



The Rise of Rural Entrepreneurship

INSIGHTS FROM THE 2018 RURAL RISE SUMMIT

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The Rise of Rural Entrepreneurship

On May 14-16, 2018, **170 community leaders and rural ecosystem builders** gathered at Canaan Valley Resort in Davis, West Virginia for the inaugural **RuralRISE Summit**. Over the three days, they collectively sought to answer the question **“How do we empower the leaders, doers, and innovators in rural communities?”**

Over six sessions, they had the opportunity to learn from experts, stakeholders, and peers on topics pertinent to their work. Following each set of talks, they then broke into small groups to share their personal insights on a variety of topics.

Through these discussions, the **170 participants** identified **90 valuable resources** and shared almost **1,400 ideas**.

From this data, we’ve developed this report summarizing some of the key insights and findings from the RuralRISE event. While this report is by no means comprehensive, we hope you will find it valuable in informing your work.

Keep in mind an idea that emerged in the discussions.

Change in the rural context is likely to be slow, but we should celebrate every small success in this important work.

“You must be intentional to make progress.”

- Table B, Discussion #6



Overview of Insights

1. Make our Language More Accessible Through Story
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12. Rural Communities Present Unique Opportunities



Make our Language More Accessible Through Story

1.

“Use language that everyone understands.”

- Table A, Discussion #6

“(Stories) humanize the technical aspects of the activity. Stories make what happened accessible.”

- Table E, Discussion #4

“It’s important to get a variety of stories...because a single story may not resonate with everyone—but multiple stories can.”

- Table E, Discussion #4

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As with many industries, the emerging field of “ecosystem building” is fast becoming laden with insider talk and terminology. While the words may be the same, what people mean by them varies greatly. At the same time, people are saying the same things in very different ways and not actually hearing each other. Insider talk has the potential to alienate not only potential partners, but the very people we seek to serve.

KEY INSIGHTS

Without a shared, accessible language to communicate, we will miss opportunities to maximize our impact and create an inclusive community. In addition to using language everyone understands, we can also use story to make ecosystem building work more accessible to local entrepreneurs, potential collaborators, and supporters. Stories inspire and teach. Stories foster human connection.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [AppalShop](#)
- » [Kauffman’s The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook](#)
- » [Main Street America Resource Center](#)
- » [Rise of the Rest Ecosystem Playbook](#)
- » [Story Corps](#)



2. Be Intentional & Inclusive in our Collaboration Efforts

“No sector has all the answers or tools.”

- Table V, Discussion #2

“(Invite) the ones that share the vision. We need to get rid of the dead weight.”

- Table U, Discussion #4

“Even seemingly homogenous rural communities have diverse populations, often hidden from the mainstream.”

- Table E, Discussion #6

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Let’s be honest. True collaboration is hard. While we all know it’s important and necessary to get us to where we want to go, it takes work. From national networks to local ecosystems, we have to work together to get the right people at the table, moving in the same direction.

KEY INSIGHTS

For collaboration efforts to be effective, they should keep in mind the following. First, in all the conversations regarding collaboration, two primary goals emerged: knowledge and connections. We collaborate to extend both who and what we know. Second, collaboration must be cross-sector and inclusive. Each sector, each person brings unique perspective, expertise, voice, and resources. Third, collaboration doesn’t happen naturally. Someone has to be the convenor, the guide, the moderator. Lastly, we should focus our collaboration efforts on those who already share the vision rather than expending energy on changing minds.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [New American Farmer Teaching Resources, New Entry Sustainable Farming Project](#)
- » [Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program, SBA](#)
- » [SheEO Ventures](#)
- » [Veteran Entrepreneur Portal, Department of Veterans’ Affairs](#)
- » [Village Capital](#)
- » [Volunteer Opportunities Search Engine, Corporation for National and Community Service](#)
- » [Women-Owned Small Business Contracting Program, SBA](#)



3. National Networks Exist to Support Local Change

“(On the) local level, culture is key. Connect locally, then move outward.”

- Table V, Discussion #2

“Rural communities don’t know who the national providers are. National level providers don’t have the clarity on WHO locally is really invested in supporting the ecosystem; there needs to be better communication.”

- Table U, Discussion #2

“Those in local communities need to understand (available) tools; national networks can provide the link.”

- Table L, Discussion #2

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

National and regional networks of ecosystem builders and resource providers are in the process of being created through events such as this one. National and regional networks have a lot to offer: support, resource sharing, learning opportunities, relationships. However, how these networks are built, and to what end, will ultimately dictate their value.

KEY INSIGHTS

While we are spending a lot of time and energy developing networks somewhat removed from the local context, we need to remember that their ultimate purpose is to support local change. We need to establish clear connections between national and regional leadership and those working on the ground in local communities.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [Appalachian Regional Commission \(ARC\)](#)
- » [Center for Rural Entrepreneurship](#)
- » [Central Appalachian Network](#)
- » [CO.STARTERS](#)
- » [Delta Regional Authority](#)
- » [Growing Entrepreneurial Communities Summit](#)
- » [InBIA](#)
- » [Kauffman ESHIP](#)
- » [Local Economy Fellows Program, BALLE](#)
- » [Main Street America](#)
- » [National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship \(NACCE\)](#)
- » [NetWork Kansas](#)
- » [RCAP](#)
- » [Small Business Development Centers, SBA](#)
- » [SOAR Summit](#)
- » [Southern Swag Conference](#)
- » [Ten at the Top Events](#)
- » [Village Capital](#)



4. Relationships & Trust are a Precondition for Collaboration

“We have to make opportunities for relationships to build and trust to grow.”

- Table A, Discussion #2

“It’s beyond having just a network, it’s important to build a team where partners hold one another accountable, trust one another, and have common goals through unity of purpose.”

- Table I, Discussion #1

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Everyone seems to agree that collaboration at every level is necessary for ecosystem building to work. But in a world where resources are scarce and competition rampant, true collaboration is challenging.

KEY INSIGHTS

Before collaboration can occur, whether between networks of national service providers or local entities working on the ground, authentic relationships and trust must be established. Trust is most easily built one person at a time, through face-to-face interactions. If we seek to establish collaborative communities and peer networks, we need to create opportunities and activities that intentionally cultivate relationships.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [All Small Mentor-Protégé Program, SBA](#)
- » [Central Appalachian Network](#)
- » [CO.STARTERS](#)
- » [Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities Program, The West Virginia Hub](#)
- » [Kauffman ESHIP Summit](#)
- » [Local Economy Fellows Program](#)
- » [Main Street Now Conference](#)
- » [NACCE Membership](#)
- » [Network Kansas](#)
- » [SOAR Summit](#)
- » [Story Corps](#)
- » [Village Capital](#)



5. Ecosystem Building Provides a Framework

“People have to look for new ways to work.”

- Table V, Discussion #1

“Ecosystem building helps all understand their role in the process/system.”

- Table A, Discussion #1

“Within the network there is overlap and a lot of noise.”

- Table J, Discussion #1

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Entrepreneurship and supporting entrepreneurs is nothing new. Numerous resources already exist. However, duplication of efforts, overlapping supports, and the sheer number of activities create a lot of “noise” in the space that can be difficult to navigate.

KEY INSIGHTS

One of the key ways an ecosystem building approach can help us move forward more effectively is by providing a framework to make sense of the “noise.” By identifying key players and what they offer, ecosystem builders can know where they fit best, who can help them, and where they can provide the most value to others.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [CO.STARTERS](#)
- » [e2 University, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship](#)
- » [Kauffman ESHIP Summit](#)
- » [Kauffman’s The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook](#)
- » [Kumu Visualization Tool](#)
- » [Rural RISE Summit](#)
- » [SourceLink Resource Navigator](#)
- » [Strategic Doing Knowledge Base](#)
- » [Village Capital](#)
- » [WealthWorks](#)



6. Understand the Ecosystem Builder's Role, Unique Perspective, and Qualifications

“So much of ecosystem building is organic— not something you can force. We need people who can manage that.”

- Table L, Discussion #3

“Experience and being around people who have ‘done it’ is more valuable than formal learning.”

- Table E, Discussion #3

“(We need) ‘boundary spanners’ who help connect different groups/people.”

- Table E, Discussion #3

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As ecosystem building emerges as a new approach to economic development, defining the role and qualifications of the ecosystem builder becomes increasingly important. Who is this person? What sorts of things prepares her for the job? What is the job exactly?

KEY INSIGHTS

Instead of leading the charge in creating entrepreneurial activity, the ecosystem builder's primary role is to listen—to the needs of entrepreneurs on the ground, to community leadership and stakeholders, to national leaders. Only by listening are they able to connect the dots. They must be able to work across organizations and not be too vested in any one. Their role is to help the various players understand their strengths and help them focus on what they do best.

Life experience is what prepares them for the job more than any sort of formal education or training. Instead of needing certification programs, something along the lines of a professional association would bring credibility and support to the work.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [Kauffman's The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook](#)
- » [Local Economy Fellows Program, BALLE](#)
- » [Kauffman ESHIP Summit](#)
- » [The Mayors Conference on Entrepreneurship](#)



7. Change What We Measure

“Sometimes the numbers don’t mean anything... Everyone’s definition of success should not be the same.”

- Table F, Discussion #5

“Success looks like incremental gain.”

- Table O, Discussion #1

“[Creating a national standard] will be challenging because each community is unique and prides itself on its uniqueness.”

- Table J, Discussion #3

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

We all know that tracking metrics over time is important for gauging success. It not only helps us be accountable to funders and stakeholders, it also helps us determine when course corrections are needed. But numbers don’t always tell the whole story and what we track matters for crafting the narrative we want to tell.

KEY INSIGHTS

Everyone agrees that the traditional metrics are still important to track (demographic information, businesses launched, jobs created, capital invested, local taxes generated, sales revenue...). However, as we shift from traditional economic development models to ecosystem building, several new metrics could help us tell new stories. For example, tracking the number of connections and partnerships established shows how the ecosystem builds, how it is interconnected. Measuring changes in mindset of the entrepreneur and capturing who decides not to start their business after receiving help acknowledges that a lot of the valuable work we do is not reflected in “businesses launched.” Helping people, regardless of the outcome, matters.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [Aspen Institute](#)
- » [Association for Enterprise Opportunity \(AEO\) Research and Reports](#)
- » [BALLE Quick Impact Assessment](#)
- » [Brookings Institute](#)
- » [Economic Analysis, CLUE Group](#)
- » [Economic and Business Development Initiatives \(ARC\)](#)
- » [Federal Reserve System Data and Analysis](#)
- » [Interactive Upstate Resource Maps, Ten at the Top](#)
- » [Kauffman Foundation Research](#)
- » [Village Capital](#)
- » [WealthWorks Resources](#)



8. Continue Searching for Sustainability

“We do really well demonstrating the needs, but proving sustainable models is challenging.”

- Table U, Discussion #5

“There is funding of the entrepreneur and funding of people who support the entrepreneur, but a clear model hasn’t really emerged. It’s all kind of piecemeal.”

- Table G, Discussion #6

“We need to change our definition of sustainability to not always be dependent on nonprofit support. We need efforts that can go on without us.”

- Table C, Discussion #5

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Let’s face it. Finding the funding to do our ecosystem building work is tough. To truly be effective, we need to be able to plan for the long-term. But the way current funding models work, we often live grant to grant, funding cycle to funding cycle. Effective efforts often get cut short and a vast amount of energy goes into securing funds to underwrite our work instead of into the work itself.

KEY INSIGHTS

Everyone agrees that sustainability is important, but new ideas on how to address this critical issue were few. It appears that the majority of ecosystem building work is currently funded through private philanthropy or public grants, and many are feeling the pressure to find new sources. Some proposed new sources included mission related investments (MRIs), program related investments (PRIs), impact investing, and for-profit subsidiaries. In order to create true sustainability in the sector, more intentional and focused effort needs to be spent on innovations and testing new models.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [Appalachia Funders Network](#)
- » [CDFI Certification](#)
- » [Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation](#)
- » [East Kentucky Technical Assistance Providers](#)
- » [Economic Development Resource Map, Vermont Innovation Network](#)
- » [Growth Accelerator Fund Competition, SBA](#)
- » [Launch Tennessee](#)
- » [NACCE Membership](#)
- » [New York State Innovation Hot Spot Program](#)
- » [NetWork Kansas](#)
- » [The Kauffman Foundation](#)



9. Identify Where Policy and Government Make the Most Impact

“(Government) dollars follow prior success instead of innovation or possibilities of new outcomes.”

- Table G, Discussion #5

“Education needs to happen to help policy makers understand the impact of what they are doing. They want us to think about sustainable solutions.”

- Table G, Discussion #4

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Governmental entities and organizations are a natural stakeholder when it comes to ecosystem building. From federal agencies to local city government, they have an important role to play in supporting entrepreneurial activity.

KEY INSIGHTS

Because government is so big and so prevalent, it’s easy to turn to them for support in every type of activity. However, government might be more effective if it supported the ecosystem building work in several key ways.

First, government can play an important role in creating and supporting the infrastructure necessary for entrepreneurs to succeed. Reliable broadband, water, sewer, roads, electricity, etc. are all vital for businesses to thrive. In rural communities, broadband is particularly important. When connectivity is present, startups can move anywhere to generate their ideas—even rural communities.

Second, in addition to creating pro-small business policies, policy makers can play an important role in paving the way for sustainable income streams for entrepreneurial support organizations (See Continue Searching for Sustainability). More funders might consider mission related investments, program related investments, and impact investing if policies made the easier and more attractive.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [Appalachian Regional Commission \(ARC\)](#)
- » [Brookings Institute](#)
- » [Federal Reserve System](#)
- » [Rural Communities Assistance Partnership](#)
- » [Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#)
- » [The Mayors Conference on Entrepreneurship](#)

10. Establish a Multigenerational Approach

“We need to help find the entrepreneurial spirit in young people and nurture it.”

- Table C, Discussion #1

“Working with the kids actually changes the view of the parents... (they) begin to believe in the future.”

- Table H, Discussion #1

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Many rural communities face “brain drain” and struggle with talent retention as one of their greatest assets—young people—leave the community for opportunities elsewhere. On the other end of the spectrum, retirees are moving to rural communities, drawn by the allure of the charm, neighborliness, and affordability of a small town.

KEY INSIGHTS

A multigenerational approach in rural areas could cultivate the spirit of entrepreneurship needed for these communities to thrive. By inspiring youth with the possibilities of entrepreneurship from an early age, more students will see opportunity at home and decide to spend their time and talents investing in their community. With the right supports, retirees looking for their “next act” can apply a lifetime’s worth of experience to creating new businesses. Even greater opportunities exist if we connect the various age demographics in support of one another.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [36|86: Student Edition](#)
- » [AARP’s Knowledge Base](#)
- » [Center for Rural Entrepreneurship’s New Generations Partnerships](#)
- » [CO.STARTERS 24Hour Generator](#)
- » [CO.STARTERS Generator](#)
- » [Ice House Student Success](#)
- » [Launch Tennessee Student Meetups](#)
- » [Maker Faire](#)
- » [SCORE Mentor Network](#)
- » [Senior Corps](#)

11.

Account for Local Context while Leveraging Commonalities

“Not a one-size fits all approach.”

- Table L, Discussion #1

“It’s important to differentiate ecosystem building work depending on place.”

- Table B, Discussion #1

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Every community is unique. What is needed to create a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem is particular to local circumstances. Yet, while acknowledging the importance of the local context, rural communities also have some commonalities that provide an opportunity for cross-community collaboration and learning.

KEY INSIGHTS

Instead of searching for “one size fits all” approaches to ecosystem building, we need to help communities capitalize on their unique assets to best support local entrepreneurs. What works in one community may not translate well to another and even one entrepreneur’s journey within a single ecosystem could look entirely different than her neighbor’s. While accounting for the uniqueness of each community, we can also leverage commonalities to make our work more effective. For example, most rural communities have a community college, SBA presence, a library, and a Rotary club. By figuring out how to tap into or network these common community stakeholders, we can share learnings across communities and better collaborate.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [EveryLibrary](#)
- » [Land Grant Universities](#)
- » [Main Street America Resource Center](#)
- » [NACCE](#)
- » [Rural Opportunity Map](#)
- » [Small Business Development Centers, SBA](#)
- » [WealthWorks Resources](#)

12.

Rural Communities Present Unique Opportunities

“Size is a benefit—(it) can be a lab setting.”

- Table Q, Discussion #6

“Rural communities are uniquely situated to move into the new economy.”

- Table J, Discussion #6

“One person can change a community.”

- Table R, Discussion #6

PRIMARY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

When thinking about the rural context, it's easy to see the challenges. Isolation, lack of infrastructure, local patterns and thinking, poor talent retention, and lack of resources are all barriers to sustaining business. However, rural communities have assets their more urban counterparts lack that can be leveraged into new opportunities.

KEY INSIGHTS

One unique opportunity that exists in rural communities is the affordable cost of living. Dollars go further in rural communities, which can be a huge asset for cash-strapped startups and founders. Second, by nature of being small, a deep sense of community and real relationships are easier to cultivate. Both insider information and potential collaborators are easier to identify. Lastly, due to its scale, a rural community can serve as a laboratory for new ideas. Its leanness lends well to experimentation and flexibility. Locals are used to doing much with little and their resourcefulness may find new ways to move forward.

RELATED RESOURCES

- » [Center for Rural Entrepreneurship](#)
- » [Central Appalachian Network](#)
- » [CO.STARTERS Rural](#)
- » [NetWork Kansas](#)
- » [RCAC Loan Fund](#)
- » [Rural Communities Assistance Partnership](#)
- » [Rural Entrepreneur Initiative](#)
- » [Rural Opportunity Map](#)
- » [SOAR](#)
- » [Sustainable Agriculture Learning & Education Center](#)



Resource List

FIND WAYS TO ENGAGE AT RURALRISE.ORG

- » Monthly Action Sessions
- » Working Groups
- » Resources
- » Events
- » Mailing List
- » Social Links

At the RuralRISE event, **90 potential resources** were identified. While the majority were the names of organizations, we know that sometimes a single organization provides multiple resources that can help ecosystem builders in different ways. For this reason, we took the initial list and spent some time fleshing out what each organization specifically has to offer.

We know there is still more to add! **If you know of something we missed, please go to ruralrise.org** and let us know

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

\$1.71m Impact Fund

Launch Tennessee

The Impact Fund supports startups solving social, environmental and economic problems, making seed-stage investments at \$50,000-150,000. They look at for-profit ventures with double bottom lines in agriculture, healthcare, sustainable living, education, clean energy and financial inclusion.

<https://launchtn.org/entrepreneur-programs/capital-programs/impact-fund/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

1 Million Cups

Kauffman Foundation

The 1MC program takes place in over 100 cities across the country, where local entrepreneurs have the opportunity to present their startups to a diverse audience of mentors, advisors, and entrepreneurs.

<https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/entrepreneurship/1-million-cups>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

24Hour Generator

CO.STARTERS

24Hour Generator is an event designed to inspire high school students with the vision, enthusiasm, and tenacity needed to become entrepreneurs. Utilizing the CO.STARTERS Generator curriculum, 24Hour Generator provides a platform for students to combine their talents while working to solve real problems in business and the community.

<https://costarters.co/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

36|86: Student Edition

Launch Tennessee

36|86: Student Edition, part of 36|86 Entrepreneurship Festival, is an opportunity for student entrepreneurs to network and learn about what is happening in the startup world. The main event is the student pitch competition where 12-15 companies will compete for a total of \$60k.

<https://launchtn.org/3686-student-edition/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

8(a) Business Development Program

Small Business Administration

The federal government tries to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to small disadvantaged businesses each year.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/8a-business-development-program>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

AEO Research and Reports

Association for Enterprise Opportunity

AEO publishes reports and data concerning the small business landscape at the state level, and probes into the details of starting and stabilizing a small business.

<https://aeoworks.org/research>

REPORT/PUBLICATION/COMPILED RESEARCH & DATA

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

All Small Mentor-Protege Program

Small Business Administration

Your small business can learn from an experienced government contractor through the mentor-protege program.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/all-small-mentor-protege-program>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Appal Shop

Appal Shop

Located in the heart of the central Appalachian coalfields, Appalshop houses media production and training facilities in film and video, a community radio station, a 150-seat theater, art gallery, and regional archive of over 4,000 hours of film, audio recording, and still images. They feed more than \$1,500,000 into the local economy each year through salaries and programming.

<https://www.appalshop.org>

PROMOTION/MEDIA/STORYTELLING

Appalachia Funders Network

Appalachia Funders Network

The Appalachia Funders Network seeks to connect communities across Appalachia, in order to accelerate an equitable Appalachian transition. Membership benefits include strong connections to grant-makers, access to a database of members across interests and geography, and foundation type, and expanded access to new resources and initiatives.

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

NETWORK

Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs

Aspen Institute

Members of ANDE have access to networking opportunities, scholarships to ANDE events, opportunities to raise their profile, new research, and a catalyst fund. ANDE is the only global organization dedicated to the flourishing of the Small and Growing Business sector.

www.andeglobal.org

NETWORK

BALLE Quick Impact Assessment

BALLE

The Quick Impact Assessment is designed to help businesses measure and improve their impact on the communities and natural places on which they depend in a digestive and informative way.

<https://bealocalist.org/about/our-impact/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

BE STRATEGIC

Entrepreneur Fund

The BE STRATEGIC program is for business owners who have been in business for at least two years. Participants will be coached by experienced entrepreneurs in creating strategic business plans, revising marketing approaches, organizing financial statements for decision making, and developing a network of peers to continue support.

http://www.corefouronline.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=173&Itemid=164

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Business Assistance Resources

Western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance

On their website, wKREDA has included a large amount of incentive, financing and training opportunities that are available from any wKREDA member in cooperation with the State of Kansas. At times, this vast amount of information can be overwhelming, but our members are dedicated to helping any business gain access to these programs.

<http://www.wkreda.com/wkreda/assistance>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

CDFI Certification

Community Development Financial Institutions Fund

The CDFI offers certification to organizations that provide financial products and services in underserved communities. This certification is the first step to receiving government grants and funding.

<https://www.cdfifund.gov/programs-training/certification/Pages/default.aspx>

CERTIFICATION

Central Appalachian Network

Central Appalachian Network

CAN is currently exploring new ways of working that connect and strengthen sustainable development actors around the central Appalachian region to build shared analysis and strategies. They seek to connect actors who support small business development and entrepreneurship, and accomplish this through small grants, peer networking opportunities, and the sharing of various tools and resources.

<http://www.cannetwork.org/index.asp>

NETWORK

Choose Connection Lab

BALLE

The Choose Connection program connects entrepreneurs with examples of personal practice and inspiring stories by convening monthly labs.

<https://bealocalist.org/choose-connection/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

CO.STARTERS Causes

CO.STARTERS

An iteration of CO.STARTERS' nine-week program, the Causes version addresses important concerns such as impact and sustainability for people launching projects, businesses, or social initiatives to better the community.

<https://costarters.co/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

CO.STARTERS Core Program

CO.STARTERS

Groups of 10-16 entrepreneurs meet as cohorts for nine weeks, develop and fine-tune their ideas, and leave the program with a deeper understanding of how to create a sustainable venture, articulate their models, and repeat the process with the next great idea.

<https://costarters.co/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

CO.STARTERS Generator

CO.STARTERS

CO.STARTERS Generator is a modular version of CO.STARTERS' core program that helps teens explore their passions through generating, testing, and launching ideas.

<https://costarters.co/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

CO.STARTERS Rural

CO.STARTERS

The Rural version builds on the CO.STARTERS flagship nine-week program and addresses concerns unique to communities in rural regions that struggle to support new businesses.

<https://costarters.co/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Community Food Projects Resources

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, in collaboration with its partners, offers free one-on-one technical assistance, educational resources, and professional development opportunities for current grantees and applicants to the Community Food Projects grant program of the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

<https://nesfp.org/national-and-state-networks/community-food-projects>

NETWORK

Contracting Guide

Small Business Administration

The SBA's guide to contracting equips small businesses with information on the basics of government contracting.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

CORE FOUR Business Planning Course

Entrepreneur Fund

Developed by the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, Inc., The CORE FOUR Business Planning Course teaches aspiring or existing business owners the information and skills they need in fundamental or „CORE“ elements of business planning.

http://www.corefouronline.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=171&Itemid=162

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Delta Regional Authority

Delta Regional Authority

The Delta Regional Authority works to improve regional economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region.

<http://dra.gov/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

e2 University

Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

e2 University is a platform for the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship to share their learning and tools, as well as updated materials. They provide free resources for use in building an entrepreneurial community and offer partnerships and mentorships for those who are building such communities.

<https://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org/library/e2university/e2universityaboute2resources.html>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Economic Analysis

CLUE Group

The CLUE Group provides several consulting services, including a detailed economic analysis geared to estimate the dollar volume of new commercial sales a district can absorb. Essentially, they analyze a geographic region's economy to predict the amount of new business that could take place there, first prioritizing the absorption of those sales by preexisting businesses.

<http://www.cluegroup.com/overview>

CONSULTING/SERVICE (SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE)

Economic and Business Development Initiatives

Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission supports a variety of activities to promote entrepreneurship and business development in the Appalachian region. Business development efforts include the Asset-Based Development Initiative, Telecommunications Initiative, Appalachian Capital Policy Initiative, and the ARC Entrepreneurship Initiative.

https://www.arc.gov/program_areas/index.asp?PROGRAM_AREA_ID=14

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

Economic Development Resource Map

Vermont Innovation Network

Vermont has a plethora of resources to assist in rural innovation and sustainable economic development. On this map, those resources are color coded by their scope (regional, statewide, national, or global).

<https://www.vtinnovationnetwork.com/development-resources>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities Program

The West Virginia Hub

The Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities program is an entrepreneur-focused community development initiative. The program assists rural entrepreneurs in their business ventures to move community development efforts to the next level via community based support for these entrepreneurs.

<http://wvhub.org/what-were-doing/energizing-entrepreneurial-communities/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Entrepreneurship Coaching and Strategic Development Consulting

Jose Luis Otero

Jose Otero seeks to aid startup companies that face adverse marketing conditions, experience financial distress, or that are looking to expand their business.

jotero@jari.com

CONSULTING/SERVICE (SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Entrepreneurship Resources

AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that empowers people to choose how they live as they age. To help the over 50 demographic, they provide a variety of articles and webinars to help members start their own businesses.

<https://www.aarp.org/work/small-business/>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

[Entrepreneurship.org](https://www.entrepreneurship.org)

Kauffman Foundation

[Entrepreneurship.org](https://www.entrepreneurship.org) is one of the most comprehensive sources of information, tools and resources available to help aspiring entrepreneurs start businesses, create wealth and employ people.

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

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Etsy

Etsy

Etsy provides a creative marketplace where nearly 30 million buyers around the world spent over \$2.8 billion last year. Etsy only charges a 3.5% transaction fee; they also provide powerful tools for business promotion, as well as support and education for entrepreneurs.

<https://www.etsy.com/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Every Library

Every Library

EveryLibrary is the first and only national organization dedicated to building voter support for libraries. They “promote public, school, and college libraries, including by advocating in support of public funding for libraries and building public awareness of public funding initiatives.

<http://everylibrary.org/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Exporting, Research, and Development Grants

Small Business Administration

If your small business is engaged in scientific research and development, you may qualify for federal grants under the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Additionally, the SBA’s State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) provides financial awards to state and territory governments in order to help small businesses with export development.

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Farm Business Planning Course

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

The Farm Business Planning Course teaches participants how to create a mission and vision for their businesses, identify their resources, create marketing plans, set goals and create timelines, develop enterprise budgets, and synthesize these elements into a cohesive plan.

<https://nesfp.org/farmer-training/farm-business-planning>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Farmer Resource Library

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

New Entry's farmer library has hundreds of resources on sustainable farming, marketing, and operating a successful small business. Their physical library at their offices in Lowell, MA contains books, periodicals, pamphlets, and videos in English, Spanish, Hmong, and Khmer. You can also search the online directory for downloadable digital resources, helpful web sites, and online farming videos.

<https://nesfp.org/farmer-training/library>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

Growing Entrepreneurial Communities Summit

The Growing Entrepreneurial Communities Summit is a practitioner-focused summit designed to help economic development and small business practitioners effectively create economic growth through entrepreneurship in local communities.

<https://www.kansascityfed.org/events/2018/growing-entrepreneurial-communities-04-2018>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Federal Reserve System Data and Analysis

Federal Reserve System

The FRS provides the data and analysis of the small business sector from this year and previous years on its website.

<https://www.federalreserve.gov/consumerscommunities/small-businesses-data-analysis.htm>

REPORT/PUBLICATION/COMPILED RESEARCH & DATA

Federal Reserve System Entrepreneurship Conferences

Federal Reserve System

The Federal Reserve System offers a variety of conferences regarding the small business sector and entrepreneurship.

<https://www.federalreserve.gov/consumerscommunities/small-businesses-conferences.htm>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Foundation Center Research & Data

The Foundation Center

The Foundation Center provides research and data concerning global philanthropy on its website.

<https://foundationcenter.org/>

REPORT/PUBLICATION/COMPILED RESEARCH & DATA

Funding Assistance

Village Capital

We build a community of entrepreneurs solving a major problem in society. We run a series of intensive programs focused on helping a cohort of entrepreneurs build the team, secure the strategic partnerships, and raise the investment capital they need to scale their business. At the end of each program, we rely on the entrepreneurs themselves to determine the most investment-ready ideas in their cohort, and we invest in ventures picked by their peers.

<https://vilcap.com/entrepreneurs-landing/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Funding Assistance

Virginia is for Entrepreneurs

Whether you're an entrepreneur in Abingdon or Alexandria, Virginia is for Entrepreneurs will connect you with the investors and supporters who can make it easier. On their website is a diagnostic test to determine the maturity of your company, after which they find possible investors.

<http://va4e.org/entrepreneurs/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Get Started Workshop

CO.STARTERS

Built on the CO.STARTERS model, this three-hour workshop helps participants work together to explore their ideas through the CO.STARTERS Canvas, learn how to refine their models through meaningful customer feedback, and define next steps.

<https://costarters.co/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Grants

Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation seeks to encourage human development in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania. Guidelines for who can apply for a grant can be found at <http://benedum.org/how-to-apply/application-guidelines/>

<http://benedum.org>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Grants

Kauffman Foundation

The Kauffman Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations that have exceptional track records in supporting women, minority and diverse entrepreneurs.

<https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/entrepreneurship/grants-for-entrepreneurship-support-organizations>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Center for Disease Control

CDC provides contracts and research grants to small businesses engaged in scientific research and development.

<https://www.cdc.gov/contracts/cdc-and-small-business/index.html>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Growth Accelerator Fund Competition

Small Business Administration

Every year, 20 startup-focused centers of excellence receive \$50,000 each to boost economic impact of growth among accelerators across the country. The SBA especially seeks to support the development of accelerators in parts of the country where there are fewer sources of access to capital, as well as accelerators that support women or are led by women.

<https://www.sba.gov/content/sba-growth-accelerator-fund-competition>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Hatfield-McCoy Trail System Economic Impact Study Report

Hatfield-McCoy Trail System

In the Summer of 2014, Marshall University's Center for Business and Economic Research completed an updated Economic Impact Study for the Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority. The first Economic Impact Study was completed on 2006. Research gathered for each of these studies reflect the impact on the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System's project area and Southern West Virginia

<http://www.trailsheaven.com/About-the-TRAILS/Economic-Impact-Report.aspx>

REPORT/PUBLICATION/COMPILED RESEARCH & DATA

HUBZone Program

Small Business Administration

The federal government tries to award at least three percent of all federal contracting dollars to HUBZone-certified small businesses each year.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/hubzone-program>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Ice House Entrepreneurship Program (Original Edition)

Entrepreneurial Learning Initiative

Ice House (Original Edition) draws upon eight fundamental concepts of entrepreneurial thought and process drawn from the companion text, "Who Owns the Ice House? Eight Life Lessons from an Unlikely Entrepreneur." Through the Ice House Opportunity Discovery Process, the program provides for problem-based, experiential learning by identifying problems, finding solutions, and making connections beyond the classroom.

<https://elimindset.com/entrepreneurship-programs/ice-house-entrepreneurship-program/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Ice House Entrepreneurship Program (Small Business Edition)

Entrepreneurial Learning Initiative

The Ice House Entrepreneurship Program (Small Business Edition) is designed to inspire and engage participants in the fundamental aspects of entrepreneurial thinking while immersing them in the process that will enable them to develop entrepreneurial skills.

<https://elimindset.com/entrepreneurship-programs/ice-house-small-business/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Ice House Student Success

Entrepreneurial Learning Initiative

The Ice House Student Success Program is a student success course that inspires and engages students with the perseverance and determination of an entrepreneurial mindset needed to succeed academically and in life.

<https://elimindset.com/entrepreneurship-programs/ice-house-student-success/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

InBIA

InBIA

InBIA is a global non-profit with over 2,200 members that lead entrepreneurship support organizations in 62 countries. InBIA provides industry best practices through education while enabling collaboration, mentorship, peer-based learning and the sharing of innovative ideas for entrepreneurs across the globe.

<https://inbia.org/>

NETWORK

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Informative Accounting Articles

National Society of Accountants

The National Society of Accountants has numerous articles for small businesses on their webpage pertaining to tax filing, IRS resources for small businesses, and Q&A articles.

<http://www.nsacct.org/home>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Interactive Upstate Resource Maps

Ten at the Top

Ten at the Top provides several interactive maps of resources and assets for businesses and ecosystem builders in the upstate region of South Carolina.

<https://tenatthetop.org/interactive-upstate-resource-maps/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Kauffman ESHIP Summit

Kauffman Foundation

The ESHIP Summit is a convening of leaders from across the United States and beyond seeking to support entrepreneurs, build ecosystems and change our economy; the summit connects entrepreneurial ecosystem builders working to empower the makers, the doers and the dreamers of our society.

<https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/entrepreneurship/eship-summit>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Kauffman FastTrac Program

Kauffman Foundation

Kauffman FastTrac is a flexible course with a solid framework to support you as you start a business and begin your journey to success. This immersive course is designed to provide information, tips, exercises and tools to help you think about your business idea.

<https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/entrepreneurship/kauffman-fasttrac>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Kauffman Foundation Research

Kauffman Foundation

The Kauffman Foundation offers research on its website that includes the Kauffman Index, an umbrella of annual reports that measure U.S. entrepreneurship across national, state, and top 40 metro levels. Also available are the U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Survey of Entrepreneurs and information regarding the research of the Kauffman Entrepreneurship Scholars.

<https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/entrepreneurship>

REPORT/PUBLICATION/COMPILED RESEARCH & DATA

Kauffman Playbook

Kauffman Foundation

The Kauffman Playbook is a simple, understandable, shareable guide, based on years of research and experience, for those who seek to foster entrepreneurship in their communities.

<https://www.kauffman.org/entrepreneurial-ecosystem-building-playbook/introduction#>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Kiva Loans

Kiva

Kiva supports poverty alleviation by granting loans to business owners around the world in need of financial support.

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

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

LaunchTN Networks

Launch Tennessee

LaunchTN Networks offer early-stage companies in Life Sciences and Energy access to expert mentors through a systematic program proven to deliver results.

<https://launchtn.org/entrepreneur-programs/launchtn-networks/>

NETWORK

Kumu Data Visualization

Kumu

Kumu is a data visualization platform that allows users to create complex information maps. Entrepreneurs will find value in Kumu's ability to draw powerful asset, systems, network, and concept maps.

<https://kumu.io/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Legal Assistance

American Disabilities Act Technical Assistance

The American Disabilities Act was designed to legally protect disabled individuals; its website provides information to those seeking technical assistance in understand their civil rights as they pertain to the workplace.

<https://www.ada.gov/>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Land Grant Universities

Universities as designated by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890

The mission of these institutions is to focus on the teaching of practical agriculture, science, military science, and engineering as a response to the industrial revolution and changing social class.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_land-grant_universities

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Lender Match

Small Business Administration

Lender Match is a tool for finding lenders that work with the SBA. The SBA reduces risk for lenders and makes it easier for them to access capital. That makes it easier for small businesses to get loans.

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Local Economy Fellows Program

BALLE

The BALLE Local Economy Fellowship is a two-year program designed for leaders who are advancing the development of healthy, equitable local economies. The immersive program connects those leaders with their peers, equips them with new skills, perspectives, and resources to help advance their work, and provides a platform to share experiments and models so that other regions can learn from them.

<https://bealocalist.org/fellowship/>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Main Street America Institute

Main Street America

The Main Street America Institute (MSAI) supports professionals in realizing these roles through a comprehensive set of learning opportunities that provide the tools and strategies needed to lead results-oriented revitalization efforts.

<https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/msai>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Main Street America Resource Center

Main Street America

The Resource Center is a collection of educational publications, webinars, and short films illustrating the power of the Main Street movement. The center is only available to members of Main Street America.

<https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/resourcecenter>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Main Street Now Conference

Main Street America

People from urban neighborhood business districts, small and rural towns, suburban communities, large and mid-sized cities, will all benefit from ideas, solutions, issue discussion, and networking opportunities that only Main Street America offer.

<https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/mainstreetnow>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Maker Faire

Maker Faire

Maker Faire is a gathering of fascinating, curious people who enjoy learning and who love sharing what they can do. Primarily designed to be forward-looking, the Faire showcases makers who are exploring new forms and new technologies. But it's not just for the novel in technical fields; Maker Faire features innovation and experimentation across the spectrum of science, engineering, art, performance and craft.

<https://makerfaire.com/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Microgrants

Launch Tennessee

The LaunchTN Microgrants program is available to certain Tennessee-based early-stage companies that are currently or will be in the near-term applying for an SBIR/STTR Phase I, Phase II or Fast-Track award. The intent of the SBIR/STTR Microgrants program is to increase the quantity of quality SBIR/STTR applications by providing financial support for experienced grant-writing assistance.

<http://launchtn.org/entrepreneur-programs/microgrants/sbir-microgrant/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Minority CDE NMTC Training

Community Development Financial Institutions Fund

The Minority Community Development Entity (CDE) New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Training is being provided by the National Community Investment Fund to certified CDEs that met the CDFI Fund's definition of Minority-Owned or Minority-Controlled, in order to inform participants of the various roles which they can participate in the NMTC Program.

<https://www.cdfifund.gov/programs-training/training-ta/Pages/minority-cde-nmtc.aspx>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

myWay to Credit

Association for Enterprise Opportunity

myWay to Credit is a bank referral marketplace for small business lending. This tool connects small business that don't qualify for financing to a vetted network of community leaders and small business mentors.

<https://mywaytocredit.com/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

NACCE Membership

National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship

NACCE provides a wide variety of strategic resources, professional development opportunities, and access to grant funds. Your NACCE membership will help you accelerate the growth of your entrepreneurship program and assist more stakeholders in your region.

<http://www.nacce.com/>

NETWORK

Natural Resource Sales Assistance Program

Small Business Administration

The government sells large amounts of natural resources and surplus property. The SBA works with federal agencies to channel a fair share to small businesses.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/natural-resource-sales-assistance-program>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

NetWork Kansas

NetWork Kansas

NetWork Kansas is a statewide network of connected non-profit business-building resources that help entrepreneurs and small business owners. Find our partners below by searching for areas of business assistance.

<https://www.networkkansas.com/connections>

NETWORK

NetWork Kansas Classes

NetWork Kansas

NetWork Kansas offers a variety of seminars and classes regarding entrepreneurship, from business basics to tax workshops.

<https://www.networkkansas.com/classes>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

New American Farmer Teaching Resources

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

NESFP has over 60 training and technical assistance (T&TA) resources, primarily for New American audiences and the programs that serve them. New Americans include refugees, asylees, and immigrants who are part of the current and next generation of beginning farmers in the U.S. and Canada.

<https://nesfp.org/new-american-resources>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

New Generations Partnerships

Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

The Center's New Generations Partnerships engage with youth and young adults through focus groups, asset mapping, youth projects, evaluation, and training.

https://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org/solutions/youth_engagement_system.html

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

New York State Innovation Hot Spot Program

New York State Government

The goal of the Hot Spot Program is to improve the quality and quantity of incubator services provided to young companies, thereby enabling these businesses to successfully transition from early stages to large-scale commercialization.

<https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2017-12/2017-innovation-hot-spot-program-overview.pdf>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

NFIB Membership

National Federation of Independent Businesses

NFIB provides members with access to a multitude of resources, including technical, legal, marketing, and strategy aid. Also accessible for members is their Small Business Playbook.

<https://www.nfib.com/>

CONSULTING/SERVICE (SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE)

NRCS Financing and Resources

National Resource Conservation Service

NRCS works with USDA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), which was established June 26, 1979 pursuant to Public Law (P.L.) 95-507. Through this work, NRCS fosters the use of small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses as federal contractors.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/people/outreach/?&cid=stelprdb1049204>

VARIOUS SERVICES

RAIN Fund Program

Rainsource Capital

A RAIN Fund is a member-lead group consisting of 20+ investors who invest \$1million or more into promising growth companies.

<http://www.rainsourcecapital.com/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

RCAC Loan Fund

Rural Community Assistance Corp

RCAC's Loan Fund is a financial resource for rural communities. The Loan Fund fills financing gaps and serves in areas that conventional markets traditionally neglect. We offer loans for affordable housing development, environmental infrastructure, community facilities and small businesses in rural locations.

<https://www.rcac.org/programs-services/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Research and Articles

Brookings Insitute

The Brookings Institute is a nonprofit public policy organization that conducts in-depth research into problems at local, national, and global levels. They occasionally publish research and articles pertaining to American entrepreneurship and the small business sector.

<https://www.brookings.edu>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Retired Military & Annuitant Pay

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

R&A Pay establishes, maintains and pays military retirees, their surviving spouses and other family members.

<https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Rise of the Rest Ecosystem Playbook

Rise of the Rest Seed Fund

The playbook is a compilation of insights, experiences, and advice from local stakeholders that Rise of the Rest met while touring the country.

<https://www.revolution.com/playbook/file/ROTR%202018%20Ecosystem%20Playbook.pdf>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Rural Community Assistance Partnership

RCAP

RCAP is a national network of nonprofit organizations focused on economic development, entrepreneurship and access to safe drinking water and wastewater for rural and small communities through the United States. RCAP's network of more than 200 technical assistance providers are located in every state, including Puerto Rico, and help communities build ecosystems that drive capacity, opportunity and economic growth.

<https://rcap.org/>

NETWORK

Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative

American Farm Bureau Federation and Georgetown University

The initiative provides access to a hub of webinars, blogs, and resources to help rural entrepreneurs start their businesses.

<http://www.strongruralamerica.com/>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Rural Opportunity Map

Center on Rural Innovation

An interactive map detailing areas of broadband coverage, thirty-minute driving radii around centers of higher education, tax credit-eligible tracts, and the overlap between these areas.

<https://ruralinnovation.us/rural-opportunity-map/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Rural RISE Summit

Rural Communities Assistance Partnership

Rural RISE is the inaugural summit for rural leaders fighting to empower leaders, doers, and innovators in rural communities.

<https://rcap.org/rural-rise/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

SARE Learning Center

Sustainable Agriculture Learning & Education

SARE's Learning Center is a treasure trove of sustainable agriculture information, including books, bulletins, curricula, videos, fact sheets, and much more.

<https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

SBA Business Guide

Small Business Administration

The SBA hosts a collection of informative guides and advice for starting your own business.

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

SBA Disaster Assistance

Small Business Administration

The SBA provides low-interest disaster loans to help small businesses and homeowners recover from declared disasters.

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

SBA Learning Center

Small Business Administration

The SBA offers a variety of online courses to help you start and run your business.

<https://www.sba.gov/learning-center>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

SBIC Finder

Small Business Administration

An SBIC is a privately owned company that's licensed and regulated by the SBA. SBICs invest in small businesses in the form of debt and equity. The SBA doesn't invest directly into small businesses, but it does provide funding to qualified SBICs with expertise in certain sectors or industries. Those SBICs then use their private funds, along with SBA-guaranteed funding, to invest in small businesses.

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/investment-capital>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

SBIR/STTR Matching Fund

Launch Tennessee

The SBIR/STTR Matching Fund Grants Program is developed and funded by LaunchTN (via the State of Tennessee) to advance commercialization efforts via a matching of funding awarded to Tennessee based companies through successful SBIR and STTR applications.

<https://launchtn.org/entrepreneur-programs/capital-programs/sbir-matching-fund/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

SCORE Mentor Network

SCORE

SCORE is the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors, with more than 10,000 volunteers in 300 chapters.

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

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

SCORE Workshops

SCORE

SCORE offers live and recorded webinars, interactive courses on demand and in-person, local workshops from industry leaders and mentors on a variety of business topics.

<https://www.score.org/take-workshop>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Senior Corps

Corporation for National and Community Service

Senior Corps is a CNCS program specifically targeted at engaging senior citizens with community service opportunities.

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Federal Contracting Program

Small Business Administration

The federal government tries to award at least three percent of all federal contracting dollars to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses each year.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/service-disabled-veteran-owned-small-businesses-program>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

SheEO Ventures

SheEO

SheEO is a global initiative to radically transform how we finance, support, and celebrate female entrepreneurs who are building new mindsets, models, and new solutions that benefit humanity. Women-owned businesses can apply to be SheEO ventures. Further qualifications can be found on SheEO's website.

<https://sheeo.world/ventures/apply-to-be-a-venture/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Small Business Development Centers

Small Business Administration

There are nearly 1,000 local centers available to provide no-cost business consulting and low-cost training to new and existing businesses.

<https://americassbdc.org/>

CONSULTING/SERVICE (SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE)

Small Business Majority Entrepreneurship Program

Small Business Majority

Small Business Majority's Entrepreneurship Program delivers the information and resources you need to run a successful small business. Designed specifically for entrepreneurs, this site will guide you in accessing capital, planning for your and your employees' golden years, inform you about the workplace issues you face everyday and more.

<http://www.smallbusinessportal.org/>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

SOAR Summit

SOAR

SOAR hosts an annual summit that empowers Central Appalachian organizations and businesses to achieve their goal of building a connected Appalachia.

<http://www.soar-ky.org/summit17>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Source Link Resource Navigator

Source Link

A great search tool for business resources that can be implemented in any community

<https://www.joinsourcelink.com/identify/resource-navigator>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Southern Swag Conference

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group

This is their annual event, providing a forum to learn about sustainable farming techniques and marketing strategies, community food systems, and federal farm policies and programs that promote sustainable agriculture. This event also provides producers, researchers, information providers, concerned consumers and community organizers the opportunity to build networks, strengthen alliances, and celebrate the achievements of Southern sustainable farmers.

<https://www.ssawg.org/about-conference/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Start-up Kansas Loans

Western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance

StartUp Kansas provides gap financing to help entrepreneurs start or grow a business in Kansas. The loan program matches other public sources of capital and can provide up to \$45,000 per project. Funds are flexible and can be used for a variety of business purposes, including equipment, inventory, and working capital. Entrepreneurs work with a NetWork Kansas resources partner to apply for funds.

<http://www.wkreda.com/wkreda/assistance/financing-alternatives>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

Story Corps

Story Corps

StoryCorps gives people of all backgrounds, typically two at a time, the opportunity to record meaningful conversations and archives the recordings at the Library of Congress.

<https://storycorps.org/>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Strategic Doing Knowledge Base

Strategic Doing

Here you,Äôll find the general ,Äúknowledge base,Äù for Strategic Doing ,Äì videos, case studies, materials, research (that,Äôs research on Strategic Doing, specifically), and information on supporting theories (that,Äôs research on related concepts that help explain why Strategic Doing works).

<https://strategicdoing.net/knowledge/>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

Strategic Doing Network

Strategic Doing

Strategic Doing enables leaders to design and guide new networks that generate innovative solutions. It is a new strategy discipline that is lean, agile and fast,Äîjust what organizations, communities and regions need to survive and thrive.

<https://strategicdoing.net/>

NETWORK

STTR Program

Small Business Administration

The Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) is another program that expands funding opportunities in the federal innovation research and development (R&D) arena. Central to the program is expansion of the public/private sector partnership to include the joint venture opportunities for small businesses and nonprofit research institutions. The unique feature of the STTR program is the requirement for the small business to formally collaborate with a research institution in Phase I and Phase II. STTR's most important role is to bridge the gap between performance of basic science and commercialization of resulting innovations.

<https://www.sbir.gov/about/about-sttr>

PROGRAM (EDUCATION, TRAINING, ETC)

Student Meetups

Launch Tennessee

Regional student meetups are great opportunities for student entrepreneurs to find resources for their startups and get involved with their entrepreneurship communities.

<http://launchtn.org/student-programs/regional-student-meetups/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Surety Bond Facilitation

Small Business Administration

Surety bonds help small businesses win contracts by providing the customer with a guarantee that the work will be completed. Many public and private contracts require surety bonds, which are offered by surety companies. The SBA guarantees surety bonds for certain surety companies, which allows the companies to offer surety bonds to small businesses that might not meet the criteria for other sureties.

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/surety-bonds>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Sustainable Agriculture Grants

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

SARE grants fund research and education projects exploring a multitude of areas, as detailed on their website.

<https://www.sare.org/Grants>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

T2 Toolkit

Federal Laboratory Consortium

The T2 Toolkit offers a comprehensive set of tools and services for anyone from startups to large corporations seeking information and access to federal resources that can propel them along the path to commercialization success.

<https://www.federallabs.org/t2-toolkit>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Technical Assistance

East Kentucky Technical Assistance Providers

The East Kentucky Technical Assistance Providers (EKyTAP) is a network of non-profit and quasi-governmental organizations dedicated to supporting entrepreneurship and small business development in Eastern Kentucky. Member organizations offer free entrepreneurial support services throughout Eastern Kentucky.

<https://www.facebook.com/EKyTAP/>

CONSULTING/SERVICE (SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE)

Technology Transfer Offices

Launch Tennessee

Tennessee's technology transfer offices are dedicated to identifying research that has commercialization potential. LaunchTN collaborates with those offices to develop strategies to advance the successful transition of technologies from laboratory to market. Entrepreneurial researchers have access to a portfolio of programmatic and financial resources to support their business formation and growth.

<https://launchtn.org/entrepreneur-programs/tech-transfer-offices/>

CONSULTING/SERVICE (SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE)

Ten at the Top Events

Ten at the Top

Ten at the Top hosts a variety of workshops, conferences, and summits for businesses and ecosystem builders in the upstate region of South Carolina.

<https://tenatthetop.org/ten-at-the-top-events/>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

The Edward Lowe Foundation Grants

The Edward Lowe Foundation

The Lowe Foundation provides funding for organizations that are involved in preventative or rehabilitative programs that benefit the critical needs of at-risk women and children located in the state of Texas.

<http://www.thelowefoundation.org/>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)

The Mayors Conference on Entrepreneurship

Kauffman Foundation

The Kauffman Foundation's annual Mayors Conference on Entrepreneurship brings mayors, entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship experts together to discuss ways to promote startup activity and encourage higher levels of entrepreneurship in their cities.

<https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/entrepreneurship/the-mayors-conference-on-entrepreneurship>

EVENT (SUMMIT, COMPETITION, WORKSHOP)

Venturize Resource Finder

Venturize

The mission of Venturize is simple, and it isn't to sell you anything or to make choices for you. Instead, it's to provide clear information and online tools that put the power to find the best loan for your business where it belongs: not just in your hands, but at your fingertips. Use the search tool to find the resource you need.

<https://www.venturize.org/resources>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Veteran Entrepreneur Portal

Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Veteran Entrepreneur Portal (VEP) is designed to save you time with direct access to the resources necessary to guide every step of entrepreneurship. VEP makes it easier for small businesses to access federal services, regardless of its source, and quickly connects Veteran entrepreneurs to relevant ,and best-practices, and information.

<https://www.va.gov/OSDBU/entrepreneur/index.asp>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

Volunteer Opportunities Search Engine

Corporation for National and Community Service

CNCS is a federal organization that engages Americans in community service. They have a search tool on their website that connects interested individuals with volunteer opportunities in their local communities.

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve/search>

TOOL (PLATFORM, FRAMEWORK, PROCESS)

WealthWorks Resources

WealthWorks

WealthWorks provides a variety of resources on their webpage regarding regional wealth-building, identifying market opportunities, constructing value chains, and gauging impact.

<https://www.wealthworks.org/basics/wealthworks-your-region-introduction>

KNOWLEDGE BASE (ARTICLES, WEBINARS)

RESOURCES FOR RURAL ECOSYSTEM BUILDERS

Women-Owned Small Business Contracting Program

Small Business Administration

The federal government tries to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to women-owned small businesses each year.

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/women-owned-small-business-federal-contracting-program>

FUNDING SOURCE (GRANT, SPONSOR, FUND)



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