

2023 Cooperative Business Development Mini-Grant Program Request for Applications

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The Nebraska Cooperative Development Center (NCDC), a program of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Agricultural Economics, is seeking applications for its 2023 Cooperative Business Development Mini-grant Program.

Cooperative Business Development Mini-Grants are available to groups who are **pursuing/exploring a cooperative business model** or are **incorporated cooperatives (or other business entity operating as a cooperative)** in rural Nebraska.

Characteristics of Cooperative include:

User-owner - the users of the business own and finance the business. **User-control** - Users vote, democratically, to set major policies and to elect a board of directors composed of the cooperative's users. **User-benefit** – User benefit distribution is based on members' use of the cooperative, not on the amount of capital they have invested.

Groups (including communities) that are exploring community-supported cooperative ventures are also eligible to apply for either Initial Development or Advanced Assistance.

- **Initial Development Assistance** grants are designed for groups who are in the exploratory stages of development of cooperative or multi-owner businesses.
- **Advanced Development Assistance** grants are designed to provide incorporated cooperatives or multi-owner businesses functioning or operating as a cooperative the ability to hire professional services or develop materials for the on-going development of their cooperative or multi-owner business functioning as a cooperative.

**Partnerships, or Sole Proprietorship businesses as well as businesses located in Omaha, Bellevue, or Lincoln are not eligible for funding.*

Past grant recipients have used grant monies for accounting assistance, business plan development, capitalization plan creation, feasibility and market studies, legal fees for incorporation, member recruitment activities and/or materials. Other activities may be allowed with approval by NCDC.

**Ineligible Activities include salaries, membership fees or dues, and/or purchases of equipment, buildings, real estate, or software including QuickBooks or POS systems.*

Additionally, NCDC staff work with the group to connect to cooperative development resources.

Applications will be accepted by accessing the online application at [2023NCDCMinigrant](#) or scanning the QR Code below beginning February 1, 2023 through February 15. Awards will be announced March 1, 2023.



Questions can be directed to Cindy Houlden at choulden2@unl.edu or 308-293-6417.



“The Board of the Emerson Grocery Cooperative (DBA Post 60 Market) is very thankful for all the support both monetary and knowledge. Having people to contact who know others who have gone through this of are going through this is a HUGE help.
—Emerson Grocery Cooperative, Emerson

*“We are extremely grateful for the support the NCDC has provided **Farm to Family Cooperative** in opening our doors to this advanced technical grant used to develop marketing materials. We look forward to continuing to partner with NCDC in the future.”*
—Farm to Family Cooperative, Hay Springs



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