

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVE II



Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II

Overview and Digital Toolkit

Program Overview

About the Program

The WNC Small Business Initiative is a new program offering grants to eligible North Carolina businesses impacted by Hurricane Helene. The WNC SBI I was launched as a partnership between Appalachian Community Capital and Dogwood Health Trust, with a \$20 million lead grant from Dogwood Health Trust. WNC SBI II is a partnership between Appalachian Community Capital, the State of North Carolina, The Duke Endowment and Dogwood Health Trust.

Where do we send businesses that are interested in applying for this grant?

Businesses interested in applying for this grant can apply by going to this page: <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

Who do I contact if I have questions about the program?

wncgrantadmin@crfusa.com

FAQs

OVERVIEW – What is the grant size?

Up to \$50,000 (up to \$25,000 for businesses with revenue of \$1,000,000 or less).

ELIGIBILITY – I applied for WNC SBI I, but the grant size for WNC SBI II is larger. Can I reapply?

The grant size is the same. Businesses with revenue up to \$1,000,000 are eligible to receive up to \$25,000. Businesses with revenue up to \$2,500,000 are eligible to receive up to \$50,000.

ELIGIBILITY – I applied for WNCsBI I, am I eligible to apply for WNCsBI II?

- If you or your business already received or are in process to receive a WNCsBI I grant, you are NOT eligible.
- If you have not yet heard back from WNCsBI I, your application will automatically be transferred to WNCsBI II.
- If your application was rejected or withdrawn from WNCsBI I, we encourage you to apply to WNCsBI II if you are eligible (please check eligibility).

ELIGIBILITY – Is my business eligible? What are the qualifications for the Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II?

To be eligible for a Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II grant, you must operate a small business that:

- Is a for-profit business actively registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State
- Is physically located in one of the following Western North Carolina counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, Yancey; or is located in the Qualla Boundary
- Business was formed and in operation on or before 9/27/23
- Had \$2,500,000 or less in 2023 annual gross revenue
- Has sustained physical or economic damage (not covered by insurance or other funding sources) from Hurricane Helene
- Is currently operating or plans to reopen

Business that is NOT eligible:

- Is a non-profit organization
- Is not physically located within the eligible WNC region
- Is a franchise which is not locally owned & operated
- Is a residential property rental business including AirBnBs, VRBOs, or other Short Term Rentals (STRs) based at residential addresses (this does not apply to traditional Bed & Breakfasts and other lodging businesses at commercial addresses)
- Is a country club or other membership-based club
- Is a business with any active bankruptcies or tax liens
- Already received or is in process to receive a WNCsBI I grant

PROCESS – How long will applications be accepted?

Applications will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on February 21, 2025. Subject to availability of funding, an additional round of funding may be opened.

PROCESS – How will applications be selected?

Applications will be selected based on eligibility, geographic distribution, and severity of impact.

PROCESS – How long does it take to get grant funds?

Applicants that advance to the second round of evaluation will be contacted to provide additional

information about their business over the next 2 months. Once all required documentation has been received, the qualification review and funding process is expected to take about 2 weeks. The exact timeline will vary based on each individual situation.

PROCESS – What documents are required as part of the grant application process?

- Federal Tax Return (2023) or Personal returns that include a schedule C for the business
- Government Issued ID (Colored Copy)
- Voided Business Check

PROCESS – Will automated emails be generated when the initial successful application is submitted?

- Yes, an email will come from: No-Reply@crfcommunitysolutions.com

PROCESS – I filed for a 2023 tax extension, so have not yet filed my tax return though otherwise meet the criteria of the WNCsBI

- If you filed for a 2023 extension, you will be asked to provide your 2023 extension document and a 2022 tax return. Additionally, you will be required to certify that you meet the other grant eligibility criteria, including registration with the NC Secretary of State (either as an LLC or through a DBA if you are a sole proprietor)

APPLICATION – Should I include seasonal and/or regular part-time employees in the ‘FTE’ count?

- Yes, include all 1099, H2A and other employees, calculated on an annual full-time equivalent basis. For example, a seasonal employee working full time for six months would be considered 0.5 FTE

Toolkit

Please help us spread the word!

Below you'll find Facebook, LinkedIn, and X posts you can copy, paste, and post – along with language for a personal email you can send to your networks. Please note that you will need to manually tag other organizations in your post if you wish to do so.

Official Handles:

State of North Carolina

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/state-of-north-carolina/>

X: @NCdotGov

Dogwood Health Trust

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/dogwood-health-trust/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DogwoodWNC>

X: @DogwoodWNC

The Duke Endowment

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-duke-endowment/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheDukeEndowment/>
X: @DukeEndowment

Appalachian Community Capital

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/acc-cdfi>
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/acccdfi>
X: @acc_cdfi

What You Can Do

1. Retweet/share on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook
2. Email your contacts information about the WNC Small Business Initiative using the email language below
3. Post one of the sample posts below on your preferred social media channels

Email to Partners and Stakeholders

Hurricane Helene devastated communities and disrupted business across Western North Carolina. That's why **[YOUR ORG NAME]** is supporting the Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II. This partnership between Appalachian Community Capital, the State of North Carolina, The Duke Endowment, and Dogwood Health Trust, is supporting small businesses in Western North Carolina as they recover and reopen in the wake of Hurricane Helene.

The Initiative offers grants up to \$50,000 to eligible small businesses. These grant funds can be used to repair and replace damaged physical property, conduct environmental cleanup, pay business related rents or mortgages, retain and hire employees, and more.

ACC is coordinating with local CDFIs, chambers of commerce, councils of government, and other partners to market the grant opportunity and assist local small businesses with submitting complete and accurate applications.

Interested small businesses can learn more about the program and complete an application form by visiting: <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

Email Response to Small Business Inquiries

Thank you for your recent inquiry regarding the Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II. You can learn more about the program and begin an application by visiting this page: <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>. This page also includes detailed information about the program and frequently asked questions.

[YOUR ORG NAME] is here to help if you have additional questions or need support completing your application.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Sample Social Media Posts

Facebook:

Post 1:

Recover from the impact of Hurricane Helene on your small business. The WNC Small Business Initiative II offers grants up to \$50,000 for eligible small businesses across Western North Carolina.

Learn more and complete an application. <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

Post 2:

Small businesses drive economic growth in our communities. That's why we're supporting the WNC Small Business Initiative II, a program that provides grants to eligible small businesses operating in select Western North Carolina counties. Learn more about the program and how you can secure capital to help your small business recover from the impacts of Hurricane Helene.

Learn more and complete an application. <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

LinkedIn:

Post 1: Hurricane Helene hit Western North Carolina communities hard. That's why we're supporting the WNC Small Business Initiative II, a partnership between Appalachian Community Capital, the State of North Carolina, The Duke Endowment, and Dogwood Health Trust. The program offers flexible grants up to \$50,000 to help small businesses recover from the negative impacts of Hurricane Helene and continue building economic growth in the communities where they operate.

Learn more and apply: <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

Post 2: Introducing the Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II, a new program to help small businesses recover from the negative impacts of Hurricane Helene. The program has expanded eligibility and offers flexible grants up to \$50,000 to support the recovery of small businesses across select Western North Carolina counties.

Find out more. <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

X (formerly Twitter):

Post 1: Was your small business impacted by Hurricane Helene? [YOUR ORG NAME] is supporting the Western North Carolina Small Business Initiative II and is here to help. Learn more by visiting: <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>

Post 2: Attention Western North Carolina business owners! The WNC Small Business Initiative II is offering grants to support business recovery and reopening in the wake of Hurricane Helene. The program has expanded eligibility to additional WNC Counties and businesses with up to \$2,500,000 in annual revenue. Learn more: <http://bit.ly/4hukKfs>