

Gov. Evers: Announces more than \$86 million for diverse business investment and diverse business assistance grants

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MILWAUKEE — Gov. Tony Evers today awarded more than \$86 million in grants to support small businesses in communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have historically had difficulty accessing credit and capital.

“We’re continuing to build a strong and resilient economy that works for everyone, and that means encouraging business development in communities that have been hit hard by the pandemic and often face barriers to getting the tools and resources they need to be successful,” said Gov. Evers. “By supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs, these grant programs will ensure job growth, stronger communities, and a brighter, more equitable future for Wisconsin.”

Of the more than \$86 million, \$57.6 million in grants were awarded through the Diverse Business Assistance Grant Program to 24 chambers of commerce and nonprofit organizations providing assistance to small businesses. These grants will support the work of chambers of commerce across the state in providing coaching and mentoring, technical assistance, equipment and internet services, digital literacy, online marketing and social media training, financial aid, and financial literacy support, as well as networking and educational opportunities for new business owners and emerging entrepreneurs. A list of grant awardees and additional information can be found on the [program website](#) (see award announcement). Another \$28.8 million in grants were awarded through the Diverse Business Investment Grant Program to nine Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). These CDFIs support micro and small businesses not only through lending and providing access to capital and credit, but many also support programs that provide additional technical assistance, coaching and mentoring, and credit counseling. These grants will help these institutions continue to bolster and ignite economic and business growth in Wisconsin. A list of grant awardees and additional information can be found on the [program website](#) (see award announcement).

“Local chambers, nonprofit organizations, CDFIs, and other organizations selected for these grants work closely with local businesses and are uniquely positioned to provide technical assistance and expertise to help diverse businesses succeed,” said Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld. “We’re proud to support these efforts and ensure that many more of our communities can experience a strong recovery.”

Part of a more than \$1 billion investment allocated by the governor for economic resilience and support for small businesses and impacted industries, the Diverse Business Assistance and the Diverse Business Investment Grant Programs were first announced in [October 2021](#) to support an equitable economic recovery in Wisconsin and help businesses that have been both severely distressed by the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic and have historically had difficulty accessing the credit and capital necessary to recover. Both programs are administered by DOA and funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Applications opened on Nov. 29, 2021, and closed on Jan. 21, 2022.

Wisconsinites can visit [BadgerBounceback.wi.gov](https://www.badgerbounceback.wi.gov) to view pandemic-related assistance information for families, farmers, businesses, organizations, and communities, as well as the latest data and success stories about how COVID-relief investments are making a difference across the state. For updates on other recovery-related grant opportunities, sign up for the [Badger Bounceback update list](#).



An online version of this release is available [here](#).