

Resources for Social Equity and Economic Empowerment Applicants

Our Academy

<http://thisisourdream.com/what-is-our-academy/>

A workshop, mentorship, and resource group of individuals and companies in the cannabis industry open to knowledge sharing and supporting social equity applicants, partners, and other disproportionately impacted communities.

Business Growth and Technical Assistance Programs

The following programs exist within the state of Vermont to assist both developing and established businesses.

Vermont Employment Growth Incentive

<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/funding-incentives/vegi>

A performance-based cash incentive (not a tax credit) paid to approved companies for prospective job and payroll creation in any region of the state and in almost any sector. The program requires board approval.

Companies looking to earn the incentive must apply to the Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC), who will determine if the company and project meet statutory requirements. There are no restrictions on the type or size of company that can apply or the number of jobs that must be created.

Vermont Talent Pipeline Management

<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/programs/vtprm>

A two-phased approach to rethinking the development and sourcing of Vermont's future workforce. Phase one focuses on the demand side of the talent pipeline – what employers need of their prospective talent pool. The second phase focuses on the supply side – finding and leveraging a qualified applicant pool so employers can hire the best talent they can.

Vermont Procurement Technical Assistance Center

<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/programs/ptac>

This Vermont program is part of a nationwide network that shares one common goal — to provide businesses with an understanding of the requirements of government contracting and the know-how to obtain and successfully perform federal, state, and local contracts. Among the assistance VPTAC can provide, the program can:

- Offer free of charge one-on-one business counseling
- Identify government buyers and subcontracting opportunities
- Initiate market research

- Review bid proposals and assist with preparation
- Help to clarify contract terms and regulations
- Provide training and networking opportunities

State Trade Expansion Program Grant

<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/programs/international-trade>

This grant has been awarded to Vermont by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to support Vermont businesses to engage internationally through trade missions, trade shows, and export education. The SBA and STEP's objective is to increase the overall number of U.S. small business exporters and to increase their export sales.

The STEP program's focus in Vermont is on relationship development and export planning—helping businesses diversify to include global markets that benefit companies and their employees alike.

Brownfields Initiative

<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/funding-incentives/brownfields>

Offers remediation grants and loans to promote the productive reuse and redevelopment of sites that are currently abandoned or not fully utilized due to contamination or the perception of contamination on the site. Common brownfield sites include former gas stations, automotive repair shops, schools, dry cleaners, print shops, and other service-oriented businesses.

The Fund is administered by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development with funds made available to Vermont from the Environmental Protection Agency. Eligible applicants can be private developers, non-profits, or municipalities.

Vermont Small Business Development Center

<https://www.vtsbdc.org/>

VtSBDC combines one-on-one confidential advising with training programs to give clients the tools and insight they need to reach their business goals. They can assist with startup planning, financing, sales/marketing, growth strategies, financial management, and operations.

Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center

<https://vmec.org/>

The Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC) has operated statewide as a not-for-profit Center since 1995, collaborating with public and private partners in business, government and education to bring world-class assistance and resources to Vermont manufacturers and other enterprises of all sizes, helping them overcome ever-changing challenges, become more competitive and grow their profitability.

Vermont Employee Ownership Center

<http://veoc.org/>

The VEOC supports business owners considering an exit to broad-based employee ownership via an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), worker co-op, or similar model. The non-profit offers free pre-

feasibility consulting, presents seminars, organizes an annual conference, and maintains a revolving loan fund to support the financing of such deals.

Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program / Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

<https://www.vhcb.org/viability>

The Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program offers business planning and technical assistance to Vermont's commercial-scale farm, food, and forestry enterprises to help them achieve long-term success. Businesses seeking support with meeting their goals for expansion, diversification, and transition can apply for up to two years of one-on-one planning and technical assistance. In-depth services are carried out by a statewide network of advisors and can include: business planning, enterprise analysis, financial record management, marketing and sales, human resources management, and planning for transition.

Regional Development Corporations

<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/resources/rdc>

The Department of Economic Development provides administrative funding to our twelve Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) serving every geographic region of the state. These organizations serve as “satellites” of the DED, and they provide local knowledge and facilitate assistance in their communities. View RDC map coverage.

Intervale Center Farm Business Planning Programs

<https://www.intervale.org/vermont-farm-and-forest-viability-program>

Provides Vermont’s farmers – from aspiring farmers to established business owners – with business development opportunities.

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation Advancement Grant

<https://www.vsac.org/pay/applying-online-financial-aid/vermont-grants>

These are awards to individuals and may be a potential source of training funds (they are state funds; not federal) for those who enroll in relevant, industry recognized certificate/credential programs.

Advancement Grant (previously the Vermont Non-Degree Grant)—for Vermont residents enrolled or planning to enroll in a non-degree course or training program that will enhance job skills to improve a person's ability to get a job or that gives an introduction to college courses.