

Eligibility

Cooperative Business Development Mini-Grants are available to groups who are pursuing/exploring a multi-owner or cooperative business or to incorporated cooperatives (or other business entities operating as a cooperative) in rural Nebraska. Groups (including communities) that are exploring community-supported ventures are also eligible to apply.

Characteristics of Cooperative ventures include:

User-owner - the users of the business own and finance the business. Cooperatives are financed by members purchasing stock, paying membership fees, or accepting self-imposed assessment on products purchased and/or sold or fees for services.

User-control - Users vote, democratically, to set major policies and to elect a board of directors composed of the cooperative's users. Users draw up bylaws to describe how the cooperative functions.

User-benefit - Users benefit by using the business. Distribution of benefits is based on members' use of the cooperative, not on the amount of capital they have invested.

Initial Development Assistance – grants are designed for groups who are in the *exploratory stages of development* of multi-ownership or cooperative ownership.

Advanced Assistance grants are designed to provide *incorporated cooperatives or multi-owner businesses functioning or operating as a cooperative*.

Up to \$2,500 is available per request.

Organizations incorporated as a Cooperative, LLC operating cooperatively, or Non-Profits operating cooperatively are eligible to apply.

Non-profits, Partnerships, or Sole Proprietorship businesses as well as businesses located in Omaha, Bellevue, or Lincoln are not eligible.

Examples of eligible activities include:

- Accounting assistance
- Business planning assistance
- Capitalization plans
- Creation of marketing materials
- Education and training
- Feasibility and market studies
- Legal fees for incorporation
- Market development
- Member recruitment activities & materials
- Technical assistance
- Travel Funds

Ineligible Activities include salaries, purchasing equipment, buildings and/or real estate.

Applications for these competitive grants will open on January 4, 2021 at

<https://go.unl.edu/2021ncdcmigrant>.

For more information, contact:

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