

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Small Business Development Resources FAQ



Welcome to the ***Innovation and Entrepreneurship Resource FAQ***, created by the Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E) Team at the South Carolina Department of Commerce. This guide brings together answers to the most frequently asked questions and highlights “hot topics” raised by small business owners seeking support from Commerce.

In addition to the resources outlined here, we encourage you to explore our dedicated business development website: <https://scbizdev.sccommerce.com/>.

We hope this FAQ serves as a helpful starting point for your business journey. If you have further questions or need additional guidance, please connect with the I&E Team at Innovation@sccommerce.com.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FAQ

CONTENTS

1. AGRIBUSINESS: How do I find help for my agribusiness?	3
2. CONTRACTING: How do I find contracting opportunities?	3
3. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Where can I find financial assistance?	3
4. GRANTS: What grants are available?	4
5. INNOVATION: Who can help me develop my product?	4
6. RELOCATION: How do I relocate my business to South Carolina?	5
7. SMALL BUSINESS CERTIFICATION: How do I certify my small business?	5
8. SMALL BUSINESS LICENSING: How do I get my small business license?	5
9. STARTUP and DEVELOPMENT: Who can help me start my small business?	6
10. STATE TAX CREDITS: How can I learn more about state tax credits?	6
11. WORKFORCE and TRAINING: Who can help with my workforce needs?	6
12. SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUSINESS TOOLS	7
13. SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS	7
14. QUESTIONS?	8

AGRIBUSINESS: HOW DO I FIND HELP FOR MY AGRIBUSINESS?

South Carolina Department of Agriculture Office of Agribusiness Development

strengthens South Carolina agribusiness by attracting new companies, supporting existing ones, fostering innovation, and connecting businesses to training, sites, and grants, driving growth in food processing, forestry, and related industries.

Agribusiness Center for Research and Entrepreneurship (ACRE)

provides resources, workshops and programs, such as the Advanced Entrepreneurship Program and Agribusiness Planning Curriculum.

Clemson University Cooperative Extension

educates and supports South Carolina farmers regarding entrepreneurship, agritourism, finances and more.

South Carolina Farmers & Agribusiness Innovators connect farmers, entrepreneurs, and business organizations with the funding, mentorship, and resources they need to move their ideas forward.

CONTRACTING: HOW DO I FIND CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES?

SC APEX Accelerator

assists small and large SC businesses with government contracting by providing individualized assistance to help navigate the federal, state and local government marketplace.

SC Small Business Development Center (SC SBDC)

offers consultation on federal, state, and local contracting, helping businesses become prime or subcontractors, research contracts, and handle performance issues.

South Carolina Division of Procurement Services (DPS)

assists businesses with the process of doing business with state agencies. Businesses can access additional government contracting opportunities by registering as a state vendor.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

provides training to help your business compete for federal contracts, understand the programs designed to assist you, find available support resources, and review annual federal contracting data.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: WHERE CAN I FIND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?

Business Development Corporation (BDC)

provides individuals and businesses with opportunities to access funds for local growth, job creation and economic development, with a priority focus on low- to moderate-income and underserved areas.

CLIMB Fund

is a nonprofit community development lender with a mission to ensure access to capital for entrepreneurs and small businesses that cannot secure traditional financing.

CommunityWorks

provides equitable financing and training to small business owners and startups throughout South Carolina.

South Carolina Community Loan Fund

offers financing and borrower support services to help make community development projects a reality. Loans are available to nonprofits, for-profits and municipalities across the state.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

offers financial programs including loans, investment capital, disaster assistance, surety bonds, and grants for businesses that conduct scientific research and development.

GRANTS: WHAT GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE?**Grants.gov**

is a database for federally funded grants. In addition to the grants catalog, users will find tools to navigate the grant application process, as well as grant writing tips.

Hello Alice

connects users with easy-to-access capital, grant opportunities, helpful resources, and a supportive community to bring ideas to life.

SC Small Business Development Center – List of Available Grants**South Carolina State Library**

has a “grants research collection” designed to assist nonprofit organizations and individuals seeking grant funding from private and corporate foundations and government agencies.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

provides weekly updated lists of loans, small business grants, or other opportunities to connect with programs and organizations that can help you with your business.

INNOVATION: WHO CAN HELP ME DEVELOP MY PRODUCT?**SC SBDC Technology Commercialization Program**

assists with market assessment, IP protection, capital, and bringing tech products to market.

South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA)

supports entrepreneurs and technology startups that are on a strong growth track through grant funding, coaching, and investing via SCRA’s investment affiliate, SC Launch Inc.

The Agribusiness Center for Research & Entrepreneurship (ACRE)

supports agribusiness entrepreneurs by providing funding, mentorship, and business development for new food, farm, and agricultural technology products.

RELOCATION: HOW DO I RELOCATE MY BUSINESS TO SOUTH CAROLINA?

South Carolina Business One Stop (SCBOS)

provides a one-stop information resource for starting, running, expanding and relocating businesses in and to South Carolina.

South Carolina Landing Pad Program

assists growth-phase companies and provides a one-stop information resource for starting, running, expanding and relocating businesses in and to South Carolina.

South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA)

Supports technology-based companies looking to relocate to South Carolina

SMALL BUSINESS CERTIFICATION: HOW DO I CERTIFY MY SMALL BUSINESS?

South Carolina Commission for Community Advancement and Engagement – Minority Certification

provides small business support and technical assistance to businesses seeking certification as a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) in South Carolina.

South Carolina Unified Certification Program (UCP)

assists with obtaining Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) certifications, eliminating the need for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms to obtain certifications from multiple state agencies.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

offers four certifications, and eight total programs, to help you stand out, find contracts, and grow your business.

SMALL BUSINESS LICENSING: HOW DO I GET MY SMALL BUSINESS LICENSE?

South Carolina Business One Stop (SCBOS)

provides a one-stop information resource for starting, running, expanding and relocating businesses in and to South Carolina.

South Carolina Secretary of State

administers corporate filings for corporations, nonprofits, limited liability companies, limited partnerships and limited liability partnerships.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

provides what you need to do before starting your business in South Carolina.

STARTUP AND DEVELOPMENT: WHO CAN HELP ME START MY SMALL BUSINESS?

SCORE

provides free consultations, advice and business services to existing business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

South Carolina Business One Stop (SCBOS)

provides a one-stop information resource for starting, running, expanding and relocating businesses in and to South Carolina.

South Carolina Small Business Development Center (SC SBDC)

offers seminars, resources and free counseling that will jump start your startup.

South Carolina Small Business Development Center — Veterans Business Program (VBP)

helps active and reserve duty military members and veterans realize their entrepreneurial potential by providing support with market research, business planning, and essential forms and registrations.

TogetherSC

provides resources for starting a nonprofit in South Carolina.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Programs

offers partnerships with public and private community-based organizations and financial institutions to provide financial, business development and technical assistance to rural businesses.

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - Veteran Entrepreneur Portal (VEP)

provides veterans direct access to resources that guide every step of entrepreneurship, helping small businesses access federal services and relevant best practices and information.

STATE TAX CREDITS: LEARN MORE ABOUT ENHANCED STATE TAX CREDITS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

South Carolina Department of Revenue

Provides technical assistance to help small business owners understand and claim tax credits to reduce the total amount of taxes owed.

WORKFORCE AND TRAINING: WHO CAN HELP WITH MY WORKFORCE NEEDS?

Apprenticeship Carolina

provides technical assistance to develop an apprenticeship program tailored to fit business needs. At no cost, consultants are available to guide companies through the registered apprenticeship development process.

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW)

supports both new and existing businesses' needs, including assistance finding qualified workers, instructions on how to pay unemployment taxes, information about qualifying for a tax credit, and more. SCDEW's Regional Workforce Advisors help bridge local gaps between educators and business owners relying on a talented labor pool.

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department

prepares and assists eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to achieve and maintain competitive employment.

The Babcock Center

provides job development, placement and training for local businesses. Individuals can accomplish vocational goals through daily training tasks within the community or at a work training center.

The Federal Bonding Program

is offered by the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW). This program is tailored for returning citizens and includes incentives for hiring those who complete the program and/or are federally bonded.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUSINESS TOOLS

BizFeed

is a monthly newsletter designed to help South Carolina's business community stay up to date with economic development and agency news, business development or educational programming, and more.

LocateSC

is equipped with flexible search criteria to analyze available sites, buildings, and office space, and provides additional demographic, business, and community data tools.

SizeUpSC

is S.C. Commerce's free business intelligence tool that provides key demographic data to help companies make better decisions around competitive benchmarking, customers, suppliers, marketing and advertising, and more.

SourceSC

is a free statewide industry directory that matches specific company capabilities and their supply chain needs. Companies looking to be listed in SourceSC must have a physical presence in South Carolina.

The South Carolina Material Exchange

is a free service designed to help businesses, industries and other organizations find markets for materials they have traditionally discarded. Registered users can post both wanted and available listings, like a classified ad section.

The South Carolina Recycling Directory

has over 300 S.C. recycling businesses that can recycle industrial paper, metals, plastics and more.

SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

- [Hello Alice](#)
- [SCORE](#)
- [Small Business Development Center](#)
- [TogetherSC](#) (for nonprofits)
- [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [U.S. Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#)

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions or need additional assistance or resources, please contact the Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E) Team at South Carolina Department of Commerce:

[Innovation@SCCommerce.com.](mailto:Innovation@SCCommerce.com)

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