

# State of Illinois Small Business Development Programs

May, 15<sup>th</sup> 2024



**Illinois**  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor

# Illinois Resources for Small Businesses



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor



# Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)

- Services Include:
  - One-on-one business advice and management assistance
  - Assistance with the development of business plans
  - Help with accessing market information and the development of marketing plans
  - Assistance with accessing business financing programs
  - Assistance with financial analysis and planning
  - Access to business education and training opportunities
  - Specialized services in technology, innovation and entrepreneurial development
- Closest SBDC's to Dekalb County:
  - [Illinois SBDC at Elgin Community College](#)
  - [Illinois SBDC at Waubensee Community College](#)

# APEX Accelerator

- For nearly 40 years the Illinois APEX Accelerator (formerly known as PTAC) professionals have been providing businesses – including small, disadvantaged and women-owned firms – the guidance they need to sell their goods and services to local, state, and federal government agencies. These centers provide:
  - One-on-one Confidential Counseling
  - Government Contracting Technical Assistance
  - Market Research and Target Market Assistance
  - Small Business Certification Assistance
  - Seminars, Webinars, and Workshops
  - Bid Matching Services
  - Mentor Protégé
  - Government specifications and standards
  - Guidance with quality assurance issues
  - Sub-contracting opportunities
  - Contract Administration Information
  - System for Award Management (SAM) Assistance
  - Review of Bid Packages
  - Networking Opportunities
- Closest APEX Accelerator:
  - [Illinois APEX Accelerator at College of DuPage](#)



# Illinois Business Development



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor



## EDGE and EDGE for Start Ups

- EDGE, the Economic Development for a Growing Economy, is a tax credit incentive program designed to encourage startups to invest, create, and retain jobs in Illinois. Businesses must be incorporated 10 years ago or less, not yet turning a profit, and ready to hire full time W2 employees to be eligible.

## INVENT Illinois

- The Illinois Innovation Venture Fund is a direct equity investment program funded through the U.S. Department of the Treasury State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI).
- The funds are expected to provide small businesses with the resources they need to sustainably grow and thrive, and to improve access to capital for traditionally underserved entrepreneurs.

## Angel Investment Tax Credit

- This program encourages investment in innovative, early-stage companies to help obtain the working capital needed to further the growth of their company in Illinois.
- Investors in companies that are certified as Qualified New Business Ventures (QNBVs) can receive a state tax credit equal to 25% of their investment (up to \$2 million).
- Investors in companies that are designated Set-Aside QNBVs can receive a tax credit equal to 35% of their investment (up to \$2 million).

# Enterprise Zone Benefits

## **Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment (MME) Exemption**

- Provides company with sales and use tax exemption all tangible personal property that is used or consumed by a purchaser in a manufacturing facility
- The state also expanded the definition of production-related tangible personal property to include supplies and consumables used in a manufacturing facility including fuels, coolants, solvents, oils, lubricants, and adhesives, hand tools, protective apparel, and fire and safety equipment used or consumed within a manufacturing facility.

## **Investment Tax Credit**

- Provides 0.5% tax credit on the total capital investment on a project located in an Enterprise Zone



# Illinois Workforce Programs



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor

## Employer Training Investment Credit

- The ETIP program is a competitive matching grant awarded to companies that provide job training to Illinois residents. The job training may be provided to both new employees and incumbent workers. The training should be a direct result of a permanent expansion, location, or retention activity. ETIP will cover up to 50% of training costs.

## Apprenticeship Program

- Under this program, employers are allowed a tax credit for qualified educational expenses associated with training and upskilling apprentices. Employers are eligible for a credit of up to \$3,500 per apprentice against the taxes imposed by subsections (a) and (b) of Section 201 of the Illinois Income Tax Act.
- This credit may be enhanced by an additional credit of up to \$1,500 for each apprentice if (1) the apprentice resides in an underserved area or (2) the employer's principal place of business is located in an underserved area. The credit is applicable to expenses such as tuition, books, and lab fees.



# Illinois Loan Programs



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor

### **Advantage Illinois Participate Loan Program (PLP)**

- The PLP offsets the risk by DCEO participating (sharing) in a portion of the loan with the Lender. There are no costs or fees to the lender or borrower. The DCEO buyout creates a lower blended rate for the borrower.
- Eligible loans can be used to finance the following: equipment, real estate (must be 51% or more occupied by the business), working capital, inventory, leasehold improvements, and accounts receivable.

### **Advantage Illinois Loan Guarantee Program (LGP)**

- The LGP offsets the risk by DCEO insuring partial repayment to the Lender in case of loan default. There are origination and ongoing costs and fees to utilize the program that may affect the Lender and/or Borrower. There is no rate adjustment as we are not purchasing any portion out.

### **Cannabis Social Equity Loan Program**

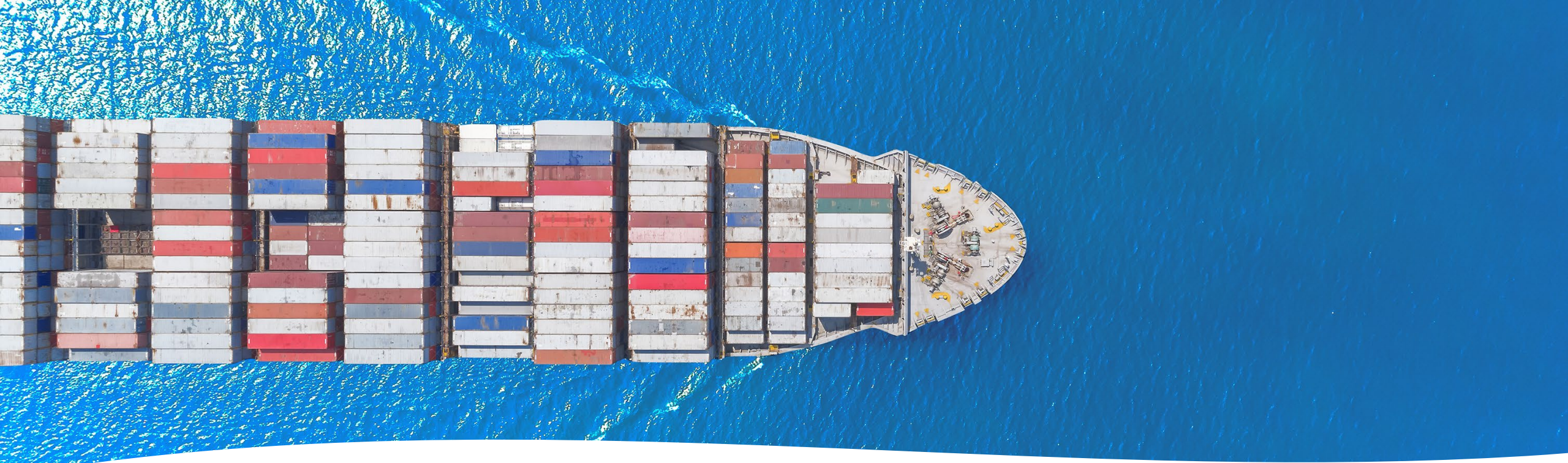
- This program is an unwavering commitment to equity as the state works to ensure that entrepreneurs that have been adversely impacted by the war on drugs have a space in the growing cannabis industry.
- Direct Forgivable Loans are fully financed by the State of Illinois. We offer a significant grace period, low interest rates, and full principal forgiveness upon receiving proof of eligible expenses.
- Interest Rates are 4% after an 18-month grace period of no required payments and 0% interest; applicants can also pursue forgiveness prior to any interest accruing. The loan principal is 100% forgivable upon providing documentation for eligible business expense



# Illinois International Trade Programs



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor



### **Illinois' State Trade and Export Program (ISTEP)**

- The ISTEP program provides Illinois' small businesses with both financial and technical assistance to increase their exports.
- The program includes 5 options for Illinois' companies to grow their export sales: Group Trade Missions (GTM), Individual Foreign Market Sales Missions (IFMSM), and Product Compliance (PC), Website Localization (WL), and Ex-Im Bank: Export Credit Insurance (ECI).

### **APEX Accelerator Program**

- This program funds centers around the state to provide guidance for government contracting success. These [centers](#) assist Illinois businesses with all their government contracting needs whether federal, state, or local.

### **Foreign Trade Zones**

- Available to companies located in specific areas, foreign and domestic merchandise may be admitted into Zones without being subject to formal Customs entry procedures, the payment of Customs duties or federal excise taxes.

# Illinois Grant Programs



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

## **Illinois Department of Transportation – Economic Development Program (IDOT-EDP)**

- A local government may apply for funding up to \$2,000,000 for roadway improvements or construction necessary for access to industrial, manufacturing or distribution companies.
- Grant funding can be up to \$30,000 for every full-time job created and \$10,000 for every full-time job retained.

## **Federal Grant Support Program**

- Grants assists Illinois-based businesses and organizations seeking federal grants that align with the State's economic development objectives.
- DCEO may provide a 1:1 cash matching grant for capital and non-capital expenses up to \$2,000,000, with prioritization based on awards that require a federal match and the number of awards an institution may have already received in the same fiscal year under this program.

## **Illinois Grocery Initiative – New Stores (Closes 5/24/24)**

- This Initiative will combat food insecurity by offering competitive grants to support the establishment of new grocery stores in food deserts. Grants will range from \$160k to \$2.4M
- Local units of government and small businesses (with fewer than 500 employees and no more than four existing grocery stores) are eligible to apply.
- Grants will provide reimbursement to eligible applicants for both capital and non-capital costs associated with establishing sustainable grocery stores located in food deserts.

## **Useful Resources for Finding Grants**

- [Live Trainings offered by DCEO's Office of Accountability](#)
- [Sam.gov](#)
- [GATA Illinois](#)
- [Grants.gov](#)

# Contact information



Renee Wott, MPA  
Senior Northeast Regional Manager  
312.305.1892  
[Renee.Wott@Illinois.gov](mailto:Renee.Wott@Illinois.gov)

Sacella M. Smith  
Northeast Regional Manager  
312.639.4029  
[Sacella.Smith@illinois.gov](mailto:Sacella.Smith@illinois.gov)

Joseph P. McKeown III  
Northeast Regional Manager  
312.497.1823  
[joseph.mckeown@illinois.gov](mailto:joseph.mckeown@illinois.gov)