

# Resources for Washington State Small Business

By Moonbeam Exchange for the Pacific Northwest  
Economic Region's Rural Investment for Small-Business  
Empowerment in Washington State (RISE-WA) Program

**Funded by**



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# Tourism is the fourth largest industry in Washington state, attracting up to 45.9M visitors annually.



## In 2022 the Washington Tourism industry generated:

- 45.9M out-of-state visitors.
- 180,000 Jobs.
- \$216 (average) per visitor per trip.
- \$22.2B in visitor spending.
- \$3.1B in taxes.
- \$1.36 in addition economic impact per dollar spent.

The goal of RISE-WA was to connect rural Small, Women, and Black, Indigenous, People of Color-owned businesses (S/W/BIPOC) in Washington State with solution providers and subject matter experts. Following a state-wide outreach and recruitment campaign, the RISE-WA team reviewed and selected ten S/W/BIPOC-owned businesses from across rural Washington State to take part in the RISE-WA Accelerator. This initiative intended to harness the innovation and technology of the urban tech sector to bolster these businesses' success and enhance their resilience against future challenges.

PNWER leveraged the success of the Congregate Accelerator Program to bring this exciting program to Washington State.

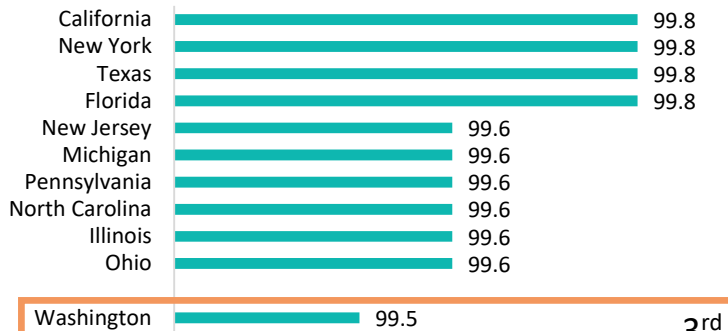
# Demography and Economic Impact



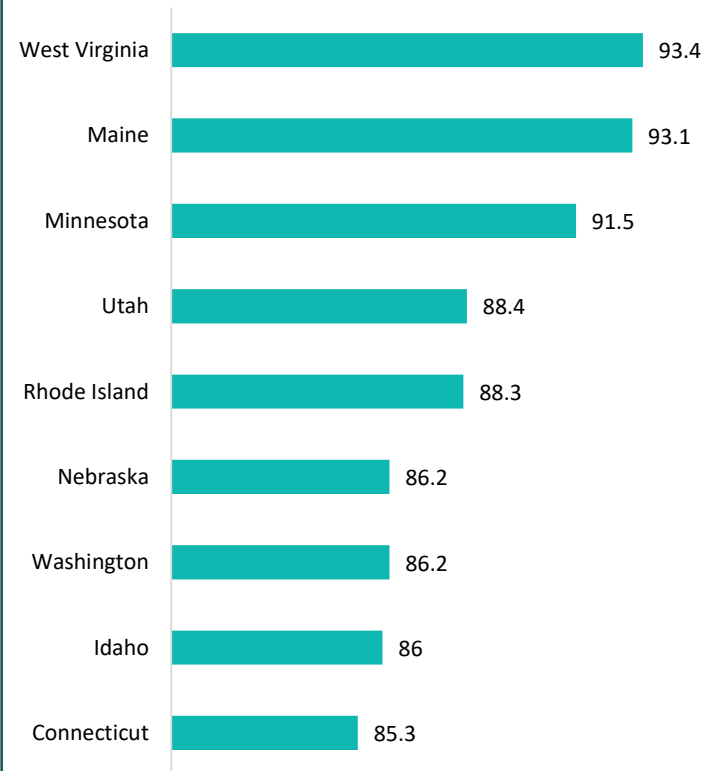
# Washington state had a total of 644,868 small businesses (SB), which account for 99.5% of all companies in the state. (2023)



% Small Businesses  
(Top 10 States, 2023)



Small Businesses Contribution to New Employees net %  
(Top 10 States, 2023)

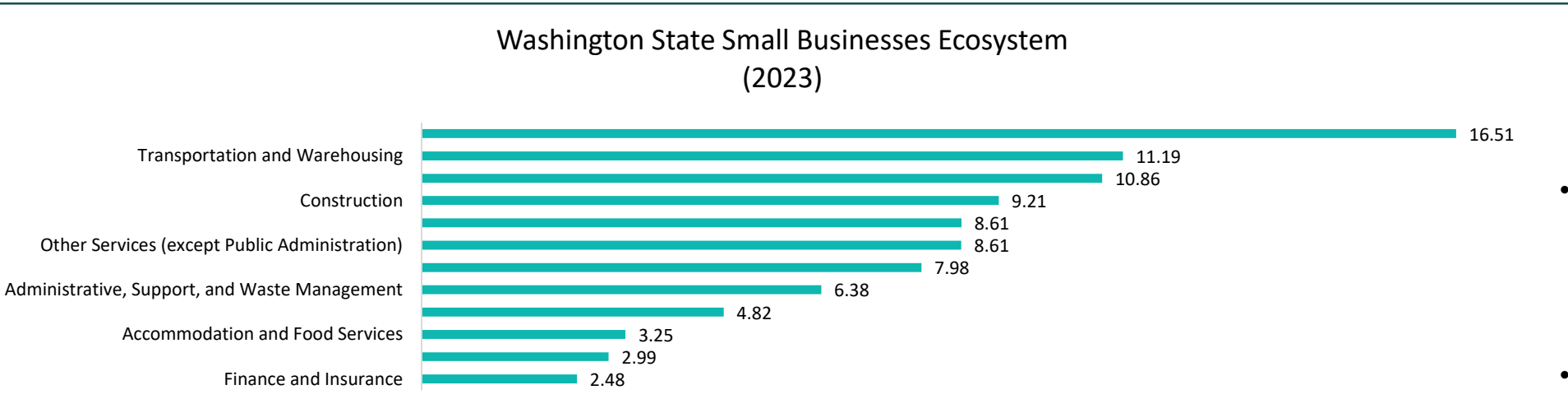


% Small Businesses Employees  
(Top 10 States, 2023)

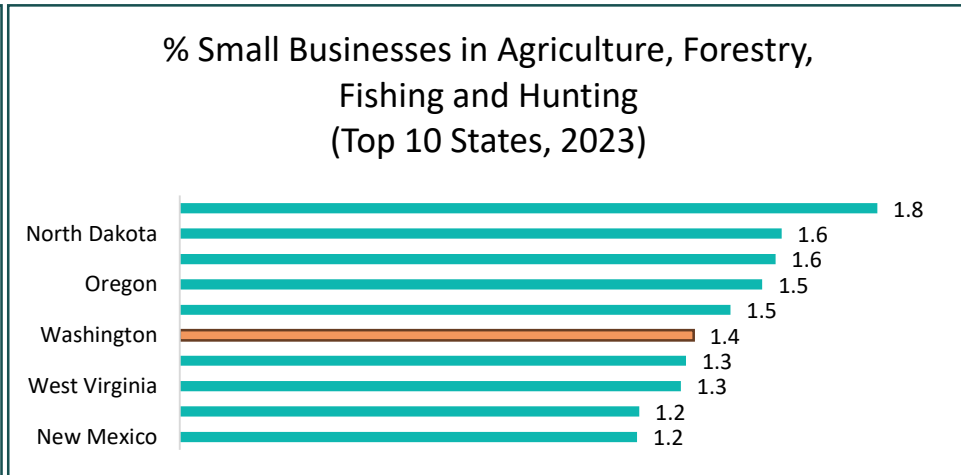
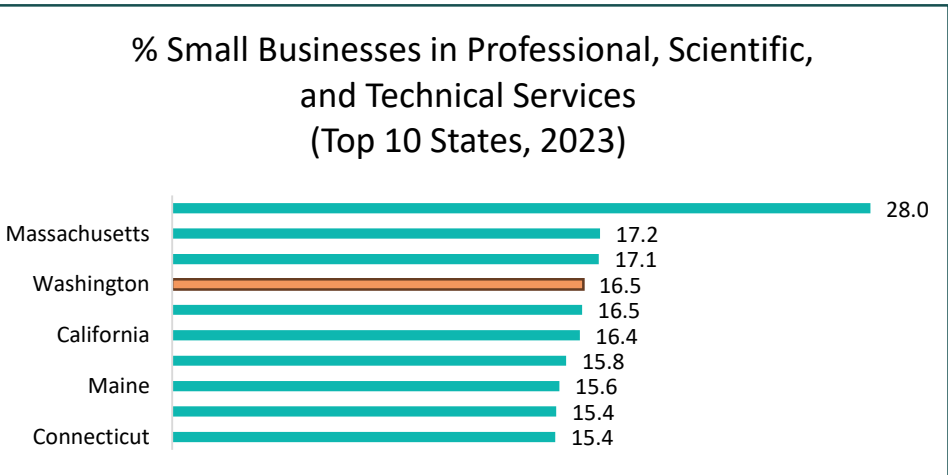


- WA Small Businesses represent 99.5% of the total companies in the state, occupying the **third** position in the U.S.A, following only Virginia or Massachusetts.
- Small businesses, in WA, are responsible for 49% of WA employees, ranking in **16<sup>th</sup> place**.
- In 2023, Washington saw a net increase in employment with 187K jobs. Small businesses were responsible for 86.2% of this net increase, ranking WA in **7<sup>th</sup>**, in the U.S.A.

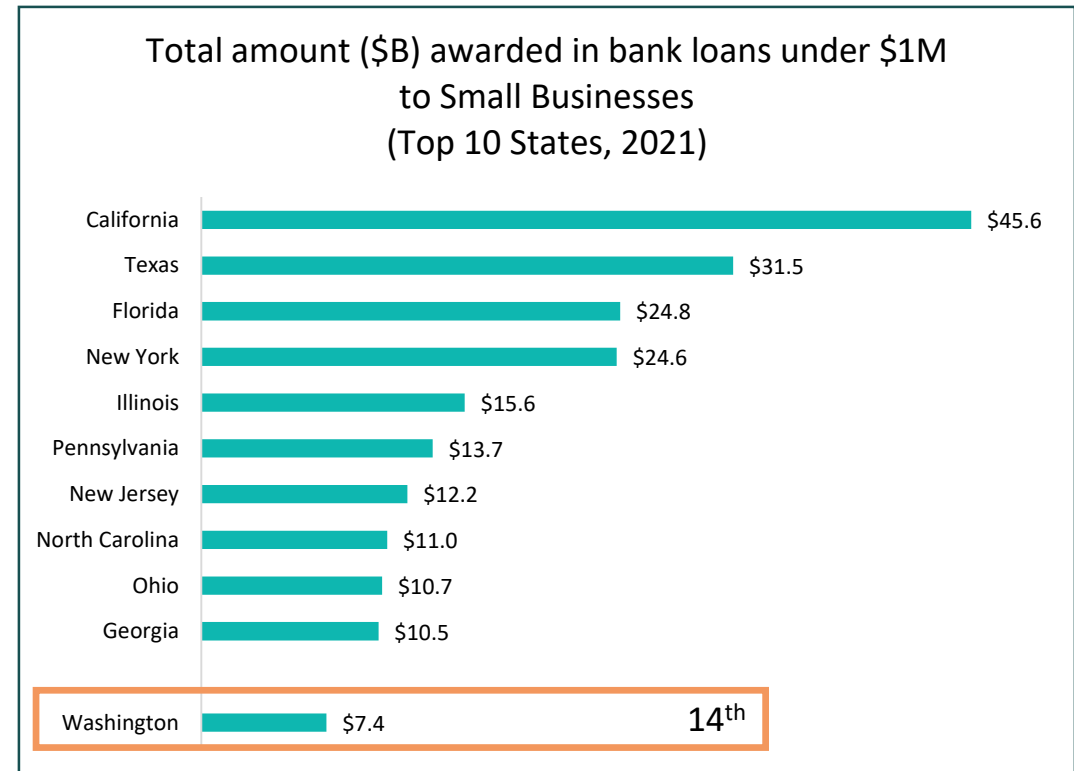
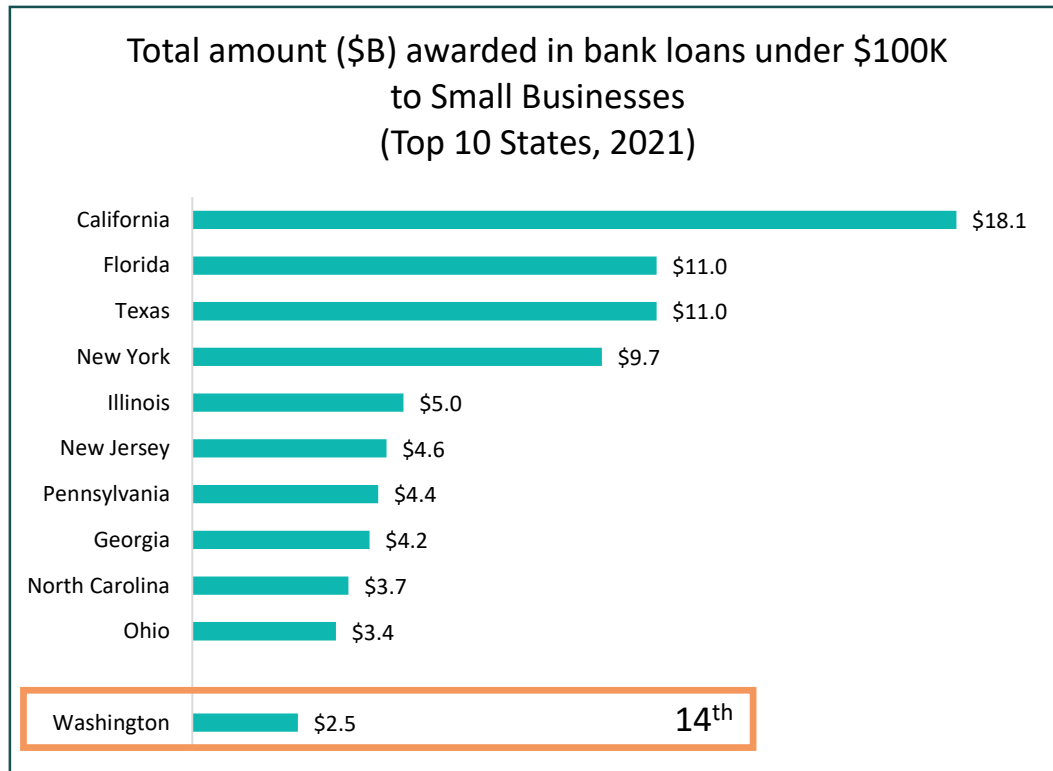
# Washington Small Businesses tend to focus on Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (16.51%), and Transport and Warehousing (11.19%).



- WA most common Small Business industry is **Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (16.51%)**.
- WA features in the Top 10 (states) only in Small Businesses operating in **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (4<sup>th</sup>)** and in **Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (6<sup>th</sup>)**.



# In 2021, Small Businesses in WA state were awarded a total of \$2.5B in bank loans under \$100K and a total of \$7.4B in loans under \$1M.



These values places WA state in **14<sup>th</sup>** place in total loans awarded to small businesses in both categories.

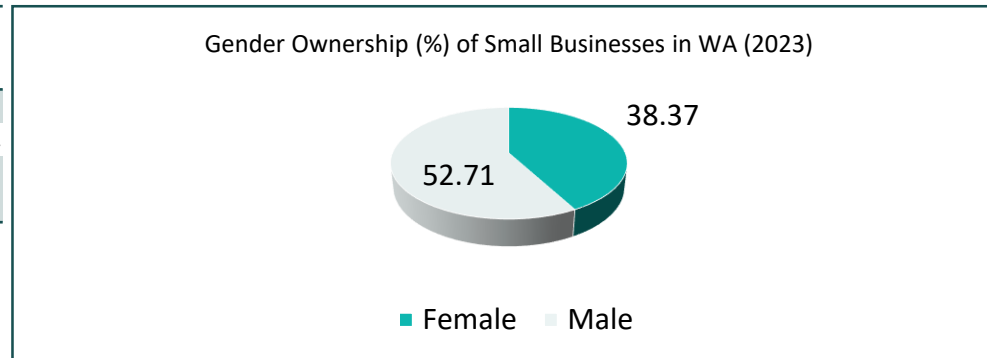
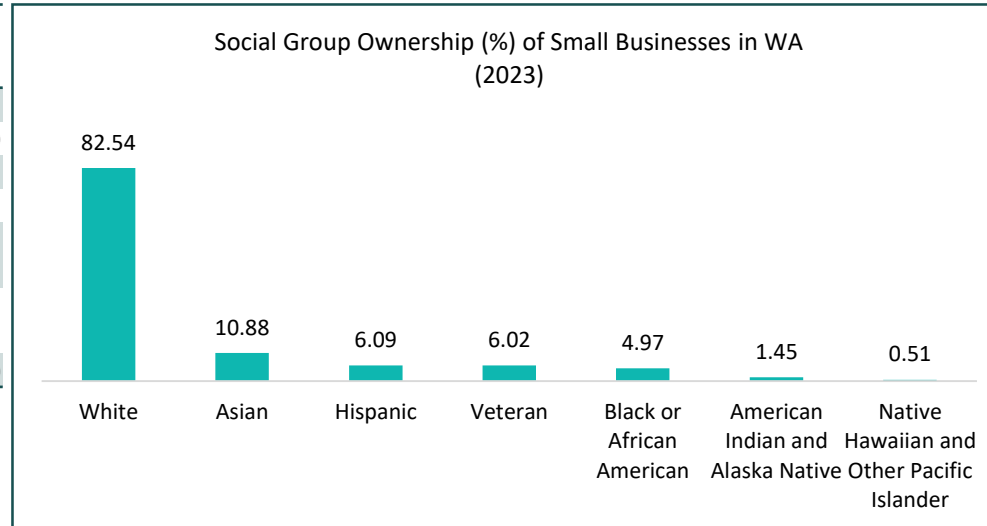
# Small Businesses in WA state are primarily owned by men. However, women owners representing 38.4% of small business owners.



Ethnicity	WA State population (%)	SB sole ownership (%)
White	78.3	82.5
Black	4.3	5.0
Hispanic	12.7	6.09
Asian	9.6	10.9
Native American	1.8	1.5
Pacific Islander		
Native	0.8	0.5
Veteran*	6.9	6.0

\* Minority

Gender	WA State population (%)	SB ownership (%)
Male	49.5	52.7
Female	50.5	38.4
Owned equally by both groups		7.3



- SB owners distribute across the following demographics: white (82.5%), followed by Asians (10.88%) and Hispanics (6.09%).
- Ownership demographics shows that WA state ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in Hawaiian owner of SB, 7<sup>th</sup> in Asian owners, and 10<sup>th</sup> in American Indian and Alaskan Natives owner of SB.
- WA state ranks 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> in small businesses ownership by Veterans, Hispanics, and people of color, respectively.
- These groups own 6.09%, 6.02%, and 4.96% of small businesses in WA, respectively.

# Funding Opportunities & Small Business Resources





# The State of Washington Tourism (SWT) is responsible for advocating, promoting, and developing tourism in the state.



## **Washington State Tourism (SWT) Mission:**

SWT provides a Tourism Sustainability Grant program open to local governments, Tribal Nations, destination organizations, and other non-profit entities that promote travel and tourism in Washington. Eligible entities can apply for this grant program with the aim of enhancing safety, inclusivity, and sustainability in visitor experiences across the state.

## **The Grant Program:**

The Tourism Sustainability Grant Program aims to enhance visitor experiences in Washington by supporting a variety of projects. Eligible initiatives span from safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists to disaster and climate adaptation planning. The program covers diverse areas like new festivals, tourism infrastructure, outdoor recreation, and initiatives for business and creative districts. Specific focus areas include improving access to outdoor activities, trail development, water recreation, cycling infrastructure, waste management, and strategies for sustainable transportation. Additionally, projects targeting business districts involve wayfinding, beautification, environmental sustainability, historical preservation, and efforts to boost local culture and international tourism.

## **Tourism Sustainability Grant:**

Promoting enhanced safety, inclusivity, and sustainability in visitor experiences throughout the State of Washington, the Tourism Sustainability Grant is available for eligible projects. Applicants can seek grant funding of up to \$30,000, with project eligibility spanning various areas such as capital projects, new festivals and events, outdoor recreation, wayfinding improvements, and more. The Tourism Sustainability Grant program allocates a total funding pool of \$125,000.

## **Eligible applicants:**

Eligible entities encompass local government, Tribal Nations, non-profit organizations registered with the Washington Secretary of State's Office, and 501(c)(3) organizations, as well as other 501(c) organizations dedicated to supporting travel and tourism.

Find more at [SWT Grant Programs](#).

# 2023 State of Washington Tourism (SWT) grants recipients demonstrate diversity of location and project type.



Grant Type	Recipient	Region	Award Amount	Project type	Project Summary
Tourism Sustainability	Dungeness River Nature Center	Peninsulas	\$11,000	Outdoor Recreation	Safe, inclusive, and sustainable trails on DRNC property
Tourism Sustainability	The Whale Museum	Islands	\$2,400	Museums	Improving and restoring existing signage
Tourism Sustainability	Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance	The Gorge	\$30,000	Outdoor Recreation	Trailhead enhancements: accessibility information, audio interpretations, trail safety messaging, slow hiking experience
Tourism Sustainability	Schack Art Center	Metro Puget Sound	\$8,000	Tourism Infrastructure	Accessibility enhancements to website and facility
Tourism Sustainability	Twisp Chamber of Commerce	Trails and Lakes	\$15,000	Festivals and Events	Promotion and management of Twisptober, a three-day food, music, and art festival in Twisp
Tourism Sustainability	Artisans at the Dahmen Barn	Palouse	\$6,600	Festivals and Events	Culinary tour of the Palouse, on-site with commercial kitchen and locally-sourced food products
Tourism Sustainability	City of Zillah	Wine Country	\$30,000	Business Districts and Main Street Associations	Planning and research for a year-round, indoor public market for local products
Tourism Sustainability	Bellingham Community Boating Center	Salish Sea	\$10,000	Tourism Infrastructure	A building project that will host ADA compliant indoor restrooms, warm showers, changing stalls, and a community gathering space
Tourism Sustainability	Chewelah Creative District	Ponderosa	\$12,000	Tourism Infrastructure	Sound system for events at the city park stage

# There are additional local resources and grants to support tourism businesses.



## City of Kirkland, Washington

Kirkland's Tourism Program, established in 2002, has granted over \$1.2 million to various tourism events and programs. The program proposes an annual funding of \$60,000, which is allocated for marketing or operational support for special events and festivals aimed at drawing tourists to Kirkland. The Tourism Development Commission (TDC) is open to considering new events, those promoting diversity and inclusivity, and events with a proven track record of attracting visitors to the city. For inquiries, feel free to reach out to the Tourism Program at [tourism@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:tourism@kirklandwa.gov).

## Washington State Department of Commerce

Acknowledging the significance of tourism for the state's economy, the state legislature formed the Washington Tourism Marketing Authority (WTMA). The purpose is to develop a structure for financing a comprehensive statewide marketing plan, utilizing a blend of state and private funds, as outlined in [RCW 43.384](#). The WTMA is also tasked with supervising the implementation of this plan.

## Olympic Peninsula Tourism Grant Funding

Numerous potential sources of grant funding are available for non-profit, tourism-related businesses and events, each with its unique qualifications, requirements, and timelines. A significant portion of these funds is derived from Washington State lodging tax, necessitating compliance with the state regulations for lodging tax use (Ref. RCW 67.28.1817).

## Port of Seattle Tourism Marketing Support Program

The Tourism Marketing Support Program provides applicants with a collaborative opportunity to showcase their Washington State destination to out-of-state visitors, concurrently promoting the utilization of Port facilities such as SEA International Airport, cruise terminals, and recreational marinas. In 2023, the match fund program will allocate a total of \$200,000 to organizations whose proposed projects align with specified criteria. Of the Port of Seattle funding, \$50,000 is earmarked to support organizations in the advancement of responsible tourism, eco/sustainable, or adventure/nature tourism projects, and an additional \$50,000 is designated for initiatives promoting diversity and inclusion in marketing projects.

## Washington Hospitality Association

Washington Hospitality Association is the primary trade organization for the hospitality sector in the state, unites over 6,000 members from the hotel, restaurant, and hospitality industry. The Washington Hospitality Association actively supports and advocates for professionals in the restaurant, hotel, and broader hospitality industry across the state and in various communities.

# For innovative tourism related startups, VC funding might be an option. Here are some WA-based VC, investing in Tourism related startups:



Venture Capital	Description	Invested Companies	POC	POC Title
<a href="#">Concur Perfect Trip Fund</a>	Concur Perfect Trip Fund is a corporate venture arm of Concur Technologies based in Bellevue, Washington. The firm prefers to invest in the travel technology sector.	<a href="#">Room 77</a> <a href="#">Nor1</a> <a href="#">BookingSuite</a> <a href="#">StayNTouch</a>		
<a href="#">Cascade Investment</a>	Cascade Investment is the private investment fund of Bill Gates. The fund invests in several alternative strategies along with making venture capital investments.	<a href="#">Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts</a> <a href="#">The Boca Raton</a>	<a href="#">William Gates Jr.</a>	Founder & Chairman
<a href="#">Techstars</a>	Techstars is an accelerator based in Boulder, Colorado but has hubs and offices in several U.S. cities included Seattle, WA.	<a href="#">Swayed</a> <a href="#">Vamos</a>	<a href="#">Kimberly Smith</a>	Chief Capital Formation Officer
<a href="#">Acequia Capital</a>	Acequia Capital is a venture capital firm based in Seattle, Washington.	<a href="#">Vamo Labs</a> <a href="#">Airbnb</a>	<a href="#">Hank Vigil</a>	Co-Founder & Managing Partner
<a href="#">Madrona Venture Group</a>	Madrona Venture Group is a venture capital firm based in Seattle, Washington. The firm prefers to invest in companies operating in the information technology, e-commerce, digital media, advertising, software, gaming, data, analytics, mobile, and infrastructure sectors.	<a href="#">BookingSuite</a> <a href="#">Vacationspot.com</a>	<a href="#">Jennifer Chambers</a>	Administrative Partner
<a href="#">Ignition Partners</a>	Ignition Partners is a venture capital firm headquartered in Bellevue, Washington with an additional office in Los Altos, California. The firm is solely focused on early-stage investments in enterprise software companies.	<a href="#">Hipmunk</a> <a href="#">TravelPost.com</a>	<a href="#">Ryan Baker</a>	Administrative Partner & Chief Financial Officer
<a href="#">Maveron</a>	Maveron is a venture capital firm based in Seattle, Washington. The firm has an additional office in San Francisco. The firm prefers to invest in early-stage companies based in the United States region.	<a href="#">The Guild</a>	<a href="#">Nathan Apse</a>	Chief Financial Officer
<a href="#">Hemisphere Ventures</a>	Hemisphere Ventures is a venture capital firm based in Seattle, Washington. The firm seeks to invest in companies operating in the health, science, technology, software, biotechnology, robotics, nanotechnology, drones, and space sectors.	<a href="#">Axiom Space</a> <a href="#">Oliver</a>	<a href="#">Jeffrey Rich</a>	Co-Founder
<a href="#">Quake Capital</a>	Quake Capital is an accelerator and early-stage venture capital firm based in Austin, Texas. The firm makes seed-level investments across a wide range of industries.	<a href="#">Baarb</a>	<a href="#">Glennon Argenbright</a>	Founder & General Partner
<a href="#">PSL Ventures</a>	PSL Ventures is an early-stage venture capital firm based in Seattle, Washington. The firm is also a startup studio.	<a href="#">Brett Heising Consulting</a>	<a href="#">Gregory Gottesman JD</a>	Co-Founder & Managing Director
<a href="#">Bezos Expeditions</a>	Bezos Expeditions is a family office based in Mercer Island, Washington. The firm makes venture capital investments. The firm prefers to invest in the software, financial services, and online retail sectors.	<a href="#">Sonder</a>	<a href="#">Melinda Lewison</a>	Managing Director

# Small businesses owners can contact the Washington Small Business Development Center for tailored and targeted support.



## Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

SBDC is a federal funded organization, powered but the U.S. Small Business Administration and hosted by the Washington State University. It comprises a network of over 30 seasoned business advisors strategically placed in communities throughout the state. These advisors offer confidential, one-on-one, and cost-free guidance to entrepreneurs and small business owners, covering various aspects of business development, including starting, growing, or buying/selling a business.

Often located alongside economic development specialists, the SBDC provides additional services such as workshops on diverse business topics and tailored market research services, which include:

- Analyzing financial statements,
- Acquiring capital and managing cash flow,
- Exporting to markets around the world,
- Market research,
- Getting and keeping customers,
- Finding and keeping qualified employees

SBDC training provides practical, real-life solutions for the most common issues faced by entrepreneurs and established business owners. Participants can access on-demand webinars at their convenience or attend a live webinar on topics of interest; such as Profit Mastery, SBDC Grow Smart and co-sponsored training events. All webinars are facilitated by SBDC advisors with first-hand experience and expertise.

Overall, and since 2013, the SBDC contributed with 1,626 new business and 19,925 jobs created or saved. In addition, SBDC clients managed to raise \$836M in funding.

# Small businesses can apply for grants and support from the Washington State Department of Commerce.



## Washington State Department of Commerce (WSDC)

In addition to support tourism endeavors, the WSDC also have funding options for small and growing business. Growing small businesses often face challenges in accessing capital, as many loan programs are tailored for larger enterprises. To bridge this funding gap, the Department of Commerce provides various loan programs to support your expanding business.

These programs can assist in acquiring new equipment, undertaking renovations, expanding or constructing facilities, fostering early-stage product development, or repurposing properties affected by environmental issues. Here are some of the WSDC initiatives:

- *Small Business Credit Initiative* in order to promote entrepreneurship, support small business ownership, and increase the flow of capital in underserved communities.
- *Export Voucher Program* to help small businesses offset some of the costs (up to \$5,000) of getting into the export business or expanding into new international markets.
- *Community Economic Revitalization Board and Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund* in order to provide critical infrastructure to communities and business while creating jobs.

Find more about the WSDC open grants and loans [here](#).

The WSDC also seeks to help small businesses through the *Small Business Resiliency Network (SBRN)*. Partners of the SBRN deliver free culturally-tailored aid and additional business services to entrepreneurs, small businesses, and nonprofits in Washington, prioritizing those led by historically marginalized and underserved individuals. The assistance include finding and applying for resources, Technical assistance, translating services or navigating state and federal resources.

The WSDC is also committed to offers a wide range of services and programs tailored to small business owners, from finance, to education, or how-to guides. These include small business export assistance, assistance in rebuilding or restarting a business, grants and flex funds, and entrepreneurship workshops. It also includes assistance in finding a retiring saving fund for sole proprietors of small businesses and “gig” workers and self-employed.

# U.S. Department of Agriculture grants additional support small businesses.



## USDA Rural Business Development Grants

[The USDA Rural Business Development Grant](#) (RBDG) is another federal resource that provides small rural businesses with funding, technical assistance and training. While there is no maximum grant amount, \$10,000 to \$500,000 is the standard RBDG award range.

The program seeks to promote economic development and job creation projects through the awarding of grant funds to eligible entities. Applications will compete in two separate categories, business opportunity grants and business enterprise grants, for use in funding various business and community projects that serve rural areas.

These grants target Public Body/Government Entity, an Indian Tribe, or a Nonprofit entity primarily serving rural areas that promote projects benefiting rural areas or towns outside the urbanized periphery of any city with a population of 50,000 or more.

Opportunity Grants target:

- Community economic development.
- Technology-based economic development.
- Rural business incubators.

Enterprise Grants have the same targets as opportunity grants in addition to :

- Training and technical assistance.
- Acquisition or development of land.
- Rural transportation improvement.
- Rural distance learning for job training and advancement for adult students.

# The Federal Government and several private foundations offers support to minority-owned small business.



## Federal

The U.S. Small Business Administration is committed to support the growth of minority-own small business. This federal agency offer counseling and training, funding programs through its field offices and resource partners. It also runs the [T.H.R.I.V.E.](#) program which offers an executive-level series intended to accelerate the growth of high-potential small businesses in America's underserved cities.

The U.S. Department of the Interior runs the Native American Business Development Institute grants provides funding to business owners of Native American descent that create jobs and promote economy activity.

## Corporate

For people of color:

- [Wish Local Empowerment Program](#) - A \$2M dollar fund to give roughly 4,000 Wish Local small business partners financial support. The selected recipients will receive amounts between \$500 - \$2000.
- [Coalition to Back Black Businesses](#) - \$5,000 grants are available each year to Black-owned businesses with between three and 20 employees.

Women:

- [HerRise MicroGrant](#) - offer monthly \$1,000 to women of color entrepreneurs o own at least 51% of their for-profit small business
- [Amber Grant](#) - Awards a \$10,000 Amber Grant to a woman-owned business in a specific, rotating category.

Native American:

- [First Nations Development Institute Grants](#) – First Nations has been offering grants to help support Native American organizations and projects, totaling \$51.6 million in grants, along with technical resources.

Latin/Hispanic:

- [Siete Juntos Fund](#) – The fund awards grants to Latino-owned bakeries, eateries and food trucks. The grand prize winner will receive \$50,000. there is also a monetary prize to the second and third place.



# Additionally, there are additional corporate programs that support minority-owned SBs.



- [National Black MBA Association](#) - A Scale-Up Pitch Challenge for black-owned startups that are scalable in order to connect with venture capitalists or early-stage investors.
- [Asian Women Giving Circle](#) – A network to raise funds for Asian American women-led projects related to arts and culture located in New York City.
- [Fast Break for Small Business](#) - Programs target at Black-owned and diverse businesses. The programs is sponsored by LegalZoom, NBA, and WNBA.
- [Hawaii FoundHer Program](#) – Targeted at women-founded businesses, particularly targeting historically underserved AAPI and Native Hawaiian wāhine.
- [BGV Pitch Competition](#) – Open to Black or brown female business owners. Each founder has three minutes to pitch, followed by a three-minute audience Q&A.
- [She's Connected by AT&T](#) - Open to U.S.-based small-businesses that are women-owned and have fewer than 51 employees
- [Publish Her Business Impact Grant](#) – Seeks to help businesses that are 100% owned by women of color.
- [Sage Invest in Progress Grant Program](#) - Awards black female entrepreneurs with funding along with training, mentorship and networking opportunities.

For further details please  
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