



## Resources in the Small Business Community: Lending and Entrepreneurial Development

### What are my options for obtaining capital to start or expand my business?

The SBA administers an array of [loan programs](#) to help businesses start, expand, and recover from disasters. Below are programs SBA offers to help your business succeed:

- [The 7\(a\) Loan Program](#) is SBA's primary business loan program, assisting small businesses to obtain financing when they are unable to obtain traditional credit.
- [The 504 Certified Development Company Program](#) provides long-term, fixed rate financing for businesses to acquire real estate, buildings, or heavy equipment and machinery.
- SBA's [Microloan Program](#) provides loans to non-profit intermediary lenders who in turn lend the funds in amounts of \$50,000 or less to the smallest of small businesses and start-ups.
- The [Small Business Investment Company \(SBIC\) Program](#) provides long-term loans and equity capital to high-growth start-up businesses.
- [The Community Advantage Program](#) is a pilot initiative intended to increase the number of SBA lenders making loans to underserved communities.
- SBA provides low interest, long-term loans through its [Disaster Loan Program](#) to businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations, homeowners, and renters. These loans can be used for physical and economic damage caused by a declared disaster.

### Where do I go for business assistance?

The SBA operates a wide-range of programs designed to assist would-be and existing entrepreneurs.

- [Small Business Development Centers](#) (SBDCs) help entrepreneurs realize the dream of business ownership and help existing businesses remain competitive in a global marketplace.
- The [Service Corps of Retired Executives](#) (SCORE) program utilizes an expansive network of volunteers to provide business assistance to entrepreneurs.
- [Women's Business Centers](#) (WBCs) represent a national network of nearly 100 educational centers, which provide in-depth counseling, training and mentoring.
- [Veteran's Business Outreach Centers](#) (VBOCs) provide entrepreneurial development services such as business training, counseling and mentoring, and referrals for eligible veterans owning or considering starting a small business.
- [Procurement Technical Assistance Centers](#) (PTACs) provide local, in-person counseling and training to provide technical assistance to businesses that want to sell products and services to federal, state, and local governments.

- The [Program for Investment in Microentrepreneurs](#) (PRIME) program is one of the only federal programs that target very low-income entrepreneurs.
- [State Trade Expansion Program](#) (STEP) provides financial awards to state and territory governments to assist small businesses with export development.

### **I live in a rural area. Are there any programs designed to meet my unique needs?**

- [The U.S. Farm Service Agency](#) administers a number of [loan programs](#) including the following:
  - [Beginning Farms and Rancher Loans](#) for farmers and ranchers unable to obtain credit from commercial credit sources.
  - [Commodity Loans/Marketing Assistance Loans](#) that provide interim financing at harvest time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell commodities when market prices are low.
  - [Microloans](#) for small, beginning, niche, and non-traditional farm operations.
- The [United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development](#) offers a wide variety of programs and services for small businesses. These include:
  - A [listing](#) of assistance programs, loan guarantees, and grants for specific rural industries.
  - The [Rural Business Investment Program](#) (RBIP) provides a Rural Business Investment Company (RBIC) license to newly formed venture capital organizations to help meet the equity capital investment needs in rural communities.
  - The [Rural Business Development Grants](#) (RBDG) is a competitive grant designed to support targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas that have fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenues.

### **I still have questions. What resources are available to help me?**

The SBA has several tools available to assist small business develop and grow.

- [Disaster Center Offices](#) offer counseling and financial help to those who are rebuilding their homes and offices.
- The SBA's [Entrepreneurship Education](#) initiative provides assistance to high-growth small businesses in underserved communities through the Emerging Leaders, Accelerators, and other ScaleUp initiatives.
- SBA [District](#) and [Regional](#) Offices offer a wide range of assistance.