

RISE-WA

Rural Investment
for Small-business
Empowerment
in WA State

PROGRAM IMPACT REPORT

RISE-WA is a project funded by a Small Business Innovation Fund grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce. The goal of the project is to bring technical solution providers and technology entrepreneurs together with rural Small, Women, and Black, Indigenous, People of Color-owned businesses (S/W/BIPOC) in Washington State to utilize innovation and technology of the urban tech sector to improve pandemic resilience and business recovery. This grant is being administered by the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER).



WOMEN & BIPOC

Women and Black, Indigenous, People of Color-owned businesses in WA



SMALL BUSINESS

Businesses with 50 or fewer employees or less than \$7m in gross revenue.



RURAL

Businesses based in rural Washington counties

Project administered by



Pacific NorthWest
Economic Region

With funding from



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

RISE-WA

SUCCESS BY THE NUMBERS



Companies in the Cohort

Through a competitive process, ten Small Women & BIPOC-owned businesses from rural counties across Washington were selected to take part. In addition, over 70% of our solutions providers and consultants are women or BIPOC-owned businesses.

10



Jobs Created

Over 12 FTE positions were created or retained as a result of support from the program.

12+



Direct & Indirect Funding

Over \$300k+ in funding and services was put back into communities across Washington State due to the program.

\$300k+



Approval Rating

Upon being surveyed, cohort members informed our team they are very satisfied with the program and would recommend it to others.

100%



Webinar Hours

Throughout the course of the program, members spent over 670 hours participating in online webinars and meeting with solutions providers.

670

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Rural Investment for Small-business Empowerment

This year, PNWER launched the RISE-WA Accelerator, funded by a Small Business Innovation Fund Grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce. Building on the success of the Congregate Solutions Accelerator, RISE-WA focused on underserved rural communities in Washington, supporting ten rural Small, Women, and Black, Indigenous, People of Color-owned businesses (S/W/BIPOC). The program connected these businesses with technical solution providers and entrepreneurs, offering up to \$10,000 in direct funding and \$20,000 in support services. Participants engaged in weekly workshops, one-on-one meetings with mentors, and tailored assistance to address specific challenges and enhance resilience.

RISE-WA Solution Providers:



360 Social Impact Studios



B2B Solutions



Timu Marketing



Moonbeam Exchange



Fiscal Finesse



Kotzer Consulting



Affiner Consulting



WA Small Business Development Center



WA Technology Industry Association

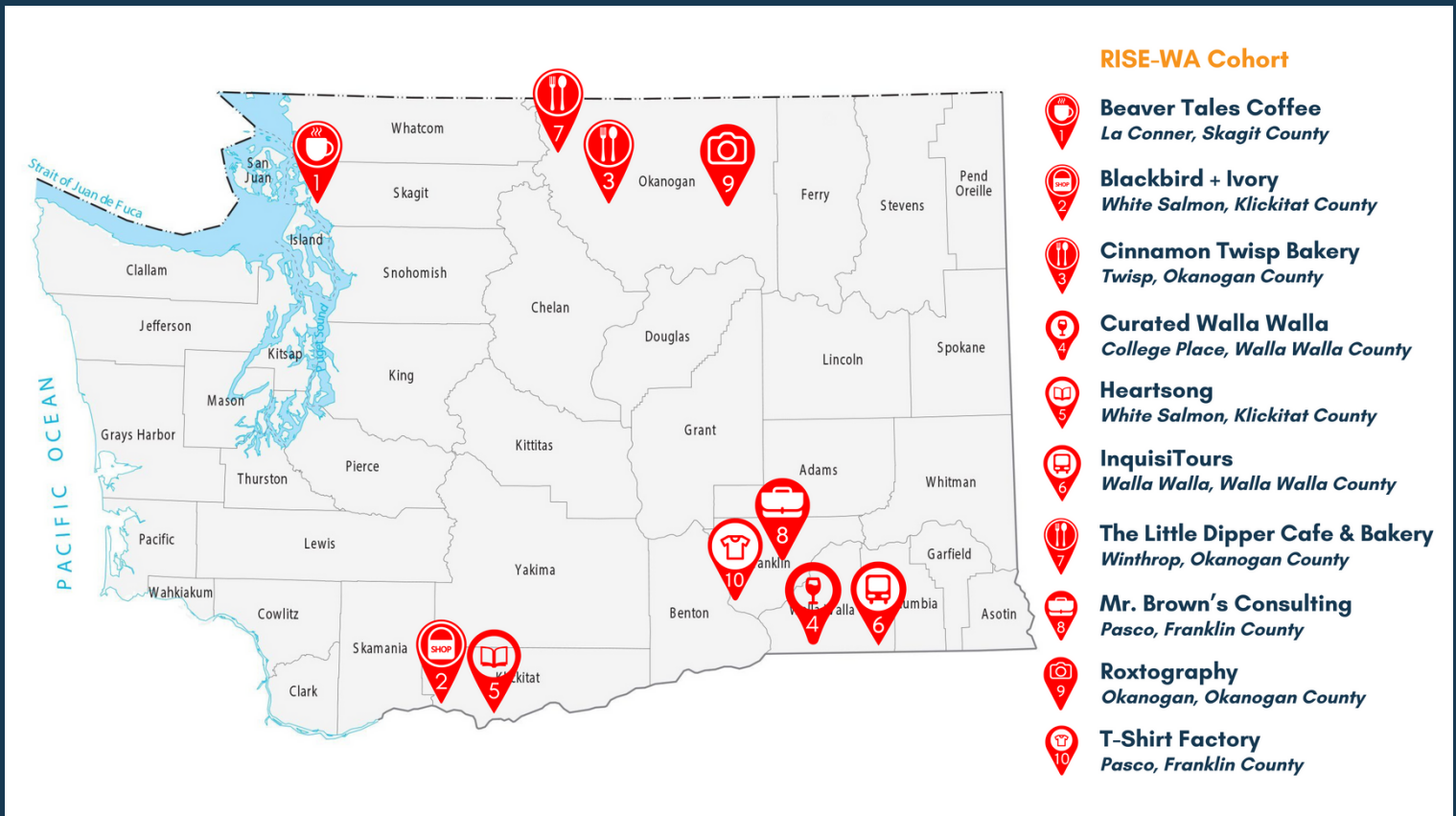


DiverseAmerica Network



ChangeUp Advisors

Map of the RISE-WA Cohort



RISE-WA

Accelerator Sessions

The sessions encompassed a holistic business development journey, beginning with business 101 and delving into marketing strategies, business scaling, and financial management. Expert-led sessions cover topics from social media and SEO to growth tactics and financial management. Additional resources from the Washington Small Business Development Center and product development insights were provided. Additionally, monthly group sessions enhanced learning with focused workshops on elevator pitches, work-life balance, leveraging business distinctions, and AI tools for planning, facilitated by various solution providers. Each session was designed to empower and educate the cohort in enhancing their business acumen.

Testimonials

"This program helped clarify and articulate our vision for our business. I am walking the talk. One thing that was really scary was that we went from 0-8 employees in 6 months. We are now looking at another location. I now have the resources though. I have contacts and people to go to...I hope there is another level of grant programming that we can use as we develop our skills. Being a small business isn't easy."

Michelle Calvin & Tony Cladoosby | Beaver Tales | La Conner, WA



"This program changes lives. We have regained confidence in entrepreneurship. What the program has done is helped us restore faith in ourselves and helped take our business to the next level. Now we are ahead of the game instead of behind the game. I have gone from a five year plan to a three year plan for my business. From marketing to finance to logos to website development. I am now connected to some pretty awesome people. I hope they bring it back!"

Irving Brown | Mr. Brown's Consulting | Pasco, WA



"[The RISE-WA program has been a] wonderful experience. Without the grant, my business may not have survived this year. This model is an innovative transformer for rural business owners, and thus rural communities. It has made all the difference. I could confidently make big changes because of the direct funding and the solutions providers that I worked with. I felt so comfortable and safe working with everyone...but they also pushed me."

Stephanie Seliga Soulseed | Heartsong | White Salmon, WA



"This grant program isn't just an investment; it's a catalyst for success, uniting passion with expertise to propel businesses forward. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this impactful program!"

Robin Glaeser | InquisiTours | Walla Walla, WA

