



2023 SMALL BUSINESS START-UP GRANT

The Creston Chamber of Commerce and Union County Development Association (UCDA) are excited to announce a new Small Business Start-Up Grant that will be offered to any new business that will be occupying a brick and mortar location in Creston. The Small Business Start-Up Grant is designed to support and encourage small businesses in Creston and Union County to invest in their communities through business ventures. The program provides up to \$1,000.00 in operating grant funds.

All applications will be reviewed by a committee that consists of: a Chamber of Commerce Representative, UCDA Representative, Southern Iowa Council of Governments Representative, and a Southern Iowa Resource Conservation & Development Representative. Creston Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ellen Gerharz, brought the idea to her Executive Board earlier this year and then to Executive Director of UCDA, Mindy Stalker to discuss details.

Chamber Executive Director Ellen Gerharz stated “we are so excited to be able to offer financial assistance. For too many years we have only been able to offer advice and suggestions, which is important, but now we can actually offer them the financial boost that many have needed. This type of grant funding is not normally available to new small businesses and through the combined efforts of the Chamber and UCDA it is now accessible.”

“I knew this was a great idea and opportunity not only for start-up businesses, but also for our organizations,” Stalker stated. “We are both champions for new and existing businesses in our communities and this could be the start of a really incredible program to help promote our region and support someone just getting started in their business venture. The thought and effort by both organization’s Boards in developing this grant and the parameters around it is greatly appreciated.

UCDA hopes to partner with additional communities in Union County to be able to expand the grant availability.”

For further information or questions on how to begin the application process, call the Creston Chamber of Commerce at (641) 782-7021 email at chamber@crestoniowachamber.com or Union County Development Association at (641) 782-2003 or email at director@unioncountyiowa.com.

SMALL BUSINESS START-UP GRANT CRITERIA

Criteria for Participation:

1. Show Proof of residency in Union County.
2. Small business must be within the first year of operation in a store front – please see #4 below.
3. The business must be open at least 60 hours a month and have an online presence.
4. The business must be a storefront (proof of ownership or lease) located in a Commercial District, a Business District, or a Light Industrial District and in business there for at least three months.
5. Qualified small business applicants must have gross revenues that did not exceed \$30,000 for any month since the business began operating or employ less than the equivalent of 3 full-time employees.
6. Attend and complete the Just Start Workshop offered by UCDA (if #7 below is not completed).
7. Applicant has completed a business plan with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) or has completed a similar business plan. Please include the business plan with your application.
8. The business must be in conformance with all regulations, codes or licensing standards.
9. Other reasonable conditions may be created by the Review Committee at its discretion.
10. The Committee may request additional information.
11. Previous Small Business Grant recipients are not eligible for the award.
12. Once the applicant has fulfilled all requirements and provided proof of business-related expenditures a decision will be made on funding the request.

The Review Committee will consist of the following individuals:

- **A representative from the Creston Chamber of Commerce**
- **A representative from Union County Development Association (UCDA)**
- **A representative from Southern Iowa Council of Governments (SICOG)**
- **A representative from Southern Iowa Resource Conservation and Development**