



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & Marketing

WELCOME TO VERNON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING

Whether you're an aspiring or new entrepreneur, scaling your business, or preparing for transition, Vernon County Economic Development and our network of partners are committed to providing exceptional support. Count on us to connect you with the resources that will set you on the right path for your unique business!

WHAT WE CAN ASSIST YOU WITH:

With the goal of being “resource match-makers” to support community and economic development, there is a wide array of services Vernon County Economic Development and Marketing can provide, including:

- **Accessing financial resources & incentives**, including revolving loan funds, grants, and financial planning resources.
- **Facilitating connections and networking** opportunities with local business leaders, entrepreneurs, and industry experts.
- **Conducting site and business tours** and assisting with site selection.
- **Referrals to service providers** and economic development partners offering information and technical assistance.
- **Sharing market research** and demographic information.
- **Marketing efforts to support for workforce** recruitment and retention.

Unsure if what you're looking for fits? Give us a call and we'll talk it over. We look forward to helping you thrive in Vernon County!

Sincerely,

Larkin Breckel

Larkin Breckel - Economic Development & Marketing Coordinator - (608) 637-5334

Business FINANCING GUIDE

SPRING 2025



Starting or expanding your business means you most likely need access to capital. In addition to traditional lending and financing, below are some lending resources available to businesses in Vernon County and Wisconsin.

Vernon County Economic Development Loan Program

The Vernon County Economic Development Loan program is a flexible source of financing for businesses expanding or relocating to Vernon County. Learn more at vernoncountywi.gov under the Community Development Department.



CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund

This revolving loan fund provides gap financing. This program will help businesses in Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties. Loan payback terms are flexible and the interest rates will be 4%-6% on average. Learn more at mrrpc.com/loans-grants.



CMV Growth Revolving Loan Fund

The CMV Growth Development Revolving Loan Fund is for Crawford, Monroe and Vernon counties. The fund is targeted toward manufacturers, tourism and selected service industries that create jobs. Learn more at mrrpc.com/loans-grants/.



WWBIC

WWBIC makes loans to small and micro start-up and established businesses up to \$350,000. Learn more at wwbic.com/business-lending/



SBA Backed Loans

The U.S. Small Business Administration helps small businesses get funding by setting guidelines for loans and reducing lender risk. Learn more at: sba.gov/funding-programs/loans



KIVA 0% Interest Loans

Kiva is a non-profit organization that acts as a micro-lending platform, where loans for up to \$15,000 are crowd funded for businesses across the world. Learn more at Kiva.org



Business GRANTS GUIDE

SPRING 2025



Grant funding is a great resource for starting and growing businesses, but there are few blanket grants that help businesses across all stages and sectors. Below is a selection of grants that span multiple industries and business types. Please reach out to Economic Development Staff for more specific grant questions.

Amber Grants for Women

National granting program supporting entrepreneurial women, The Amber Grant offers three \$10,000 grants to women-owned businesses each month.



Value Added Producers Grant

The Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program helps agricultural producers enter value-added activities to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase producer income.



Entrepreneurial Micro-Grants

EMG supports business planning and strategy for entrepreneurs and small business owners in Wisconsin that are early-stage technology-based companies with services and funding to support their efforts in obtaining significant federal grant funding.



Compeer Rural Investment Grants

Compeer provides a variety of rural investment grants for beginning farmers, rural business owners, and organizations that help enrich agriculture and rural America.



Find more opportunities and resources through the Office of Rural Prosperity

Search the Office of Rural Prosperity's resource directory for business specific loans, grants, and other services.



Business RESOURCE GUIDE

SPRING 2025



Whether it is writing your first business plan, exploring market resources, getting on top of your financials, or other assistance, there are many organizations in the region who are here to help you and your business succeed.

UW-La Crosse Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Small Business Development Center at UW-La Crosse helps entrepreneurs succeed at any stage. They offer no-cost, confidential consulting and business education.

Director: Anne Hlavacka (608)785-8782 | ahlavacka@uwlax.edu

Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC)

WWBIC provides underserved individuals with access to business education and financing options to help start, strengthen or expand their businesses.

Southwest Regional Coordinator: (608)668-4400 | mpierce@wwbic.com

SCORE

SCORE offers free and confidential mentoring along with low-cost or no-cost business training, seminars, workshops, and numerous tools and templates.

learn more at www.score.org

Vernon Economic Development Association (VEDA)

Vernon Economic Development Association helps entrepreneurs start or expand businesses with 1:1 counseling, access to resources, and space for entrepreneurial tenants at the Food Enterprise Center and locations across the county.

Executive Director: Susan Noble (608)638-8332 | snoble@veda-wi.org

Couleecap

Couleecap assists aspiring business owners turn their business idea into a reality. They help early stage entrepreneurs develop business models and plans, offer startup capital grants, and access to retail incubator space in La Crosse.

Contact: Alex Rodriguez - (608)304-7978 | alex.rodriguez@couleecap.org

Contact: Brad Morescki - (608)461-9675 | brad.morescki@couleecap.org

Business CONNECTIONS GUIDE

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Business groups of all sorts help build a sense of community, provide networking opportunities, share advice, provide mentoring, education, and resource sharing. Check out the following groups and find your fit to get connected!

Group:

Meets:

Stoddard Business Association

Contact: Jancyn Lepke - jancynlepke@gmail.com

every other month,
last Wednesday @ 6:00 pm

Coon Valley Business Association

Contact: Paulene Aspenson - chancesr@mwt.net

3 times a quarter
First Monday @ 5:00 pm

Westby Chamber of Commerce

Contact: Stef Schroeder - westbywi@gmail.com

Quarterly
Third Thursday @ 5:00 pm

Viroqua Chamber

Contact: Aaron Aslin - Infodesk@viroquachamber.com

Quarterly

Hillsboro Chamber

Contact: Dana Stanek - info@visithillsborowi.com

Contact for meeting and
networking schedule

Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club - VEDA

Contact: Susan Noble - snoble@veda-wi.org

Monthly: Second
Wednesday @ 5:30 pm

Premier Referral Network

Contact: Courtney Moser - cmoser@bethelhome.org

Every Wednesday @ 8:00 am