



Microenterprise Collaborative of Inland Southern California

Strategic Plan
for 2022–2025

microbizinsocal.org

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Build Capacity

To accomplish its mission to create and grow sustainable small businesses and job development by supporting micro business development agencies, the Microenterprise Enterprise Collaborative of Inland Southern California will implement a three year (2022-2025) strategic plan that will convene, build, and support the work of our Partners dedicated to small business development. What follows is a list of our key Partners and the strategies the Collaborative will implement to secure mutual success.



SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Nonprofit and government agencies provide training, technical assistance, support services and access to capital to individuals starting and growing small businesses. Business incubators, counselors and workshop trainers, micro-lending, business owner networks, labs and maker spaces for design and innovation are examples of the kinds of services, programs, and products provided by small business programs. Most of these are offered free or very low-cost for low and moderate individuals and disadvantaged and underserved populations such as people of color, women, immigrants, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ+, and veterans. Actions that will support the efforts of the Small Business Programs include:



COLLABORATE

Convene the network of Small Business Programs to foster collaboration, reduce competition and redundancies, and leverage resources.



GAIN SUPPORT

Gain support for Small Business Programs by conducting outreach on behalf of the network, brokering connections with funding entities such as government agencies and foundations, and acting as a funding intermediary when appropriate.



STRENGTHEN AND IMPROVE

Strengthen and improve Small Business Programs by providing professional development programs and technical assistance, conducting research, and promoting performance standards.



MAXIMIZE OUTREACH

Maximize the outreach of Small Business Programs by providing a web-based directory of programs and services, conducting marketing campaigns, and communicating information on the programs and services to the general public.



REPRESENT PROGRAMS

Represent Small Business Programs in public policy efforts, public education, and regional economic development efforts.



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE TOOL

Demonstrate to bank staff how to use the Small Business Assistance Tool (web-based directory) to help business owners find the assistance they need to start and grow their businesses.



HIGHLIGHT SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Conduct presentations to bank staff to highlight Small Business Programs and how they work in partnership with Financial Institutions to develop and help retain small business clients.



LEARN BANKING TRENDS

Utilize the Financial Institution Advisory Board to learn banking industry trends and gain advice and recommendations for improving partnership building with Small Business Programs.



MARKET SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Market Small Business Programs to Financial Institutions using the weekly newsletter and social media.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Banks and credit unions are often the first connection a small business owner makes when searching to start or grow a business. Financial institutions offer a number of services that are key to a small business operation, such as credit cards, lines of credit, payroll services, and business checking and savings accounts. Bank branch staff and business loan officers want to build long term relationships with business owners and look to small business programs to help with that effort. Financial institution staff want a) to give the proper referrals that will help business owners address their needs and they want b) to retain their customers while working in partnership with Small Business Programs. The following is a list of action the Microenterprise Collaborative will implement to support the partnerships of Financial Institutions and Small Business Programs:

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Government Agencies are an integral part of small business operations. Many times, government agency staff will connect with small business owners when they first start a business, plan to grow, or are in crisis. It is critical for government agencies to be aware of the Small Business Programs available to assist at these times and feel confident in referring them. Government Agencies can also lead public education efforts to improve small business development for their constituents and seek federal funding for this purpose. The Microenterprise Collaborative can support this partnership building with Small Business Programs in the following ways:



DEMONSTRATE VALUE

Convene Government Agencies and Small Business Programs and demonstrate the value of the Small Business Assistance Tool to support referrals by government staff, and determine methods to strengthen local small business development.



COLLECT DATA

Collect Small Business Program data and success stories and conduct public education on the importance of small business development to support government investment in the effort.



ADVOCATE COLLABORATION

Advocate that Government Agencies work collaboratively with Small Business Programs to seek federal and state funds for small business development.



COMPELLING COMMUNICATION

Articulate the value proposition of small business development with compelling communications, public education, and marketing.



DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

Facilitate the distribution of funds to Small Business Programs by acting as a Financial Intermediary when appropriate.



SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Represent small business development with other community development efforts to ensure inclusion of support for Small Business Programs in funding priorities.

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Foundations address critical issues of our time and provide operating and program support to the effort of improving economic conditions for the disadvantaged and underserved, such as people of color, immigrants, women, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ+, and veterans. Small business development provides the means for these target groups to achieve equity and a viable income. Small business development also improves the quality of life and economic success within communities. The Microenterprise Collaborative can support foundation investment in small business development in the following ways:



The Microenterprise Collaborative must have the capacity to lead small business development efforts in the region. What follows are the essential elements the Collaborative needs to achieve strong organizational capacity.



SECURE AND IMPLEMENT PLAN

Secure the facilities, technology, and staffing to implement the strategic plan.



IMPROVE

Improve marketing and communications to articulate the value of small business development and the Collaborative's role in supporting the effort.



SECURE FUNDING

Secure foundation and government funding that supports the work of the Microenterprise Collaborative.



MAXIMIZE SUPPORT

Maximize funding support through opportunities for earned income and by acting as a funding intermediary.

WE CAN'T THANK YOU
ENOUGH
FOR SUPPORTING OUR
SMALL BUSINESS

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Measure Success

The Microenterprise Collaborative will measure success in the following ways:



Acknowledge improvements with Small Business Program capacity such as increases in funding support, partner referrals, and program performance.



Collect data and success stories that indicate increases and improvements in the number of small businesses served, capital accessed, jobs created or retained.



Promote policy successes and new partnerships that benefit small business development.





Action Steps for 2024

- 01 Create a set of communications tools for Small Business Programs, Financial Institutions, Government Agencies, and Foundations that demonstrate the value of the Collaborative in achieving the mutual goal of supporting small business development in the region.
- 02 Expand the use of the Small Business Assistance Tool by securing agreements with at least five Government Agency Partners to include the Collaborative's webtool on their webpages.
- 03 Convene the network of Small Business Programs by June 30, 2024, to support collaboration and to determine the capacity building needs of the network.
- 04 Based on the information gleaned during the network convening, provide a program that addresses the capacity building needs of the Small Business Programs by December 31, 2024.
- 05 Secure foundation funding, expertise, and communication tools that help Small Business Programs improve their marketing and outreach to small business owners.
- 06 Provide at least three public education programs for Financial Institutions that demonstrate the small business owner referral and development process.
- 07 Secure the staffing and funding necessary to implement the 2024 Action Steps of the Strategic Plan.