

Commerce EDA grant Safe Start partners and quotes

Association of Washington Business

The [Association of Washington Business](#) is Washington's oldest and largest statewide business association representing nearly 7,000 businesses across diverse industries. While its membership is made up of both large and small employers, more than 90% of AWB members employ fewer than 100 people and more than half employ fewer than 10.

Early in the COVID pandemic, AWB recognized that many small businesses needed help welcoming back employees and customers in a safe way. Small businesses couldn't buy personal protective equipment (PPE) and didn't necessarily have the resources to design the required signage regarding face masks and social distancing. AWB assembled a task force that created and launched a website www.reboundandrecovery.org within two weeks, providing a portal for small businesses to match up with PPE suppliers near them (and a marketplace for local manufacturers of PPE to reach customers) and download a tool kit for safe operations. In the first week, the website received almost 4,000 visits and more than 2,000 people downloaded resources from the online tool kit. By late summer, the website had received more than 4,000 requests for PPE and 149 businesses were listed in the database as PPE suppliers.

*"COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenges to our doorstep, but it's also given us an opportunity to think carefully and strategically about how we rebuild our economy," said **Kris Johnson**, president of the Association of Washington Business. "Since the start of the pandemic, AWB has worked hard to help employers of all size and in every industry not only survive the initial downturn but also rebound and recover in a way that enhances equity and works for everyone. Whether that's by building an online portal to connect small businesses with made-in-Washington PPE or serving as a source of timely, credible information about state and federal resources, we want to see a state that emerges from this crisis better, stronger and more resilient than we were before. We look forward to continuing to work with those most affected, including small businesses and rural businesses."*

Impact Washington

[Impact Washington](#) is a statewide non-profit organization that provides competitive, value-driven services. With access to public and private resources, our goal is to enhance growth, improve productivity, reduce costs, and expand manufacturing capacity in Washington. We provide fee-based consulting, education, and training opportunities to ensure a healthy and vibrant manufacturing community in every corner of the state. We are an affiliate of the [National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Program \(NIST MEP\)](#). Since 1997 Impact Washington has delivered improvement solutions to more than 1,500 Washington State manufacturers.

Under the grant, Impact will provide technical assistance to small manufacturers, start-ups and main street business. Each of these types of companies has a different sweet spot, and they will be working one-on-one with Impact experts to help restart, rebuild and become more resilient. This could mean retooling the manufacturing floor to keep workers safe but still be efficient, pivoting to do more online business, or diversification.



*"Impact Washington has worked closely with the state since the announcement of the pandemic in early March," said **Deloit R. Wolfe, Jr.** center director for Impact Washington. "We look forward to continuing our advisory role and plan to utilize these funds to provide no-cost business guidance and restart resources to manufacturers in rural and underserved areas of Washington State."*

National Development Council

The [National Development Council](#) (NDC) is a key community development financial institution. Under the grant, NDC will work with other CDFI partners and philanthropy to help small businesses leverage private funding. Small businesses are eligible for a wide variety of financing and funding, but they often don't know what they need, who provides it, or how to connect with them. NDC will provide technical assistance and education for both the businesses and the investors, cohort coordination, matchmaking and one-on-one financial deal development.

*"NDC looks forward to working as a partner on the Washington State Safe Start Project to help small businesses and projects access the capital they need to recover and rebuild from the COVID19 pandemic" said **Daniel Marsh**, president and CEO of NDC "In addition, NDC is pleased to be part of the implementation team that will help projects get investment-ready, including providing pre-development technical support and helping assemble financial packages that include a mix of public, private, and philanthropic funds. NDC will further collaborate with the Washington State Safe Start Project by capitalizing a statewide revolving loan fund to provide patient and affordable capital to small businesses- especially those left out of the traditional financing systems"*

Restart Partners

[Restart Partners](#) is a nonprofit organization committed to helping government leaders save lives and livelihoods by using science, data, and policies that empower communities with the tools to protect the most vulnerable, increase public trust, and enable all sectors of our economy to safely open and remain open. Restart Partners believe no one is safe from COVID-19 until we are all safe. Their team includes leaders from a wide variety of backgrounds in technology, industry, data and behavioral science, public policy, academia, communications, supply chain, and other disciplines.

Restart Partners will be integral to the state's work to address equity. For example, the Refugee Artisan Initiative (RAI) based in Seattle serves a mission is to transform the lives of refugee and immigrant women by providing sustainable work in sewing and handcrafting products. Restart Partners partnered with the Refugee Artisan Initiative to provide the financial support that the organization needed to make customized, clear adult and kids masks for Kindering so that their therapists can effectively teach children with disabilities while wearing protective masks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Kate Greco, Kindering Speech Language Pathologist, having clear face masks is extremely beneficial because so much communication comes through nonverbal cues, particularly for children on the autism spectrum. The RAI/Kindering clear mask program has been very successful, supporting Kindering's mission to provide the finest education and therapies to nurture hope, courage, and the skills of children of diverse abilities and their families.

In addition, Restart Partners worked with RAI to support their GoFundMe campaign to help purchase mask making supplies to ensure that workers on the front line against COVID-19 are protected. RAI is



also making masks to help people impacted by the West Coast wildfires. RAI will be donating up to 5,000 masks to emergency teams, firefighters and victims. For more information, please visit: refugeesarts.org

*“Restart Partners is enthusiastic about bringing our public-private collaborative solutions and resources to address the challenges of Washington state’s small business community to help move beyond the pandemic to an equitable, thriving and innovative future,” said **Dr. Sandra O. Archibald**, founding board member of Restart Partners, and former dean of the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance at the University of Washington.*

Thurston County Economic Development Council

The [Thurston Economic Development Council](#) is a broadly constructed organization – comprising leaders from the entire region brought together to create a dynamic and sustainable economy that supports the values of the people who live and work here. We have a strong ethos of service, partnership and inclusiveness and are committed to continual investment in building equity in our community. The Center for Business and Innovation (CB&I) is an entrepreneurship ecosystem that was constructed through cohesive partnerships between resources and technical service providers to provide a holistic approach to business excellence. With resource providers and partners such as the South Puget Sound Community College, the Small Business Development Center, Saint Martin’s University, Washington Procurement Technical Assistance Center, and the Washington Center for Women in Business, the CB&I has supported, mentored, and launched businesses located throughout the state and region.

The grant will expand opportunities for businesses to take advantage of an online training and mentoring series. *ScaleUp: The COVID-19 Edition* will be offered free to 2,400 small businesses to help owners improve strategic thinking and decision-making, create operational

*“The significant economic disruption of our economy that COVID-19 has brought, has impacted all sectors of our communities. The CB&I and our partners have chosen a pathway forward that is based on the fact that recovery began yesterday – that we can quickly move resources and assistance into new avenues of action that can rebuild and support our employers, our community vibrancy, and build a resiliency for the future. Since March of this year, the CB&I has provided resources to over 20,000 business clients – each receiving a direction, a resource, and or technical assistance focused on rebuilding our economy. The resource that is provided through this new grant program will directly impact our state’s long term recovery strategy and provide resources to business to gain traction in a vastly different and changing economic landscape,” said **Michael Cade**, Thurston EDC Center for Business and Innovation Executive Director.*

UW Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME)

The [IHME](#) is an independent population health research center at UW Medicine that provides rigorous and comparable measurement of the world's most important health problems and evaluates the strategies used to address them. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, IHME has been one of the leading organizations in the world providing data for science-based decision-making, which has led to increased public safety measures. IHME is working closely with businesses, governments, and the global health community, offering extensive insights on the pandemic.



When COVID-19 was first reported in Washington state, IHME was asked by the region's largest health system, UW Medicine, to project the impact on hospitals to help doctors and nurses prepare for the surge in cases. Through that effort, UW's hospitals were able to adequately address the rising number of patients and to successfully treat thousands of people over the past six months. Because of careful, data-driven planning, Washington state ultimately was able to donate respirators it had amassed for the pandemic response to other parts of the country struggling to meet the demand, including New York State.

The IHME will build on its COVID-19 modeling expertise along with learnings from back-to-work engagements it has with organizations to build, implement, and scale an early detection system to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases in Washington state's high-risk workforce, beginning with the fishing industry in local communities and in Alaska.

*"IHME has provided critical information to our state's hospital systems, which helped them avoid being overwhelmed by the high caseloads from COVID-19," said **Professor Ali Mokdad**, the chief strategy officer for population health for the University of Washington. "Through careful monitoring, IHME will help businesses in vulnerable communities keep their work forces and the people they serve safe from COVID-19."*

Washington Maritime Blue

[Washington Maritime Blue](#) is a non-profit, strategic alliance formed to accelerate innovation and sustainability in support of an inclusive blue economy. This partnership between industry, public sector, research and training institutions, and community organizations has a mission to implement Washington state's strategy for the Blue Economy delivered by Gov. Jay Inslee's Maritime Innovation Advisory Council. Maritime Blue works to create a world-class, thriving, equitable and sustainable maritime and ocean industry in Washington through knowledge sharing, joint innovation, entrepreneurship, commercialization, business and workforce development.

With this grant, Maritime Blue will coordinate the development of the IHME Early Detection product pilot test in the maritime and fisheries sector including interface with operators, maritime health providers and regulators. The product will need to interface and meet the reporting needs of each respective sector or community. Maritime Blue is in the unique position to provide the level of coordination, communications and distribution to other maritime employers, sectors and markets.

*"The fishing fleet and maritime sector workforce is critical to our state's food supply, transportation and cargo movement, but at high-risk in the ongoing health and economic crisis. With this opportunity to work with IHME, not only can we focus our efforts on prevention, but help accelerate a technology for sectors and communities around the state to stay safe while continuing work," said **Joshua Berger**, Gov. Inslee's maritime sector lead and founder and board chair of Washington Maritime Blue.*

WSU Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The [Washington SBDC](#) is a network of more than 30 business advisors and two international trade business advisors who work in communities across the state to assist small business owners and entrepreneurs who want to start, grow or buy/sell a business. The Washington SBDC is an accredited



member of the America's SBDC and is a partnership between the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) at the federal level, and institutions of higher education and/or economic development centers at the state level. The Washington SBDC is among the oldest in the nation and has been hosted by Washington State University (WSU) since 1980.

The mission of the Washington SBDC is to help small businesses succeed through advising, education and research. Under this grant, SBDC's will provide small businesses with no-cost assistance ranging from business planning to marketing and tax support.

*"Supporting small business owners through the pandemic and into a strong recovery requires all hands on deck, so we are pleased to be part of this collaborative effort that will truly make a difference for struggling business owners and the communities where they work and live," said **Duane Fladland**, state director Washington Small Business Development Center (SBDC). "We know that businesses in underserved communities have been hit especially hard by the pandemic. Capital is important to recovery, but it isn't a panacea, and what works for one business will not work for every business. This grant will enable us to expand one-to-one, client-centered technical assistance so that more small business owners can restart, rebuild and become more resilient."*

Thanks to our Safe Start project partners



#SafeStartWA