



Economic Development Alliance
St. Clair County, Michigan
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EDA OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY AWARDED \$2.5 MILLION SMALL BUSINESS HUB GRANT MAY 17, 2024

St. Clair County, Michigan

The Economic Development Alliance (EDA) of St. Clair County is pleased to announce it's been awarded \$2.5 million dollars through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Small Business Support Hubs program (SBSH). The Small business Support Hubs (SBSH) program aims to strengthen regional ecosystems for entrepreneurs and raise the national profile of Michigan's small business ecosystem.

The funds awarded will be utilized for programming and operations to expand the Small Business Development Center's counseling services across Region 6, grow the Port Huron SmartZone Hub and the affiliated Underground Incubator to serve technology and non-technology small businesses and startups. Affiliate locations are being established in Shiawassee, Lapeer, Tuscola, Huron, and Sanilac Counties in order to facilitate business counseling and training services. New co-working facilities are proposed to be launched in the Village of Capac in St. Clair County and Bad Axe in Huron County by two community foundations.

The EDA of St. Clair County will be expanding its local Emerge Fund to Region 6 and seed it with business grant funds. Approximately \$426,000 of the funding will be available to deploy as direct grants to eligible small businesses through the Emerge Fund and other possible small business grant initiatives over the next three years.

Additionally, in order to successfully launch and grow new startups and help existing small businesses flourish, the EDA will be working with multiple service providers throughout Region 6 to provide support services in legal, accounting, patent filing, marketing, consulting and other services crucial to entrepreneurial success. The EDA will soon be issuing an RFP across the six counties to identify potential firms for providing services to startups and small businesses. A cohort of small business entrepreneurs /companies will be accepted into the Hub program (approximately 60 per year for three years) that will be eligible for up to \$7,500 of the grant funded services from one or more of region's approved service providers.

"We are excited and grateful to the MEDC for this Small Business Hub grant award that will help us to elevate entrepreneurship throughout the Eastern Michigan region, said Dan Casey, CEO of the Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County. "There is much to do to get programming, service providers, and grant resources ready to deploy quickly. We're excited about the economic impact this will have on the region. Ultimately, the Hub will help people realize their dream of being self-employed and it will create the next generation of businesses for our communities."

Funding for the SBSH derives from the federal American Rescue Plan. Michigan's goal is to strengthen existing entrepreneurial hubs and expand their geographic reach. Other objectives include to support small businesses disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

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About EDA of St. Clair County

The Economic Development Alliance (EDA) of St. Clair County is a private non-profit organization that creates economic prosperity by growing companies and cultivating vibrant communities. The EDA is a full-service economic development agency working in the areas of business attraction, retention and expansion, community development, small business development, talent attraction and regional marketing. The EDA's mission to enhance the prosperity and growth of our region's economy is made possible by the generous support of EDA private & public sector investor members passionate about supporting community and economic development. To learn more about the Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County visit: www.edascc.com.