

External Funding Sources

<p>USDA Rural Development</p>	<p>The U.S. Department of Agriculture, through its Rural Development agency, provides a range of funding programs that can seed new initiatives. Funding limits vary and match may be required. Programs include Rural Community Development Initiative, Rural Business Opportunity Grant, Rural Business Enterprise Grant, and Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants.</p>
<p>State Departments Of Economic Development or Commerce</p>	<p>Many state departments of economic development or commerce provide grant programs that communities can tap. They also administer Community Development Block Grants that often can be used to support entrepreneurship strategies.</p>
<p>Other Government Agencies</p>	<p>Depending on the development project and activity, there are literally hundreds of funding sources that can help with projects ranging from libraries to wastewater systems.</p>
<p>U.S. Economic Development Administration</p>	<p>The U.S. Economic Development Administration provides economic development-related funding ranging from dollars for planning projects to capital for business incubators.</p>
<p>Federal Home Loan Banks</p>	<p>Many of the nation’s Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLB) have economic development grant programs and support. For example, the Topeka FHLB has a JOBS grant program that is a great fit for entrepreneurial community strategies.</p>
<p>Other Federal Agencies</p>	<p>Depending on the need, the federal government provides funding for initiatives ranging from rural health care to community facilities.</p>
<p>Regional Organizations</p>	<p>Most communities are served by regional organizations such as Development Districts, Resource Conservation and Development Districts and Community Action Agencies. Many provide both community and economic development funding opportunities. These organizations may also provide planning support and even grant writing and administration services.</p>
<p>Microenterprise Development Organizations</p>	<p>Some states and many community development organizations operate microenterprise programs that combine lending and training for small entrepreneurs. If you can partner with one of these organizations to serve your region, you free up resources to fill other gaps in your support system.</p>
<p>Community Development Financial Institutions</p>	<p>Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) help to meet the financing needs of entrepreneurs who are not quite bankable. These organizations are motivated to help entrepreneurs <i>and</i> their communities. They can be important partners in increasing your community’s capacity to better serve your entrepreneurs.</p>
<p>Local and Regional Foundations</p>	<p>Many communities are served by local or regional community or private foundations and trusts. Often these organizations provide grants that can be flexible in funding entrepreneurship efforts.</p>
<p>State and National Foundations</p>	<p>Most communities have access to statewide and national foundations that can be funding partners for specific projects.</p>