



2025-2026 Grant Opportunity:

WSMA Statewide Grant Program

Application Checklist

Applications must be submitted via the [WSMA grant portal](#) by **5:00 p.m. PST on Wednesday, January 7, 2026**. Applicants may only apply to either a Statewide or an Urban Grant. Refer to the separate 2025-2026 Statewide Grant Program Guidelines for an overview and details about this funding opportunity located on the [WSMA website](#). Applicants requiring technical assistance with the WSMA 2025-2026 Statewide RFP and Program Guidelines should contact Lisa Smith, WSMA Executive Director, at lisa@wamicrobiz.org and Catherine Borgeson, WSMA Grant Specialist, at catherine@wamicrobiz.org.

Information Session: December 16, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. Register [HERE](#). WSMA will post the FAQs on the WSMA website after the Information Session. WSMA will also record this session and make it available on the [WSMA YouTube Channel](#).

Grant Portal Walk-through: December 17, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. Register [HERE](#). WSMA will record this session and make it available on the [WSMA YouTube Channel](#).

Applicants can find grant writing resources on either the [Puget Sound Grantwriters Association](#) or the [Funding for Good](#) websites.

If your organization already has a grant portal account, create a draft application by selecting “Funding Opportunities” on your dashboard. After saving a draft, continue to access your application by selecting “In Progress” under “Applications” on your dashboard. Do NOT try to access your active draft application by opening a new application under the “Funding Opportunities” as this will create a duplicate application. If you are a first-time applicant, you must first [register your organization](#) with the grant portal. Please contact catherine@wamicrobiz.org with any portal technical assistance questions.

The WSMA grant portal allows applicants to save their work as a draft to come back to before submitting the final version. We strongly advise applicants to click “Save Draft” frequently while completing their draft application on the grant portal to avoid losing their work. You can also create and edit your answers in a separate Word document to copy and paste them into the grant portal. Make sure your responses do not exceed the word count for each question. Upon submission, you will receive a confirmation email to the address you provided from noreply@smartsimple.com, which will also include a PDF of your application for your records. You can continue to access your submitted application on your grant portal dashboard. Unfortunately, once an applicant submits their application, you can NOT make changes. However, if you accidentally submit before completion of the application, please contact catherine@wamicrobiz.org.

Items to include in your application:

1) Questions answered on a Word document so you can copy and paste into the grant portal (optional, but remember to click “Save Draft” frequently as you complete the application on the portal to avoid losing any work), 2) Completed Funding Request Form in Excel (available for download on the WSMA website or from the grant portal), 3) Expected economic impact outcomes ready to copy & paste into the grant portal, 4) Organization Budget for the current or 2026 calendar year, 5) Profit & Loss (P&L) / Income Statement (actuals) from the 2024 calendar or fiscal year or most recent 12-month period, and 6) Organization (or fiscal sponsor) IRS 501(c)(3) Letter of Determination. If you use a fiscal sponsor, you will also need to upload a written agreement to the relationship.

Application Questions

Tab 1: Contact Information

Contact information is copied directly from your organization and user profiles and will appear in a read-only state within this form. If the information displayed is outdated, please update your organization and user profiles before completing and submitting this form. After saving any changes to your user and/or organization profile, click “Save Draft” to refresh the application.

Organization Information (*pulled from organization profile*)

- Organization Name
- Organization Address - Official, stated in W-9 Form
- Organization Phone
- Organization Website
- Organization EIN (Employer Identification Number)
- Organization UBI (Unique Business Identifier)
- Organization's Washington State Legislative District(s)
- Organization's Washington State Congressional District(s)

Primary Contact Information *(pulled from user profile)*

- Contact Name
- Contact Address
- Contact Phone
- Contact Email

Tab 2: Project Information

Each proposal will be independently evaluated. WSMA is dedicated to ensuring that funds are distributed to nonprofit organizations serving businesses throughout the state to achieve geographic and demographic equity.

1. Are you applying for a Statewide Grant or an Urban Grant? *(Select “Statewide Grant” and click “Save Draft” for the corresponding questions to appear.)*

If your organization predominantly serves urban-based small businesses in the small-scale manufacturing, childcare, or homebuilding/construction industries, please apply for a \$10,000 Urban Grant (refer to the WSMA 2025-2026 Urban Grant Program Guidelines and Application Checklist). For all other applicants, including those serving urban-based businesses in industries outside of the sectors noted above, apply for a \$10,000 Statewide Grant.

2. Tell us about your agency/organization with specific focus on your ability to provide business training, technical assistance and/or access to credit services or financial support for microbusinesses in Washington state. *(200-word limit)*
3. Select which areas your organization will be focusing its efforts: Indicate all that apply.

- **Training:** Provide multi-session training programs or comprehensive business training webinars or workshops that build the capacity of small businesses to attract new customers, manage their finances, fine tune their operations, apply for financing, etc.
 - **Training Series:** Group-based, connected, multi-session or cohort training experience where one session is connected to the next and attendance is expected at all sessions, typically with a culmination event or certificate.
 - **Training Workshops:** One-time or stand-alone events that provide vital training programs but as individual or separate, unconnected events where attendance at all workshop/webinar sessions is optional.
- **Technical Assistance:** Assistance to small businesses that includes but is not limited to support for accessing federal and state loans/grants, business coaching, helping businesses with implementing their business plans, troubleshooting, improving marketing strategies or accessing financing, etc.
- **Microlending or Financing Support:** Assistance to organizations that provide support for accessing microloans and other financing resources for microenterprises. Funding is available to provide technical assistance, loan

processing, outreach, business counseling, and other services. **However, the loan amount itself and/or any fees associated with it that are normally paid by the borrower cannot be covered with these funds; this funding prohibition applies as well to any type of other lending or financial instrument.**

4. Is your organization an Existing ESO, Embedded ESO, Emerging ESO or Other? Please see Section B - Definitions in the Program Guidelines.
5. Does your organization have demonstrated experience providing comprehensive business services for small-scale manufacturing, creative economy, agriculture/food-based economy, clean technology, childcare, homebuilding/construction, life sciences, maritime trades, and/or tourism small businesses? (*Please select up to two.*)
 - a. How many years of experience?
6. Does your proposal primarily serve businesses in rural or urban communities? Is it statewide? Refer to Section B - Definitions in the Program Guidelines. Note: Statewide projects include programs with a demonstrated history of service delivery, primarily accessed by businesses located across the state. Reminder: If you predominately serve urban-based businesses in the small-scale manufacturing, childcare, or homebuilding/construction industries, apply for an Urban Grant by selecting “Urban Grant” in question #1, and then click “Save Draft” to refresh the application.
7. Which counties does your organization serve? Note: Your organization serves businesses in a particular county if entrepreneurs from that county have attended your virtual webinars and/or if you have provided programs or business events in that county in the last six months. (*Select all that apply.*)
8. Regarding your outreach, engagement and services for BIPOC-owned businesses in your service area, identify the communities you serve below. Indicate all that apply:
 - American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic or Latino
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHPI)
 - White
 - Other/Mixed Race
9. Is your organization led by a Person of Color (BIPOC)?
10. Provide a 150-word abstract (brief summary of your proposal). For example:

Sample 1: Sophisticated Resources (SR) will provide outreach, tools and business services to small-scale manufacturers in Southeast Washington. SR specializes in training, technical assistance and other resources that help the very small businesses we serve reach new markets and strengthen their business practices so they can grow their

capacity to thrive in rural Washington. This program will offer hands-on training and technical assistance to manufacturers and will help them complete applications for permitting, licensing new products, and access procurement services.

Sample 2: Elegant Opportunities (EO) supports predominantly French speaking elder entrepreneurs through a 12-week Business Planning Series in Hopeful and Diligent Counties that includes financial education, marketing, business plan development, financial projections and more. EO will provide our training and technical assistance services in one-on-one and in small groups all in French. Outreach events in several communities will enable EO to build connections for these entrepreneurs and enroll them into business programs. A unique strength of our work is how past graduates are becoming trainers and mentors in the program.

11. Scope of Work (SOW) Summary (*table format*): List the primary deliverables your organization will provide with these grant funds. How do you intend to use WSMA grant funds? What tools and resources will you provide to microbusinesses? Complete the columns for the number of businesses, sessions, and hours of instruction per deliverable business service type - cohort training series, module/single workshops/webinars/events, or one-on-one/small group technical assistance (as outlined in Section 3 of the Program Guidelines). For proposal alignment, your SOW summary must match your numbers reported in Tab 4, Economic Impact Outcomes. Please note that, for this grant cycle, your program **must serve at least 35 Washington-based unduplicated businesses.**

We understand that this is your proposed plan for what your organization will accomplish with this grant. WSMA recognizes that you will also need to be flexible to make changes as necessary to accommodate unforeseen circumstances.

The SOW summary table on the following page contains sample language for guidance. Only complete the business service types (row) relevant to your deliverables. For multiple business service deliverables, click the “+” button on the grant portal to add additional rows.

Business service type (Training Series, Training Workshops, Technical Assistance, Access to Financing)	# of sessions	Total duration, in hours (includes pre- and post-event)	In-person, virtual, or both	Location (city or county. If virtual, indicate which areas the businesses served are based in)	# of businesses served	Anticipated collaborators/partners (if applicable, be specific)	Description of work
Training Workshop	4	8	In-person	Port Townsend	40	SBDC (Small Business Development Center), Chamber of Commerce	Two-hour workshops on “Tips and Tools for Start-ups” to focus on 10 entrepreneurs each that have not yet been formally established.
Training Series	8	27	In-person	Jefferson County	10	Local CDFI (Community Development Financial Institution) and library	Based on our past experience and surveys, we will reach and connect with 50 entrepreneurs in February, provide business programming for 10 business owners from March-May. Translations and interpretation and other support will be provided as needed for participants. We will train 10 manufacturers to source materials, expand, purchase equipment, or manage waste.
Technical Assistance	12	18	Both	Vancouver, Ridgefield, Clark County	30	EDC, DES (Department of Enterprise Services), Vancouver Community Library	Individual or small group technical assistance with the following topics that include, but are not limited to: How to overcome fears of scaling; Legal advice; Panel discussion of business owners in the industry to share their experience and advice; Access to financing resources; Other topics as identified by participants: resale opportunities, stores, transportation, warehouse.
Access to Financing	6	3	Both	Vancouver, Ridgefield, Clark Country	6	CDFI, local lender	Through the technical assistance sessions, we will assist six businesses in applying for and securing loans.

12. Project Narrative: Describe how the organization will accomplish the specific activities highlighted in the Scope of Work section. This section tells a story about why the particular services are essential, understanding the needs of the entrepreneurs that you will serve, who will be doing the work, what vital resource partners are involved, and how the programming will unfold.

Please share important information about how your proposed programs will ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in their delivery. Finally, include unique or essential details about the services that will distinguish the program from other applications.

As often as possible, provide the name and type of webinars, kinds of business technical assistance support, and/or what translation and interpretive services you will provide, and how your project is connecting businesses with financing resources, if applicable. *(1,000-word limit)*

13. Beyond the traditional measures of impact, please describe what you expect to be the impact of your proposed project on your organization, the businesses and/or communities served. Impact is measured differently for different communities. Some examples might include quality of life, increased revenue, new employees, wealth creation, new location, greater confidence expressed by businesses served, stability, hopefulness, etc. *(200-word limit)*
14. Explain how you will track your progress, including the total number of business owners served and the results of your work. Identify the specific platforms, software, spreadsheets, or other tools that enable your organization to measure progress with economic impact outcomes. If applicable, please share how you will measure quality of life, greater stability, hopefulness, etc. through surveys and other strategies. *(200-word limit)*

Tab 3: Funding Request

Application requests must total **\$10,000**. Applicants will use the 2025-2026 WSMA Fund Request Form (Excel), available for download from the [grant portal](#) or the [WSMA website](#). If you are unable to download a copy, please reach out to Catherine Borgeson at catherine@wamicrobiz.org. Once you fill in your ***REQUIRED Fund Request Form*** with written budget justifications AND line-item amounts in the Excel form, you will upload the completed Excel spreadsheet to the grant portal (third tab of the application) using the upload graphic (file with an up arrow). Please upload in Excel, NOT PDF nor Numbers.

Tab 4: Economic Impact Outcomes

Outcomes are vital for understanding the **impact of these funds**. Identify the anticipated economic impact outcomes your organization expects to reach, especially your unduplicated businesses served (entrepreneurs being served, surveyed or supported or business services being paid for, specifically with these funds) of your proposal. Intensive support for a smaller number

of businesses is sometimes as valuable as reaching many companies with limited programming. Gauge your impact carefully. Put a zero (0) if this category does not apply to you. Of course, it is difficult to project into the future. This section is important for WSMA to evaluate your best understanding for the goals you want to achieve for these grant funds and to get a sense for how you will achieve them.

Jobs & Businesses

- Jobs Created with these Funds (*If an existing business you served hires a new employee, that is a job created. If a person you served with business assistance starts a new business [see definition below], that is one job created.*)
- Jobs Saved (*If a business is able to keep a person on as an employee as a result of the business services your organization provided, it is a job saved.*)
- Businesses Started (*If the entrepreneur you served formalizes their business with a UBI number/business license, establishes an EIN, and/or sets up a business bank account, etc. it is considered a business started.*)
- Businesses Expanded (*If a business is able to reach new markets, increase their revenue, access financing, expand on their physical space or hire more employees as a result of the business services your organization provided to this business, it can be counted as a business expansion.*)
- Total **UNDUPLICATED** Business (existing and start-up) Served (*Unduplicated counts a business one time no matter how many services [a workshop, a webinar, a technical assistance session] are attended or received with at least one hour of in-depth business support provided to a unique business.*) Please note, for this grant cycle, your program **must serve at least 35 unduplicated businesses.**

Business Training Series (*Group-based, connected, multi-session or cohort training experience where one session is connected to the next and attendance is expected at all sessions, typically with a culmination event or certificate.*)

- Sessions Provided (*Number of sessions in a training series*)
- Businesses (Existing and Start-up) Served (*Number of businesses that attended the training series*)
- Total Hours of Instruction (*Total number of hours of all the sessions*)

Business Training Workshops/Webinars (*One-time or stand-alone events that provide vital training programs but as individual or separate, unconnected events where attendance at all workshop/webinar sessions is optional.*)

- Sessions Provided (*Number of stand-alone workshops or webinars provided*)
- Businesses (Existing and Start-up) Served (*Number of participants that attended each of the workshop[s] or webinar[s]*)
- Total Hours of Instruction (*Hours only. For example, two, one-hour workshops would be two hours of instruction*)

Technical Assistance (*Business provider or specialist supporting the needs of a specific business or small group of businesses*)

- Sessions Provided (*Number of meetings or appointments regardless of the number of hours*)

- Businesses (Existing and Start-up) Served (*Number of participants that received at least one business technical assistance hour of support*)
- Total Hours of Technical Instruction (*Hours only. For example, if a business had two appointments, lasting two hours each, the total would be four hours.*)

Access to Financing (Loans/Grants)

- Businesses (Existing and Start-up) Served (*Including those assisted with referrals*)
- Referrals to Local/Regional Lenders as a Result of the Project (*Number of businesses introduced to a financing partner*)
- Loans/Grants Applied For (*An application for funding is submitted*)
- Businesses Awarded Loans/Grants (*If applicable*) (*How many businesses secured a loan and/or grant?*)
- Total Amount Funded/Received (*Total funding dollars awarded to the business*)

Demographics of Those to be Served

- # of Veteran Owned Businesses
- # of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous & People of Color) Owned Businesses
- # of Women Owned Businesses (who identify as such)
- # of Businesses Owned by People with Disabilities
- # of Businesses Owned by People Exiting the Justice System
- # of LGBTQ+ Owned Businesses (who identify as such)
- # of OMWBE Certified Businesses
- # of Businesses Owned by Refugees and/or Immigrants

Tab 5: Attachments to Upload

1. Organizational Budget (not the project budget) for the current or 2026 calendar year.
2. Organizational Profit & Loss (P&L) or Income Statement (actuals) for the 2024 calendar year, or fiscal year or most recent 12-month period. This document shows how much your organization has spent and earned over a 12-month period.
3. Organization (or fiscal sponsor) IRS 501(c)(3) Letter of Determination. The IRS determination letter notifies a nonprofit organization that its application for federal tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) has been approved. If you do not currently have a 501(c)(3) filed with the IRS, you must have a fiscal agency with a 501(c)(3) to serve as your fiscal sponsor with documentation defining the relationship. As noted in Section 2, WSMA will only fund organizations with a fiscal sponsor for two (2) years. After that time, ESOs will be required to have their own federal status as a nonprofit. Nonprofit or quasi-governmental applicants with different formal IRS designations will also be considered. For example: Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Districts, etc. that provide business services to small businesses are eligible to apply. Unfortunately, academic institutions are not eligible for funding at this time.

Tab 6: Certifications & Attestation

1. I certify this nonprofit does not discriminate with regard to employees, volunteers, delivery of programs or services, or clients served based on age, sex, religion/creed, race, color, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, marital status, military or veteran's status, pregnancy or genetic information.
2. I certify that our nonprofit is active and does not have any compliance or regulatory issues with state or federal agencies, as of the date of signature.
3. I certify that I am authorized to submit this proposal to WSMA on behalf of the organization.

Please Note: By entering your name, title, and date into the WSMA grant portal, you are:

1. Representing that you are an officer or other agent duly authorized to enter into legally binding agreements.
2. Agreeing to submit this WSMA grant application in an electronic form which shall be bound by its contents as an electronic transaction.
3. Agreeing that your insertion of this data constitutes an electronic signature.