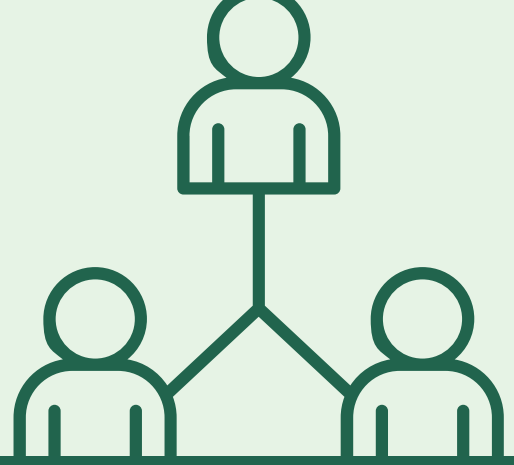




Community Partnerships

How to Pitch a Partnership with Your Economic Empowerment Program to: Small Business Development Programs



Purpose

This resource provides: (1) a list of roles that small business development programs can play in supporting economic empowerment programs; (2) a sample “elevator pitch” you can use in outreach to small business development programs to help them understand how a partnership may be mutually beneficial, and (3) a list of common challenges inherent in partnerships with small business development programs and strategies to prepare for and mitigate those challenges.

How can small business development programs support economic empowerment program?

Identifying roles that small business development programs can play in a strategic partnership can help you determine whether you need this partnership and how to tailor your outreach to them.

Small business development programs can:

- Provide virtual or in-person training on a variety of entrepreneurship topics such as: How to Start a Business, creating a Business Plan, Marketing for Small Businesses, Government Contracting, Gaining Capital and more.
- Provide one-on-one business coaching on creating a business plan and navigating the challenges of running a small business.
- Connect to financial institutions, grants, and investors looking to support emerging entrepreneurs.
- Co-host small business pitching events where survivors can market their business to potential customers, fellow entrepreneurs, or partners/investors.

Who is this resource for?

This resource is for organization and/or program leaders administering economic empowerment programs, and program staff who provide direct services. It may be useful in both crisis intervention and long-term services.



How to pitch a potential partnership to small business development programs?

This section provides sample language to use when seeking to build a relationship with a small business development program. This “elevator pitch” can be tailored to fit the specific job readiness and skill training needs of your community and can be incorporated into initial email outreach or introductory meetings.

Introductory Email/Outreach Template:

“I’m reaching out on behalf of [Agency Name], a local nonprofit dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by [type of victimization, e.g., domestic violence, human trafficking, etc.]. We are currently seeking a small business development programs to support our [name of economic empowerment program] with [Insert role you are in need of] .

Our organization has specialized expertise in addressing challenges that may affect entrepreneurs such as financial abuse and credit sabotage, identity theft and fraud and workplace safety for small business. We understand that entrepreneurs who feel safe and supported are more likely to launch, sustain and grow their business. Thus, we can provide these capacity-building training courses to your program staff and customers. Partnering with us will allow for greater retention, expand outreach to a new entrepreneur pipeline, and foster strategies that promote entrepreneur resilience and sustainability.

If you’re interested and would like more information, please reply to this email or contact me directly at [phone number or email]. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, will make a significant difference in the lives of those we serve.”

What are common challenges in engaging small business development programs and how can these be mitigated?

This table lists common challenges that may occur related to small business development programs and potential solutions to navigating those challenges.

Potential Challenge	Potential Solution
Challenges in Navigating the Partnership	
Different Timelines and Expectations: Business development programs often have structured timelines, and expectations on business outcomes that may differ from what is feasible or possible for survivors who may need more flexibility and time to engage in entrepreneurial activities.	Set Clear Expectations: Small Business Development and Survivor Economic Empowerment Programs must remain transparent about timelines, expectations, and resources available.



Potential Challenge	Potential Solution
Challenges Survivors Face When Engaging with This Partner	
Eligibility Limitations: Some small business development programs have specific credit and revenue requirements to gain services and loans. These requirements may be a challenge for participants who are experiencing legal barriers, financial exclusion and poor credit due to their experience with violence.	General Training and Coaching: Small business programs can provide general 101 training on how to start a small business, do market research and more. Small business programs can also provide coaching on navigating pathways to program eligibility for full services. This allows participants to still gain knowledge and work toward goals. Simultaneously, victim service agencies can also connect survivors to safe banking, financial coaching, and credit repair services to address barriers.
Access to Capital: While survivors may benefit from the trainings offered by small business development programs, they may continue to struggle with connecting to the capital they need such as customers, partners, and financial resources that support the growth of their small business.	Leveraging Community: Economic empowerment programs in partnership with a variety of community partners can host small business showcases, holiday markets, pitch fests and other creative avenues where survivors can promote their services, connect to new customers and seek additional resources such as financial investments.