

# San Bernardino Investment Playbook

## Project Details: Entrepreneurial Resource Center

The Entrepreneurial Resource Center (ERC) will provide a centrally located, easily accessible downtown hub for small business training and technical assistance. The ERC will bring together a wide range of entrepreneurial support organizations to provide a complete set of training, technical assistance, and access to resources for small business owners and entrepreneurs in the city and adjacent communities. It will improve access to resources for all aspiring and existing entrepreneurs, increase the rate of business creation, and foster greater success and long-term sustainability for local small businesses.

The ERC will be anchored by the Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship (IECE)—one of the largest university-based Centers for Entrepreneurship in the world—and the globally recognized CSUSB School of Entrepreneurship (SoE), which remains the first and only school of its kind in the state. The extensive array of entrepreneurial support programs offered by the IECE and SoE encompasses every stage of company formation. Together the IECE and SoE will work with partner entrepreneurial support organizations to set clear objectives, develop programming, and deliver services with tangible results.

Historically entrepreneurial support organizations in the region have worked largely in isolation, though a small number have focused on leveraging the programming and resources of larger, more established organizations. The ERC will convene these actors in order to create a well-defined and well-coordinated continuum of services capable of supporting businesses across their entire lifecycle. It will also work with the Supply SB supplier diversity initiative to connect local Latino and Black vendors to contract-readiness programming and procurement-focused sales opportunities.

### RATIONALE

Historically there has been a lack of coordination among the roughly two dozen organizations working to support entrepreneurship in the Inland Empire. While some smaller entities leverage the programs and resources of larger, better-established organizations, most work in relative isolation and lack the capacity to meet the changing needs of entrepreneurs as they move from initial idea to business launch. These coordination deficits result in duplicative efforts and disjointed programming that can be difficult for would-be entrepreneurs and small business owners to access and navigate.

### OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that current and aspiring small business owners have consistent access to the resources they need to start and grow their businesses
- Provide long-term small business support that ensures sustainable success
- Address disparities in small business ownership and entrepreneurship through a deliberate focus on Latinos and others from underrepresented groups in the City and surrounding communities (e.g., Rialto, Highland, Colton, Redlands)
- Increase coordination and collaboration among the approximately two dozen entrepreneurial support organizations working within the region in order to

establish a clear and easy-to-access continuum of support for entrepreneurs and small business owners

## ADDITIONAL DETAIL

The Entrepreneurial Resource Center will be a 10,000-ft<sup>2</sup> facility that is a mixture of private office space (20 offices at 200 ft<sup>2</sup> each—10 free and 10 for rent), training rooms (two rooms at 600 ft<sup>2</sup> each), storage / shipping space (1,500 ft<sup>2</sup>), an e-commerce digital media room (600 ft<sup>2</sup>), and 2,500 ft<sup>2</sup> of retail space. It will have a staff of 15-20 employees.

## COST

\$5M – Facilities  
7.5M Staff  
over ten years Programming and services

Marketplace Program – Assists entrepreneurs as they move from initial idea to microbusiness launch with tracks for farmers market / craft fair sales (IE Made), e-commerce (California Shop Small-Amazon), wholesale (procurement network), and exports

SBDC Eats Program – Six-week program that prepares participants to start and run a food-based business (includes follow-on counseling)

Catapult Business Growth Network – 50-hour intensive for small business owners focused on key concepts and tools proven to drive and manage business growth (includes peer mentoring network)

Financial Fitness Bootcamp – Four-day workshop for small business owners focused on financial literacy and financial management basics

Main Street Digital Program – Assists brick-and-mortar businesses interested in having an online presence

SBDC Center for Contracting – Helps small businesses with contract readiness and securing contracts

Mini-MBA in Entrepreneurship for Veterans

Upstarters Discovery Camp – Introduces middle and high school students to entrepreneurship fundamentals

Association de Emprendedor@s – Startup programs and workshops delivered in Spanish

4th Sector Innovations – Incubation and coworking space

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**\$5M – 7.5M TOTAL** over ten years

## POTENTIAL FUNDING

### *Federal*

Economic Development Administration (US Commerce)

ED Adult Education Basic Grants

ED Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program – Title V

ED Educational Facilities Clearinghouse

ED Opening Doors, Expanding Opportunities Grant Program

Small Business Administration (US Commerce)

US Department of Agriculture

*State*

Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF)  
Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)  
High Road Training Partnership Resilient Workforce General Fund  
Infrastructure State Revolving Fund (ISRF) Program  
State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) Technical Assistance Funding

*Philanthropies*

Kauffman Foundation  
San Manuel Foundation

## LEAD ORGANIZATION

Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship (IECE) and School of Entrepreneurship (SoE)  
at California State University San Bernardino

Michael Stull, director, IECE and SoE

Paul Nolta, program director, Small Business Development and director,  
Inland Empire Small Business Development Center (IESBDC)

## SIMILAR PROJECTS ELSEWHERE

[Utah Valley Business Resource Center](#)