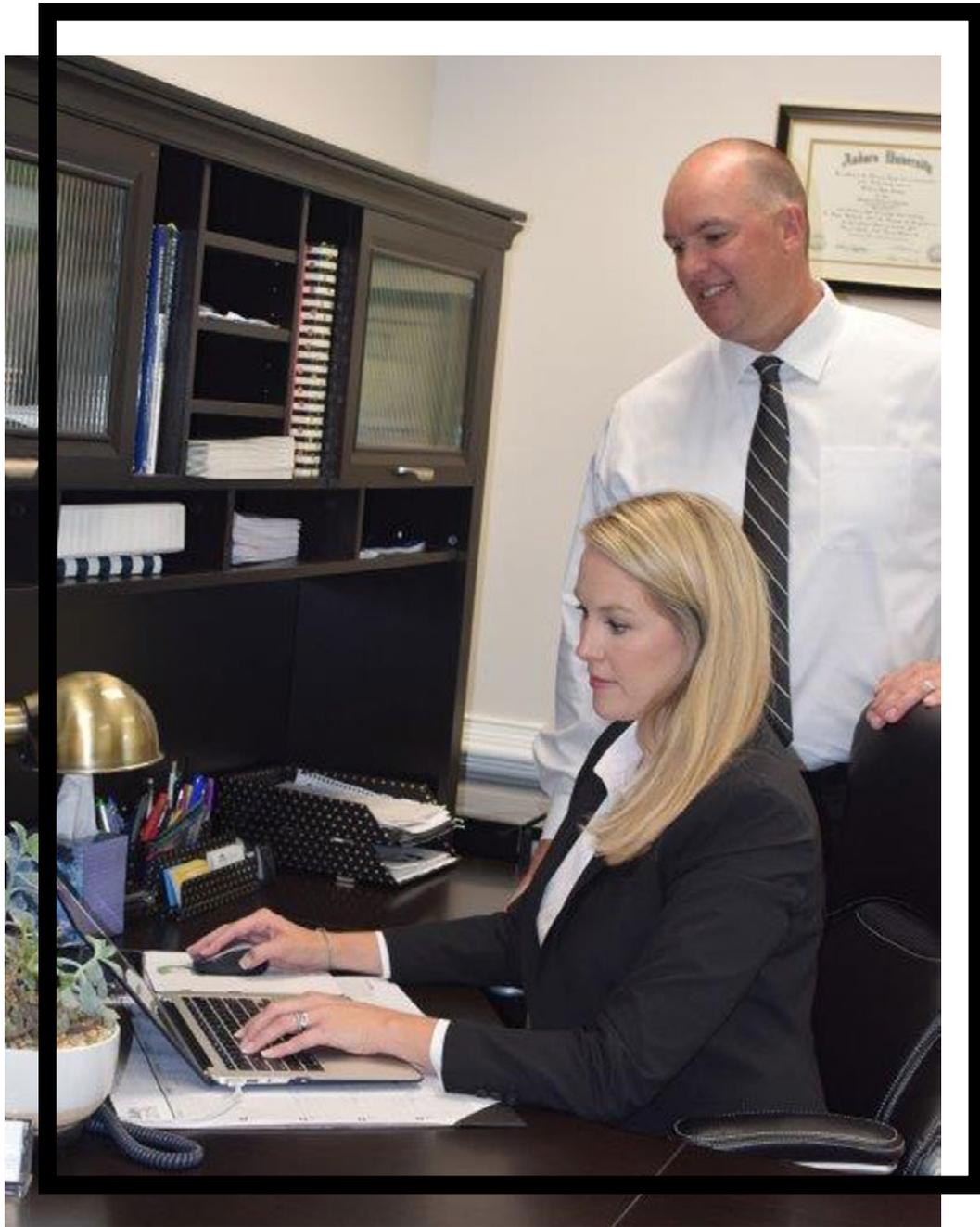
# Becky & Jeff Lamont

PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, PATHWAYS BEHAVIORAL CONSULTING

*Atlanta, GA*

**When it came time for Becky and Jeff Lamont to grow their own small business, they turned to the SBA.** Pathways Behavioral Consulting, an applied behavioral analysis therapy clinic for special needs children, has grown from one center in Atlanta to a network of clinics across Georgia. The Lamonts continue to seek business guidance from their local Small Business Development Center, an SBA Resource Partner.

- **What challenge did you have?** I'm confident in my clinical and educational experience, but when it came to starting a business, Jeff and I needed help. I have a bachelor's degree from Auburn University and a master's degree in early childhood development from Vanderbilt University. I worked as a special education teacher and program manager in Virginia and Georgia. I knew that Pathways was a way for me to continue to serve children. I knew it was also our next step as a family. Both Jeff and I wanted the opportunity to work together on our entrepreneurial dream, but we needed the business counseling to get us there.
- **What was the SBA solution?** We found the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center in Lawrenceville. Our SBDC business adviser helped us develop business and marketing plans, financial projections, and a human resources structure. SBA Resource Partners across the state offer mentoring, counseling, and training for free or low cost to help entrepreneurs like us thrive. It wasn't long before we recognized that we needed a strategy for growth as well.
- **What benefit did this have for you?** Pathways has grown to over 70 employees with three locations. We offer full employee benefits and opportunities for advancement. Without the help we received from the SBDC, our company would not be here. Our long-term vision is to work with our SBA Georgia District Office and SBDC to learn how to expand our brand services across Georgia and beyond.



“

**SBA Resource Partners across the state offer mentoring, counseling, and training for free or low cost to help entrepreneurs like us thrive.”**

**Becky & Jeff Lamont**

President & Director of Operations, Pathways Behavioral Consulting

# FUNDING PROGRAMS

Financing Your Small Business



How We Did It

## Crafting a Business

SBA-backed financing helped Superstition Meadery expand into a multimillion dollar enterprise.

WRITTEN BY BECKY BOSSHART

**J**ennifer and Jeff Herbert's home-based brewing has expanded into a global, multimillion dollar enterprise thanks to SBA assistance. Using Arizona honey and ingredients they've sourced from around the world (such as Tahitian vanilla and Moroccan saffron), the Herberts are selling nearly 30,000 gallons annually of their honey-based fermented beverage. They operate a downtown Prescott, Arizona tasting room and state-of-the-art production facility, creating jobs and building a local craft industry. The Herberts, founding members of the American Mead Makers Association, have traveled around the world hosting pairing events and pouring at craft beverage festivals.

### Challenge

The Herberts wanted to scale up their meadery while also staying true to their values of quality ingredients and craft process. It is often difficult for new entrepreneurs or unique concepts like a meadery to get traditional financing, even though they knew they had a great idea, the backing wasn't there to expand. They say that choosing to do something new breaks the mold, which can be uncomfortable for traditional lenders.

### Solution

Thanks to guidance from an SBA Resource Partner, the Small Business Development Center at Yavapai Community College, Jennifer and Jeff learned about financing that worked for them. The SBA guarantees loans made by lending institutions to small business that would not otherwise be able to obtain financing. Their small business qualified for two SBA-backed loans totaling more than \$600,000. The Herberts' first SBA-backed loan allowed them to acquire commercial property to design and build their mead production facility. Their second SBA-backed loan provided the funding for professional brewing equipment to complete their 7,450-square-foot production space. The Herberts recently purchased a historic building in downtown Phoenix, Arizona to open a mead-pairing restaurant.

### Benefit

The Herberts started with two employees and now have over 20 producing 29,000 gallons this year. From a homegrown setup, Jennifer and Jeff are now charting revenue in excess of \$2.6 million and distributing to 37 states, across Europe and Southeast Asia. They have plans for another expansion, including a shipping warehouse to manage their online retail and wholesale orders. 



COURTESY OF SUPERSTITION MEADERY

Jeff & Jennifer Herbert, owners of Superstition Meadery, completed their 7,450-square-foot production space and opened a tasting room in Prescott, AZ with the assistance of SBA-backed financing. See their story on YouTube by searching for the 2019 National Small Business Persons of the Year.

# 5 Tips for Success

## Get guidance.

Develop a working relationship with an SBA Resource Partner (see page 8) to help you find the funding that works best for you.

## Define your lending needs.

Determine if a loan is right for you. Is this the right time? How much do you need? What are you going to use it for?

## Talk to multiple lenders.

See who best matches you and your business. Has the lender successfully worked with other businesses in your industry?

## Check all options.

Consult with your lender to see if you're eligible for SBA financing programs, determined by your industry & experience; collateral; credit score; and the relationship & transparency you develop with the lending agent.

## Be ready for the ups and downs.

Your entrepreneurial endeavor will be a roller coaster ride filled with challenges and successes. The path is all consuming so make sure that you love what you do. Passion is the price of admission.

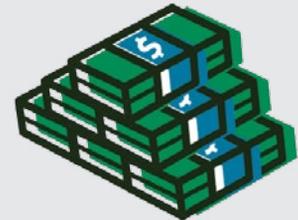
# Lender Match

Find a lender interested in working with you at [sba.gov/lendermatch](http://sba.gov/lendermatch). This matching tool connects entrepreneurs with SBA Lenders in your area.



# SBA-backed Loans

help small business owners and entrepreneurs who are creditworthy but don't qualify for conventional financing. If you cannot obtain a business loan with reasonable rates and terms, contact your local SBA Lender to see if you are eligible for SBA programs. The SBA works with participating lenders to reduce their risk, increasing the likelihood your loan will be approved with the terms that work best for you. The guarantee is conditional on the lender following SBA program requirements. Just like with any other loan, you make your loan payments directly to your lender in accordance with your terms.




## Banking With WALLISBANK

Exceptional Personalized Service | Unsurpassed Customer Satisfaction

**DEPOSIT PRODUCTS**

- Checking & Savings
- Money Market Accounts
- Certificates of Deposit
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**LOAN SERVICES\***

- Personal Loans
- Auto Loans

**ONLINE ASSISTANCE**

- Online Banking & Bill Pay
- Mobile App
- Financial Calculators
- E-Statements

**CONTACT US**

404.439.0110 | 1710 Mount Vernon Rd, Dunwoody, GA 30338 | [wallisbank.com](http://wallisbank.com)

WALLISBANK  

\*Offer is subject to credit approval.

At Wallis Bank our services are built for you with customer service as our main priority.

This is Banking Made Easy.




## GROW YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

with a SBA 504 Loan from GSBC, one of the Southeast's largest CDCs!

Call **404-373-8601** or visit [ga504.com](http://ga504.com) to learn more!

## Ideal Financing for Small Business:



- UP TO 90% FINANCING**
- OWNER OCCUPIED REAL ESTATE & FIXED ASSET FINANCING**
- BELOW MARKET LONG TERM FIXED RATES 10-YR / 20-YR / 25-YR**
- ABILITY TO FINANCE MAJORITY OF CLOSING COSTS**



**Cory Stewart**  
SVP, Regional Sales Executive  
[cory@ga504.com](mailto:cory@ga504.com)



**JT Nix**  
Brokerage Relationship Mgr.  
[jt@ga504.com](mailto:jt@ga504.com)

# SBA Lenders

Our participating SBA Lenders serve all small businesses in Georgia. To find more bank locations, contact the lender.

## ALPHARETTA

### PNC Bank

3815 Mansell Road, suite 150  
(678) 277-4582

### Touchmark National Bank

3651 Old Milton Parkway  
(770) 407-6717

## ATLANTA

### Ameris Bank

1201 W. Peachtree St. NW, suite 3150  
(888) 749-2435

### Atlantic Capital Bank

3280 Peachtree Road NE, suite 100  
(404) 995-6050

### BB&T

3175 Cobb Galleria Parkway, second floor  
(770) 850-3904

### Cadence Bank

1349 W. Peachtree St. NW  
(404) 266-4343

### East West Bank

3490 Shallowford Road, suite 200  
(770) 454-0416

### Fifth Third Bank

3344 Peachtree Road, suite 800  
(404) 279-4532

### Georgia Banking Co.

6190 Powers Ferry Road, suite 150  
(770) 226-8800

### Georgia Primary Bank

3880 Roswell Road  
(404) 231-4100

### Metro City Bank

5441 Buford Highway  
(770) 455-4989

### Regions Bank

1180 W. Peachtree St NW  
(800) 734-4667

## Renasant Bank

3328 Peachtree Road NE, suite 150  
(404) 386-8614

## Wallace Bank

303 Perimeter Center N., suite 300  
(404) 439-0111

## Wells Fargo Bank

360 Interstate North Parkway, fifth floor  
(678) 627-3738

## AUGUSTA

### South State Bank

1450 Walton Way  
(706) 849-0660

## BRUNSWICK

### South Coast Bank & Trust

(912) 264-8887

## CARTERSVILLE

### Northside Bank

325 Cherokee Place  
(770) 382-1777

## COVINGTON

### Pinnacle Bank

6124 Highway 278 NE  
(678) 625-8133

## CUMMING

### Synovus Bank

960 Buford Highway  
(770) 576-4471

## DORAVILLE

### First IC Bank

5593 Buford Highway  
(770) 451-7200

## DOUGLAS

### First National Bank of Coffee County

420 S. Madison Ave.  
(912) 384-1100

## DULUTH

### PromiseOne Bank

2476 Pleasant Hill Road  
(678) 385-0800

## FITZGERALD

### Colony Bank

302 S. Main St.  
(229) 426-6000 x6087

## JOHNS CREEK

### Chase Bank

5960 State Bridge Road  
(404) 553-2680

## LAGRANGE

### Community Bank & Trust West Georgia

201 Broad St.  
(866) 902-2265

## LAWRENCEVILLE

### Embassy National Bank

1817 N. Brown Road  
(770) 500-1255

## LYONS

### Peoples Bank

299 W. Liberty St.  
(912) 524-2000

## MARIETTA

### First Landmark Bank

307 N. Marietta Parkway  
(770) 792-8870

**NORCROSS**

**SunTrust**

6095 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.  
(770) 409-5691

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**SANDY SPRINGS**

**Signature Bank of Georgia**

6065 Roswell Road, suite 600  
(404) 256-7725

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**SAVANNAH**

**Carver State Bank**

701 MLK Blvd.  
(912) 233-9971

**First Chatham Bank**

111 Barnard St.  
(912) 629-2900

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**STATESBORO**

**Queensborough National Bank & Trust Co.**

201 S. Main St.  
(912) 764-9719

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**SUWANEE**

**Quantum National Bank**

505 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.  
(770) 945-8300

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**TUCKER**

**Fidelity Bank**

2255 Northlake Parkway  
(404) 553-2050

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**OUT OF STATE/MULTI-STATE LENDERS**

**Affinity Bank**

(678) 742-9990

**AgSouth Farm Credit**

(912) 367-7006

**AgGeorgia Farm Credit**

(478) 987-8300

**American Commerce Bank**

(770) 537-2265

**American Pride Bank**

(478) 922-5010

**Bank of America**

Small Business Financial Solutions  
(888) 931-5626

**Bank of Dudley**

(478) 277-1500

**Bank of Newington**

(912) 857-4466

**Bank OZK**

(800) 274-4482

**Bank of Perry**

(478) 987-2554

**Bank of Terrell**

(229) 995-4461

**BBVA Compass**

(888) 273-5363

**CBC National Bank**

(888) 699-5715

**Celtic Bank**

(877) 274-8597

**Center State Bank**

(770) 767-6500

**Citizens Trust Bank**

(404) 575-8280

**Commonwealth Business Bank**

(678) 580-5356

**Community Bank of Fitzgerald**

(229) 423-4321

**Community Bank of Pickens County**

(706) 253-9600

**Cornerstone Bank**

(678) 553-1483

**Douglas National Bank**

(912) 384-2233

**Entegra Bank**

(770)-536-0607

**First Bank of Dalton**

(706) 226-5377

**First Chatham Bank**

(912) 629-2900

**First Financial Bank**

(205) 428-8472

**First Landmark Bank**

(770) 792-8870

**FNB South**

(912) 632-7262

**Flint Community Bank**

(229) 903-1400

**FSG Bank**

(706) 295-9300

**Greater Community Bank**

(706) 295-9300

**Guardian Bank**

(229) 241-9444

**Heritage Bank**

(912) 368-3332

**Heritage Bank of the South**

(229) 878-2047

**Heritage First Bank**

(706) 378-3978

**Iberia Bank**

(678) 631-2115

**JPMorgan Chase Bank**

(203) 944-8515

**LGE Community Credit Union**

(770) 423-2486

**Live Oak Banking Co.**

(910) 790-5867

**Morris Bank**

(478) 272-5202

**Navy Federal Credit Union**

(888) 842-6328

**Newton Federal Bank**

(770) 786-7088

**Northeast Georgia Bank**

(706) 356-4444

**North Georgia National Bank**

(706) 629-6499

**Northside Bank**

(770) 773-7300

**Paragon Small Business Capital Group**

(470) 225-5507

**Pineland Bank**

(912) 632-8631

**Piedmont Bank**

(770) 246-0011

**Southcrest Bank**

(706) 938-3166

**Southern States Bank**

(404) 272-1478

**Southeastern Bank**

(912) 437-4141

**United Community Bank**

(888) 987-5884

**Vinings Bank**

(770) 437-0004

**Waycross Bank & Trust**

(912) 283-0001

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## Participating Microlenders

**Access to Capital  
for Entrepreneurs**

504 Fair St. SW, Atlanta  
10 College St., Norcross  
3173 Highway 129 N., Cleveland  
(678) 335-5600  
**aceloans.org**

**Accion**

(866) 245-0783  
**us.accion.org**

**Liftfund Inc.**

(470) 344-8396  
**liftfund.com**

**Small Business Assistance Corp.**

111 E. Liberty St., suite 100  
Savannah  
(912) 232-4700  
**sbacsav.com**

## Community Advantage Lenders

**Access to Capital for  
Entrepreneurs**

504 Fair St. SW, Atlanta  
10 College St., Norcross  
3173 Highway 129 N., Cleveland  
(678) 335-5600  
**aceloans.org**

**Accion**

(866) 245-0783  
**us.accion.org**

**Coastal Area District  
Development Authority**

501 Gloucester St., suite 201  
Brunswick  
(912) 261-2500

**Liftfund Inc.**

(470) 344-8396  
**liftfund.com**

**Small Business Access  
Partners Inc.**

460 S. Enota Drive  
Gainesville  
(770) 536-7839

**Small Business Assistance Corp.**

111 E. Liberty St., suite 100  
Savannah  
(912) 232-4700  
**sbacsav.com**

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## Participating Certified Development Companies

**Capital Partners Certified  
Development Co.**

6445 Powers Ferry Road, suite 210  
Atlanta  
(404) 475.6000

**Coastal Area District  
Development Authority**

501 Gloucester St., suite 201  
Brunswick  
(912) 261-2500

**CSRA Business Lending**

3626 Walton Way Extension, suite 300  
Augusta  
(706) 210-2010

**Florida Business Development  
Corp., dba Georgia Small  
Business Capital**

7000 Central Parkway  
Atlanta  
(404) 373-8601

**Georgia Certified  
Development Corp.**

5855 Sandy Springs Circle NE, suite 300  
Atlanta  
(404) 240-1733

**North Georgia Certified  
Development Corp.**

503 W. Waugh St.  
Dalton  
(706) 226-1110

**Small Business Access Partners**

460 S. Enota Drive NE  
Gainesville  
(770) 536-7839

**Small Business Assistance Corp.**

111 E. Liberty St.  
Savannah  
(912) 232-4700

**Southern Regional Area CDC**

327 W. Savannah Ave.  
Valdosta  
(229) 333-5277



# Financing 101

## 1 What do you need funding for?

- Start or purchase a business
- Purchase, renovate or expand facilities
- Purchase inventory, equipment or machinery
- Revolving credit/working capital for day-to-day expenses
- Export a product or service



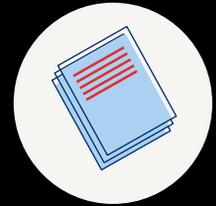
I need investors.

Look into SBICs.



I need to research and develop a business idea for commercialization.

Research the SBIR or STTR programs.

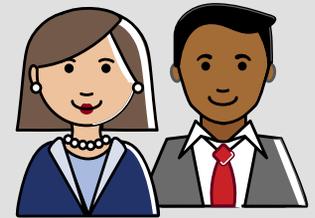


I'm bidding on a contract that requires me to be bonded.

Ask for information on SBA surety bonds.

## 2 Do you need help with your business plan or loan package?

If so, SBA Resource Partners can help. Find a list at your local SBA district office.



## 3 Now that you have your business plan and loan package ready, contact an SBA Lender to see if you qualify. There are two options...

**A.** Check out Lender Match ([sba.gov/lendermatch](http://sba.gov/lendermatch)) to find an SBA Lenders who may specialize in your industry or type of project.

**B.** Visit your local SBA district office for a list of local SBA Lenders.

### Be prepared to discuss:

- size and purpose of your loan
- how long your business has operated
- your credit history
- collateral
- financial projections
- technical assistance/mentoring needs



# Need Financing?

Visit your local SBA office or lender to learn about these funding options.

## The 7(a) Loan, the SBA's Largest Financing Program

If you cannot get conventional financing and you meet the eligibility requirements, you can use a 7(a) loan to buy real estate, equipment, or inventory for your small business. It may also be used for working capital, to refinance business debt or purchase a small business.

**MAX LOAN AMOUNT:** \$5 million

**INTEREST RATE:** generally prime + a reasonable rate capped at 2.75%

**TERMS:** loan term varies according to the purpose of the loan, generally up to 25 years for real estate, 10 years for other fixed assets and working capital

**GUARANTEE:** 50 to 90%

## CAPLines

Meet your revolving capital needs with lines of credit. CAPLines can be used for contract financing, seasonal lines of credit, builders line of credit, or for general working capital lines.

## SBA Express Loan

Featuring a simplified process, these loans are delivered by experienced lenders who are authorized to make the credit decision for the SBA. These can be term loans or revolving lines of credit.

**MAX LOAN AMOUNT:** \$350,000

**INTEREST RATE:** for loans less than \$50,000, prime + 6.5%; for loans of \$50,000 and greater, prime + 4.75%

**TERMS:** loan term varies according to the purpose of the loan, generally up to 25 years for real estate and 10 years for other fixed assets and working capital

**GUARANTEE:** 50%

## Community Advantage

A financing program for women, veterans, low-income borrowers, and minority entrepreneurs just starting up or in business for a few years. Receive free business counseling as you work with a community-based financial institution.

**INTEREST RATE:** prime + 6%

**TERMS:** up to 25 years for real estate, 10 years for equipment and working capital

**GUARANTEE:** 75 to 90%



## Microloans

Eligible businesses can startup and grow with working capital or funds for supplies, equipment, furniture and fixtures. Borrow from \$500 to \$50,000 and access free business counseling from microlenders.

**INTEREST RATE:** loans less than \$10,000, lender cost + 8.5%; loans \$10,000 and greater, lender cost + 7.75%

**TERMS:** lender negotiated, no early payoff penalty

## 504 Certified Development Company Loan

If you do not qualify for traditional financing, but would like to purchase or renovate real estate or buy heavy equipment for your business, ask about the 504 loan. It provides competitive fixed-rate mortgage financing through a lender and a Certified Development Company.

**MAX LOAN AMOUNT (UP TO 40% OF THE TOTAL PROJECT):** up to \$5 million; \$5.5 million for manufacturing or energy public policy projects

**INTEREST RATE:** below market fixed rates for 10, 20 or 25 year terms

**TERMS:** 20 or 25 years for real estate or long-term equipment, 10 years for general machinery and equipment

**GUARANTEE:** the lender provides a senior loan for 50% of the project cost (with no SBA guarantee); the CDC finances up to 40% in a junior lien position (supported by the SBA guarantee)

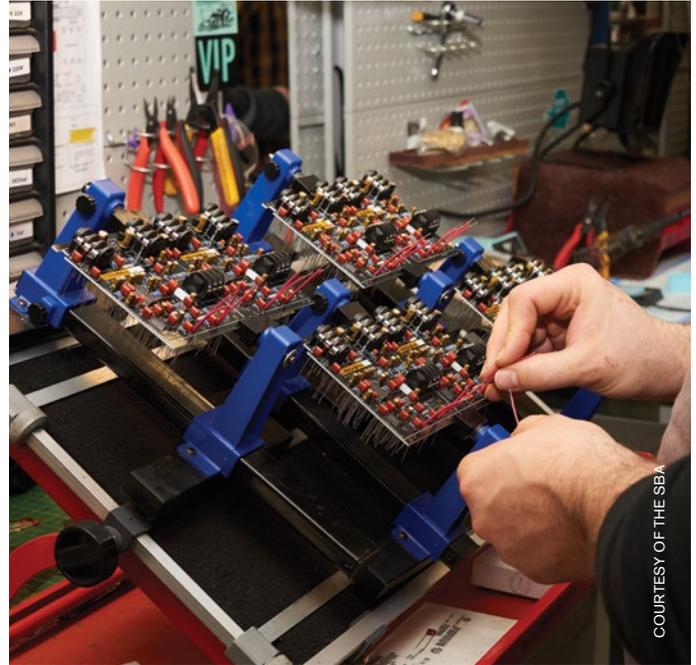
**SPECIAL CONDITION:** a minimum borrower contribution, or down payment, is required, amounts vary by project but are usually 10%

# Go Global with International Trade

Businesses that export are more resilient—they are less dependent on any one market. Exporting also stabilizes sales for those who make seasonal products.



COURTESY OF THE SBA



COURTESY OF THE SBA

## Expand your Market

Small businesses can enter and excel in the international marketplace using State Trade Expansion Program grants and training. Visit [sba.gov/internationaltrade](https://sba.gov/internationaltrade) to find out if your state is participating.

You can:

- learn how to export
- participate in foreign trade missions and trade shows
- obtain services to support foreign market entry
- translate websites to attract foreign buyers
- design international marketing products or campaigns

## Financing for International Growth

Having trouble securing capital to meet your small business exporting needs? Use SBA international trade programs to cover short or long-term costs necessary to sell goods or services abroad. Loan proceeds can be used for working capital to finance foreign sales or for fixed assets, helping you better compete globally. You can apply for lines of credit prior to

finalizing an export sale or contract, so adequate financing is in place by the time you win your contract. If you've been in business for at least a year, ask your area SBA regional finance manager about the Export Working Capital program. The International Trade Loan program also helps exporters who have been adversely affected by foreign importing competition, helping you better compete globally.

**Max loan amount:** \$5 million

**Interest rate:** for Export Working Capital, the rate is negotiated between borrower and lender. For the International Trade Loan, it also cannot exceed prime + 2.75% for loan amounts over \$50,000 and maturity of seven years or more

**Terms:** For Export Working Capital, typically one year, cannot exceed three years. For International Trade Loans, up to 25 years for real estate, up to 10 years for equipment

**Guarantee:** up to 90%

Export Express uses a streamlined process that expedites the SBA guarantee—what small businesses need most when preparing to export or ramping up international trade on a fast timeline.

**Max loan amount:** \$500,000

**Interest rate:** typically not to exceed prime + 6.5%

**Terms:** up to 25 years for real estate, up to 10 years for equipment, up to seven years for lines of credit

**Guarantee:** up to 90%

**Approval time:** 36 hours or less

## Expert Advice on Exporting

Find an SBA professional in one of the 21 U.S. Export Assistance Centers, [sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/eac](https://sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/eac), located in most major metro areas. The centers are also staffed by the U.S. Department of Commerce and, in some locations, the Export-Import Bank of the United States and other public and private organizations. Visit your local Small Business Development Center (see page 8) for exporting assistance from professional business counselors.



COURTESY OF THE SBA

## ▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Small businesses that qualify for the SBA State Trade Expansion Program use grant proceeds to bolster their international market presence, which EarthQuaker Devices has done in a seismic way. A manufacturer of guitar special effects pedals in Akron, OH, EarthQuaker has built an international social media fanbase delivering content in seven languages, generating millions of website page views.

EarthQuaker owners Julie Robbins & Jamie Stillman developed their global marketing strategy and multilingual promo materials with the SBA State Trade Expansion Program. The couple also received global marketing counseling and research assistance from the Ohio Small Business development Center Export Assistance Network.

## Help with Trade Barriers

If you need assistance with international trade regulations, the SBA can be your advocate in foreign markets. Call toll free (855) 722-4877 or email your contact information and trade issue to [international@sba.gov](mailto:international@sba.gov).

# R&D Opportunities for High Growth Startups

Engaged in high-risk research and development? Compete for funding to develop your cutting-edge technology.



## Do you work in one of these areas?

- » advanced materials
- » agTech
- » artificial intelligence
- » biomedical
- » cybersecurity
- » energy
- » first response
- » national security
- » space exploration

The Small Business Innovation Research and the Small Business Technology Transfer programs, also called America's Seed Fund, provide more than \$3.5 billion in early stage capital through a competitive awards process.

## How it works

Every year, participating federal agencies announce topical areas that address their R&D needs. Eligible businesses submit proposals to win either grants or contracts.

There are three phases:

- » The proof-of-concept stage typically lasts from 6-12 months, and ranges from \$100,000-\$225,000.
- » The full R&D period lasts about 24 months and typically provides \$600,000-\$1.5 million.
- » The commercialization stage is when you seek public or private funds for your venture.

## How your startup benefits

The funding agency does not take an equity position or ownership of your business. The federal government also protects data rights and the ability to win sole-source phase III contracts.

Participating agencies:

- » Department of Agriculture
- » Department of Commerce
  - » National Institute of Standards and Technology

## ▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED US SUCCEED

Killer Snails brings science out of the laboratory and into classrooms and living rooms with award-winning educational games, such as BioDive, Assassins of the Sea, and Biome Builder. The Brooklyn, NY-based business gained access to startup funding thanks to the Small Business Innovation Research program. Dr. Mandë Holford, left, Jessica Ochoa Hendrix, right, and Dr. Lindsay Portnoy envisioned how venomous marine snail research could be used in extended reality and digital learning to engage students and meet educators' needs. The business has raised more than \$1.2 million to support a team of full-time employees. Killer Snails's tabletop, digital, augmented and virtual reality games have won national and international awards.

COURTESY OF THE SBA

- › National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- » Department of Defense
- » Department of Education
- » Department of Energy
- » Department of Health and Human Services
- » Department of Homeland Security
- » Department of Transportation
- » Environmental Protection Agency
- » NASA
- » National Science Foundation

Visit [sbir.gov](http://sbir.gov) to find funding opportunities and helpful program tutorials, as well as past award winners, such as Qualcomm, iRobot, Illumina, and Symantec.

### **SBIR Road Tour**

Visit [sbirroadtour.com](http://sbirroadtour.com) to learn about national events connecting entrepreneurs working on advanced tech to the country's largest source of early stage funding. Each SBIR Road Tour stop introduces participating federal agency program managers, who oversee over 5,000 new awards annually. Southwest U.S. stops in Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado are planned for mid-August. Eastern stops in Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland are planned for mid-September. The road tour stops in Miami and Puerto Rico in November.

## **Investment Capital**

Looking for investors? For mature, profitable businesses with sufficient cash flow to pay interest, a Small Business Investment Company can help scale up your small business.

### **How an SBIC works**

Investment companies with financing expertise in certain industry sectors receive SBA-guaranteed loans, which means the federal government is responsible in case of default. These investment companies then use the SBA-guaranteed capital and private funds to invest in qualifying small businesses. Each SBIC has its own investment profile in terms of targeted industry, geography, company maturity, the types and size of financing they provide.

### **To be eligible**

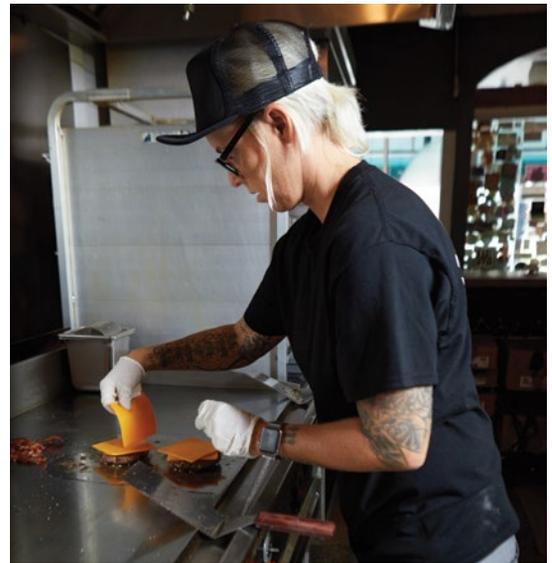
The majority of your employees and assets must be within the United States. Some ineligible small businesses and activities include relenders, real estate, project financing, and foreign investment.

Visit [sba.gov](http://sba.gov) and click on Funding Program and then Investment Capital.

# **Advertise your company here.**

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## How I Did It

# Smiling After the Storm

With SBA assistance, Stephanie Vitori rebuilt her Miami Beach, FL restaurant after Hurricane Irma.

WRITTEN BY JESS WALKER

If you ask Stephanie Vitori, the person who coined the term “bittersweet” must have run a business. In the 15 years Stephanie has owned Cheeseburger Baby, the Florida burger joint has endured recessions, multiple hurricanes, and competition from corporate franchises. She has grown along with Cheeseburger Baby, changing with each stage of the business lifecycle.

Vitori worked as a delivery driver before purchasing the business in 2004. Since then, she’s expanded by purchasing two food trucks. She runs an open kitchen, which means customers can watch their 100% Angus

beef cheeseburgers sizzle on the flat-top grill. Burgers are kept classic, no extra frills. “People feel at home,” Stephanie says. “You’re not just another table somebody has to serve.” Here, everybody feels like somebody, she says. So many people love a good cheeseburger, which is why all kinds of people are attracted to her restaurant. Cheeseburger Baby’s handcrafted patties have been featured on the Food Network and consumed by celebrities such as



COURTESY OF THE SBA

Jay-Z and Kanye West. Stephanie has met famous chefs “all through a cheeseburger.” But just as special to her is the Vietnamese couple who came in one day, speaking little English. They were eager to meet Stephanie and show her a napkin with “Cheeseburger Baby” scrawled on it. On the other side of the world, a friend had told them to come, so they did. It all just goes to show you, Stephanie says, people come together for a great cheeseburger.

### Challenge

Despite these sweet moments, there have also been bitter ones. Hurricane Irma struck in 2017, and Cheeseburger Baby lost equipment and food supplies. Thirty percent of sales blew away with the wind. “It was a zombie zone in South Beach. People were scared to come since they thought everything was destroyed,” Stephanie says. “It was the roughest road I’ve ever traveled.”

### Solution

An SBA disaster assistance loan aided Cheeseburger Baby’s recovery. The SBA provides direct low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters to repair damage or replace property not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance. SBA disaster assistance loans can also be used to rebuild stronger, protecting your home or business against future damage caused by a disaster. The SBA also introduced Stephanie to her local Small

**When you're affected by a disaster** the SBA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other organizations work together to provide assistance. Once immediate safety and security needs are met, the SBA helps get you and your community back to where you were before the disaster. Since low-interest SBA disaster assistance loans are government aid, creditworthiness and the ability to repay are taken into consideration before a loan is awarded.

## What to do after a Disaster Declaration

After a disaster is declared by the President



Register with FEMA at

**disasterassistance.gov**, or call (800) 621-3362, TTY 800-462-7585, or visit a Disaster Recovery Center. Locations can be found at **fema.gov/drc**. Businesses are automatically referred to the SBA. Most homeowners and renters will be referred by FEMA to the SBA to apply for disaster loan assistance. You must complete the SBA application to be considered for assistance. If the SBA cannot help you with a loan for all your needs, the SBA will in most cases refer you back to FEMA. If you do not complete an SBA application, you may not be considered for assistance from other agencies.

### Express Bridge Loan Pilot Program

Businesses affected by a Presidential disaster declaration are eligible to receive expedited financing through an SBA Express lender. These funds may be used for disaster-related purposes while the business waits for long-term financing through the SBA’s direct disaster loan program.

**Loan Amount:** \$25,000

**Terms:** up to seven years

**Guarantee:** 50%

After a disaster is declared by the SBA

Businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters are eligible to apply for an SBA disaster assistance loan. Visit a Business Recovery Center or Disaster Loan Outreach Center in your area or visit **disasterloan.sba.gov/ela** to apply for a loan. You can also call the SBA customer service center at (800) 659-2955, TTY (800) 877-8339, and ask for an application package. FEMA grant assistance for homeowners or renters is not available under an SBA declaration.



Information you need to get started:

- address of damaged residence or business and contact information
- insurance information, including type of insurance, policy numbers, and amount received
- household and/or business income
- description of disaster-caused damage and losses



Business Development Center, which provided assistance with financing options and marketing. She continues to meet with SBDC advisers every month to remain competitive in an ever-changing economy.

During disasters, the responsibility falls on the owner's shoulders. But one lesson Stephanie has learned is the value in reaching out to others for assistance and counsel. While her brick-and-mortar restaurant was being rebuilt, she sold from a food truck. When the restaurant was operational again, she advertised that with spray paint on the plywood covering the broken windows. Stephanie and her wife, Gabriele Vitori, rebuilt Cheeseburger Baby by depending on each other and SBA assistance. See their story on YouTube by searching for the 2019 Phoenix Award for Small Business Disaster Recovery. "You've got to have resiliency. You've got to swallow your pride sometimes," Stephanie says. "But you also have to believe in your product."

#### Benefit

For Cheeseburger Baby, that product will continue satisfying the burger hankerings of locals, celebrities, and tourists alike. Vitori sees expansion in her future—she'd like to have a brick-and-mortar restaurant and food truck in each growing town in South Florida. "My whole life is this. I've always felt a love for business ownership," Vitori says. "That drive keeps you going." ■

The SBA provides direct low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes, nonprofits, homeowners, and renters to repair or replace damaged property not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance. SBA disaster assistance loans can also be used to rebuild stronger, protecting your home or business against future damage caused by a disaster. For information visit [sba.gov/disaster](https://sba.gov/disaster).

## Keep in mind

Since an SBA disaster assistance loan is a direct loan from the government, other organizations may reduce or not award you a grant if you have received an SBA loan or other assistance for your disaster loss. Be sure to check with the organization offering assistance to see how an SBA loan might affect your eligibility for their program. In general, recovery expenses covered by insurance, FEMA or other forms of assistance may reduce the amount provided by your SBA disaster assistance loan.

## Get Ready

The Ready Business program, [ready.gov/business](https://ready.gov/business), gives step-by-step guidance on how to prepare your business for a disaster. The series includes preparedness toolkits for earthquakes, hurricanes, inland flooding, power outages, and severe winds/tornadoes. Spanish materials are available.



## Getting Back to Business:

*Six essential preparedness steps for creating a continuity plan*

The financial and emotional cost of rebuilding a business after a disaster can be overwhelming. With a business continuity plan in place, you can recover more quickly. Your plan also puts you in a better position to contribute to the economic recovery of your community.



### Establish a communications plan

- Test your calling tree or communications list to reach employees to ensure they and their families are safe.



### Protect your documents

- Keep copies of vital business documents in a digital format or in an accessible, protected off-site location.



### Review insurance coverage

- Contact your insurance agent to find out if your coverage is right for your business; make sure you understand the policy limits and deductibles.
- Ask about business interruption insurance, which compensates you for lost income and covers operating expenses if your company has to temporarily shut down because of a disaster.



### Establish a solid supply chain

- If your vendors and suppliers are local and the disaster is widespread, you will all be in the same situation—struggling to recover. Put a disaster response plan in place to get key supplies from companies outside your area. Create a contact list of contractors and vendors you plan to use.



### Plan for an alternative location

- Identify several places to relocate your operations in case you must close your primary location for an extended time.
- Consider creative options for available office space, including sharing space and resources with other businesses.
- Allow employees to telecommute until your location reopens.



### Practice your plan with your staff

**Based on your location, assess your risk for every type of emergency.**

- Discuss as a group how your plan would be affected by different types of disasters, such as an earthquake, tornado, flood, mudslide, or hurricane.

# Surety Bonds

SBA-backed surety bonds help small businesses succeed.

Eligible small businesses in the construction, supply, and service sectors better compete for contracting and subcontracting jobs using SBA-backed surety bonds.

## How you benefit

Surety bonds help small businesses receive the bonding assistance they need to win contracts by providing the customer with a guarantee the work will be completed.

## How surety bonds work

Many contracts require surety bonds, which are offered by surety companies. The SBA guarantee provides an incentive for surety companies to work with small businesses that would normally not be able to obtain the bond.

## Is the program right for you?

Small businesses that often come to the SBA for surety bonds:

- » startups and firms in business less than three years
- » businesses with credit issues or internally prepared financial statements
- » those who cannot secure bonding through regular commercial channels
- » subcontractors with a desire to establish their own bonding as a prime contractor
- » those wishing to increase their current bonding limits



## ▲ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

With SBA-backed surety bonds, Frank Spencer III has been able to better compete for commercial and government contracts. Aztec Contractors of El Paso, TX received the bonding support it needed to compete for construction contracts with the General Services Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command. Frank acquired Aztec in 2006 with no capital and only two employees. Now he employs 25 full time and provides internship opportunities. Sales have grown to about \$30 million annually. Aztec now qualifies for bonding in the standard surety market without SBA support.

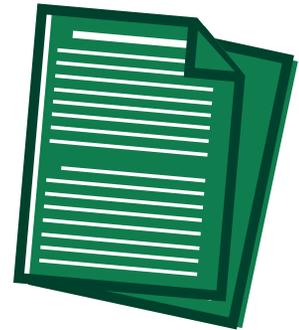
**For all contracts and subcontracts up to \$6.5 million, the SBA guarantees bid, payment, performance, and ancillary bonds issued by surety companies. For federal contracts up to \$10 million, the SBA makes a guarantee if it's in the best interest of the government.**

The SBA reimburses surety companies in case of default 90% of losses sustained for veteran & service-disabled veteran, minority, 8(a), and HUBZone-certified small businesses; all projects up to \$100,000 and 80% for all other small businesses.

## Need a surety bond guarantee fast?

For contracts under \$400,000, the process is streamlined using the SBA's QuickApp program.

- » easy application
- » no need to submit financials to the SBA
- » online applications submitted to SBA authorized agents approved within hours



## Ready to start?

The SBA partners with 36 surety companies and hundreds of bonding agents. Find authorized agents at [sba.gov/osg](https://sba.gov/osg).

Do you want to discuss the advantages of the SBA's Surety Bond Guarantee program? Contact a bonding specialist:

**Tamara E. Murray**  
Denver, CO  
(303) 927-3479

**Kevin Valdes**  
Seattle, WA  
(206) 553-7277

**Jennifer C. Bledsoe**  
Washington, DC  
(202) 205-6153

# CONTRACTING

Doing Business with the Government



How I Did It

## Taking the Helm

Jennifer Rahn steers Admiral Engineering and Manufacturing to success as a government subcontractor.

WRITTEN BY MICAELA MORRISSETTE



## 5 Tips for Success:

### Find a mentor.

I had a great mentor in my company, and I reached for opportunity when it was in front of me.

### Always move forward.

The SBA has educational resources to improve your business know-how. To learn more about government contracting and SBA certification programs, call your local SBA district office or procurement center representative.

### Compete smart.

See if your company can use the SBA Subcontracting Network database, [https://eweb1.sba.gov/subnet/client/dsp\\_Landing.cfm](https://eweb1.sba.gov/subnet/client/dsp_Landing.cfm). SubNet connects businesses with subcontractors & small businesses with contract opportunities.

### Know your industry.

I see everything; I have my hands in everything. I don't want to expand to where I can't do that anymore.

### Build a team.

Everybody feels like this is our work family. My employees are as big a part of my company as I am, so I make sure they know that.

major government contractors. She's grateful prime contractors have incentive to subcontract with small business, and that helps businesses like Admiral.

Rahn has plans to grow, but not in the typical ways. She's investing in replacing equipment, enhancing efficiency and productivity while leading Admiral into new arenas like 3D printing. Because of the stability provided by being a government subcontractor, she's able to do all of this. 

**J**ennifer Rahn was first hired as an office assistant at Phoenix, Arizona-based Admiral Engineering and Manufacturing Co. Rising to the top in a sector dominated by men, Rahn's career sounds a lot like the classic American success story. She got there with the help of a mentor and business growth earned as a federal government subcontractor.

For 16 years, Rahn worked side-by-side with then-owner David Schlosser, who became her mentor. Rahn says she learned "everything it takes to run a machine shop. I naturally just picked it up and wanted it."

The learning curve was steep—Admiral specializes in complex machined parts for industries including aerospace and communications—and Schlosser expected as much as he gave. "When I did something wrong, he told me, and I didn't do that again," Rahn

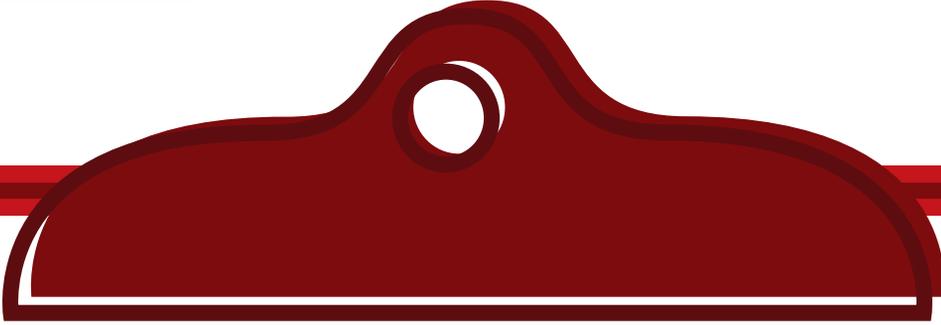
said, laughing.

One of their largest clients, aerospace and defense company L3 Technologies, nominated Admiral for the SBA Subcontractor of the Year award. As a subcontractor for L3 Technologies, Rahn said she gets great satisfaction from knowing soldiers are able to communicate with their leaders because of parts her company has made.

When Schlosser decided to retire, he asked Rahn to purchase Admiral.

"He did not want to sell to a corporation that would bring in their own people or end up foreclosing," Rahn says. "Then all your hard work is gone. I agreed because it was everything I had spent my life working on, too."

In September 2017, she took over as owner and president. Ownership transition poses a unique set of challenges. Rahn wanted to maintain relationships with her existing clients, which include



# How to do business with the government

- 1** Identify your product or service number at **naics.com**.
- 2** Search the FedBizOpps database (**fbo.gov**) to see if any federal agencies are looking for your product or service.
- 3** Attend an SBA district office workshop on contracting. Visit **sba.gov/localassistance** to find your local office.
- 4** Talk to a local Small Business Development Center counselor (see page 8) or visit a Procurement Technical Assistance Program adviser. Find your closest center at **aptac-us.org**.
- 5** Obtain a free DUNS number at **fedgov.dnb.com/webform**.
- 6** Register with the System for Award Management (**sam.gov**) to start doing business with the government.
- 7** Are you eligible for SBA certification programs? Read more about the 8(a), woman-owned small business, and HUBZone programs. Find out if you are eligible and upload all required documents to **certify.sba.gov**.

# Government Contracting

Is it right for you? Government contracting can be a valuable tool to grow your small business, but it isn't for everyone. Complete the following readiness assessment to help you decide whether your company can successfully compete for government contracts.

**1** Does the government buy the product or service that you sell?

- Continue to question 2.
- Government contracting may not be for you at this time.
- Start with your local SBA district office. If you can't identify at least three federal agencies that might buy what you sell, contracting might not be right for you.

**2** Are you capable of fulfilling a government contract (e.g., time, staffing, and materials)?

- Continue to question 3.
- Your local SBA district office can help you gauge ramp-up time and other factors that contribute to government contracting success.

**3** Confirm your answer to all of the following:

- Is the majority owner(s) a U.S. citizen?
- Does your company have a place of business in the U.S.?
- Is your business organized for profit?
- Does your business generate revenue?
- Continue to question 4.
- These are requirements for participation in government contracting programs.

**6** Do you have cash on hand to purchase working inventory, if needed?

- Continue to question 7.
- Talk to an SBA Lender about getting a line of credit or a loan to do business with the government.

**5** Do you have an accounting system that produces financial statements, such as profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and cash flow projections?

- Continue to question 6.
- Before you get into government contracting, make sure your accounting system is compatible with the government's requirements.

**4** Are you credit worthy?

- Continue to question 5.
- Visit an SBA Resource Partner for tips on repairing your credit.
- Talk to an SBA Lender about how to build credit.

**7** Do you already have federal/state/local government contracting experience?

- Continue to question 8.
- If you don't yet have contracting experience, you won't reap the full benefit of opportunities like the 8(a) Business Development Program. You can participate in the 8(a) program once, so make sure it's the right time for you.

**8** Do you know where to find contracting opportunities?

- Continue to question 9.
- Ask an SBA business opportunity specialist for help.

**9** Make sure you have:

- a DUNS number
- the NAICS codes and size standards for your industry
- SAM registration
- Continue below.
- This is a requirement for participation in some government contracting programs.

It sounds like you may be a good fit for government contracting!  
Visit your local SBA district office or [sba.gov/contracting](https://www.sba.gov/contracting) for more information.

# SBA Certification Programs

Your business could earn profit and gain valuable work experience by providing goods or services to the government.



COURTESY OF THE SUNDANCE CONSULTING

## ◀ HOW THE SBA HELPED ME SUCCEED

September Myres knew that becoming a government contractor would empower herself and other native peoples, while also growing her small business to the next level. She sought business development assistance from the SBA, qualifying for the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, which helps small disadvantaged businesses compete in the federal marketplace. This program helped September strategically grow her company to become a competitive force in the environmental services industry. Sundance Consulting of Pocatello, ID has won contracts from the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service. She has continually secured Department of Defense contracts to improve Native American lands adversely affected by past department activities. September often assists Native American tribes and Alaska Native villages with developing projects and community plans.

American Indians, Alaska Natives, and native Hawaiians seeking entrepreneurial development training can start, grow, and expand their business with the help of the SBA, [sba.gov/naa](https://www.sba.gov/). The Office of Native American Affairs also consults with tribal governments prior to finalizing SBA policies affecting tribes.

**Socially disadvantaged:** those subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias without regard to their individual qualities because of their identity as members of certain groups. The following groups often fit this status: Black Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Subcontinent Asian Americans. A person who is not a member of one of these groups must establish that it is more likely than not that he or she has suffered social disadvantage.

**Economically disadvantaged:** those whose ability to compete in the marketplace has been impaired because they have not had as much capital and credit opportunities compared to others in the same or similar line of business.

The benefits of the 8(a) program:

- » You are assigned an SBA professional to help coordinate business development assistance.
- » You could be awarded an 8(a) sole-source contract up to \$4 million for goods and services, \$7 million for manufacturing, exceptions apply.

8(a) small business that can provide the needed services. This is an accelerated process saving time for both you and the government agency or office.

## All Small Mentor-Protege Program

Looking for an opportunity to partner with a more experienced firm for mentorship? That effort can be rewarded in the All Small Mentor-Protege Program, [sba.gov/allsmallmpp](https://www.sba.gov/allsmallmpp). At the same time you're gaining invaluable direction and experience, you and your mentor can compete for government contracts, further growing your business. To qualify for this program:

- » Proteges must have a mentor prior to applying for the program. Visit your local SBA office for guidance. Ask about the SBA's Resource Partners and the Procurement Technical Assistance Program for help in connecting you with a mentor business.

Contracting certification programs are designed to help you better compete for and win federal contracts set aside for small businesses. Visit [sba.gov/contracting](https://www.sba.gov/contracting) to learn more about set-asides and whether one or more of these government certification programs is right for your business. To see if you are eligible and then certify as a woman-owned, HUBZone, 8(a), or All Small business, visit [certify.sba.gov](https://www.certify.sba.gov).

## 8(a) Business Development Program

If you're an entrepreneur who is socially or economically disadvantaged, you may be eligible to receive business training and government contracting assistance through the 8(a) Business Development Program, [sba.gov/8a](https://www.sba.gov/8a). It includes free business development

education, training workshops, and match-making opportunities with federal buyers. Firms owned by Alaska Native Corporations, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Community Development Corporations are also eligible for 8(a) business development assistance.

To be eligible for the 8(a) program, your small business must:

- » be owned and controlled by U.S. citizens who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged
- » demonstrate at least a two-year track record and have potential for continued success
- » have a net worth and adjusted gross income of less than \$250,000 and assets under \$4 million

- » You must be certified as a small business within your NAICS industry classification ([naics.com](https://naics.com)).
- » Mentors and proteges must be organized for profit or as an agricultural cooperative.
- » Mentors cannot own more than 40% equity in the protege's business.
- » An SBA determination of affiliation must not exist between the mentor and the protege. All Small-approved partnerships receive an exclusion of affiliation for contracting purposes.

## HUBZone

Businesses located in Historically Underutilized Business Zones, [sba.gov/hubzone](https://sba.gov/hubzone), can gain special access to federal contracts. To qualify for the certification, your small business must:

- » be owned and controlled by U.S. citizens, a Community Development Corporation, an agricultural cooperative, Indian tribal government, Alaska Native Corporation, or a Native Hawaiian organization
- » have a principal office located in a HUBZone, which includes Indian reservations and military facilities closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act. Enter your address in our interactive map, [maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map](https://maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map), to see if you qualify.
- » have at least 35% of your employees living in a HUBZone



## Service-Disabled Veterans

If you're a service-disabled veteran looking to enter the federal marketplace, you may be eligible for this small business certification. To determine your eligibility, contact a veterans business development officer at your local SBA office, or the SBA's Office of Veterans Business Development, [sba.gov/ovbd](https://sba.gov/ovbd). After you have set up to do business with the government in [sam.gov](https://sam.gov), update your status as a service-disabled veteran business. Keep in mind, the SBA does not officially certify this designation, so when a contract awarded based on this eligibility is protested, the SBA will determine if your business meets the eligibility status, ownership, and control requirements.

# Women-Owned Small Business Certification

If you're a woman proprietor looking to sell to the federal government, you may be eligible for the Women-Owned Small Business certification, [sba.gov/wosb](https://sba.gov/wosb).

Here's how to get certified:

## 1. Make sure you're eligible

- Your business must be at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more women who are U.S. citizens. The ownership must be direct and unconditional.
- A woman must hold the highest officer position and have managerial experience required to run the business.
- One or more women must manage the daily business operations on a full-time basis and conduct long-term decision making and planning.

To qualify as an economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business, your company must meet these criteria and the business owner and/or manager must meet certain income and asset requirements.

## 2. Register

- Register with the System for Award Management ([sam.gov](https://sam.gov)) to start doing business with the government.

## 3. Certify

Self-certify as a woman-owned small business or an economically disadvantaged woman-owned small business for free, or obtain certification from one of the SBA's approved third-party certifiers (which costs a fee):

- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- National Women Business Owners Corporation
- U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce
- Women's Business Enterprise National Council

All required documents must be uploaded to [certify.sba.gov](https://certify.sba.gov) prior to submitting an offer on a contract set aside for the program.

## 4. Update your status

- Update your status as a woman-owned small business in [sam.gov](https://sam.gov).

## 5. Search the database

- Search the FedBizOpps database ([fbo.gov](https://fbo.gov)) for your new business opportunity.

## Get Expert Contracting & Certification Help

Federal contracting can be complex, but you don't have to do it alone. A Procurement Technical Assistance Center adviser can help you determine if your business is ready for government contracting. An adviser can also help you register in the System for Award Management ([sam.gov](http://sam.gov)), and see if you're eligible for any small business certifications and/or programs. One-on-one counseling is free or low cost. Visit [sba.gov/localassistance](http://sba.gov/localassistance) to find your local SBA office or an SBA Resource Partner near you (see page 8).

**Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institutes**  
[gtpac.org](http://gtpac.org)

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125 Pine St.  
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[bridget.bennett@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:bridget.bennett@innovate.gatech.edu)

Chicopee Complex  
 1180 E. Broad St.  
 Athens  
[jason.sullins@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:jason.sullins@innovate.gatech.edu)

75 Fifth St. NW, suite 3000  
 Atlanta  
 (404) 385-3376  
[thomas.larkin@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:thomas.larkin@innovate.gatech.edu)

2907 Professional Parkway, suite B  
 Augusta  
 (706) 650-5655

3100 Gentian Blvd.  
 Columbus  
 (706) 569-2688

Featherbone Center  
 999 Chestnut St. SE, suite 7  
 Gainesville  
 (770) 718-3981  
[chioma.anosike@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:chioma.anosike@innovate.gatech.edu)

210 Technology Circle, room 230  
 Savannah  
 (912) 963-2524  
[larry.blige@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:larry.blige@innovate.gatech.edu)

151 Osgian Blvd., suite 157  
 Warner Robins  
 (478) 953-1460  
[ailen.zoellner@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:ailen.zoellner@innovate.gatech.edu)

An O'Fallon Casting Inc. employee at work in O'Fallon, MO. Owner Vince Gimeno grew his business thanks to expert SBA business counseling.





## **SMALL BUSINESS LOANS FOR BIG BUSINESS DREAMS**

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*Sheila Jordan, Managing Partner  
Knowledge Architects, LLC*

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