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Applications CLOSE at 11:59 p.m. TONIGHT for \$75 million We're All In Small Business Grants

More than 28,000 businesses have already applied for the \$2,500 grants

MADISON, June 26, 2020 – Applications close tonight at 11:59 p.m. CDST for small businesses to apply online for the \$2,500 **We're All In** Small Business Grants, officials from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) reminded potential applicants today.

WEDC had received more than 28,000 applications as of late Thursday night. The application deadline was extended until tonight to give additional businesses more time to gather needed documents and submit their information to WEDC.

The program, which will provide \$2,500 grants to 30,000 small businesses, is designed to help small businesses recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, while also encouraging them to adopt best practices to keep employees, customers and communities safe.

WEDC Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes said the **We're All In** grants “will **not** be determined on a first-come, first-served basis, so all businesses have the same chance of receiving a grant, regardless of when they apply. But with the limited time we have left, we want to make sure no business that could benefit from these funds will miss out.”

Funded primarily by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the grants will help small businesses with the costs of business interruption or health and safety improvements, wages and salaries, rent, mortgages and inventory.

Hughes noted that unlike most other programs to assist businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, “the We're All In grants come with very few strings attached. They are grants – not loans – so they don't have to be repaid, and businesses can use the money for whatever they need at this time.”

The online application, FAQs, and other information about the grant can be found at <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/wai-small-business-grant/>. The online grant application will be open at the same site from until 11:59 p.m. on Friday, June 26. WEDC anticipates releasing the first round of payments by early to mid-July.

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A business may apply for the **We're All In** Small Business Grant if it:

- Started operating prior to Jan. 1, 2020, and was operating as of Feb. 2020;
- Is Wisconsin-based and for-profit;
- Employs 20 or fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, including the owner; and
- Has more than \$0 but less than \$1 million in annual revenues.

Businesses will **not** be eligible for the grants if they are:

- Part of a national chain, unless the business is a third-party franchise;
- Industries covered by other Wisconsin CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund programs

These are:

- Crop Production
<https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/TaxPro/2020/FarmSupportProgram.aspx>
- Animal Production or Aquaculture
<https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/TaxPro/2020/FarmSupportProgram.aspx>
- Lessors of Residential Buildings and Dwellings
(<https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/COVID-Grants.aspx>)

Hughes reminded businesses that even though the deadline is approaching, they should take extra care to make sure to have all their required documents in order before applying online.

“We’ve found that in some cases, businesses have submitted incomplete information, such as not signing W-9 forms or uploading the wrong documents,” she said. “If they have all the right materials in hand, applying will only take a few minutes, and it will avoid delays as we process the applications.”

To prepare for the online application process, businesses should be ready to upload the following documents to the WEDC application:

- 2018 or 2019 federal tax return for business. (Businesses started in 2020 are not eligible for this grant.)
- **Signed and dated** W-9 form available at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf
- An email or letter of acknowledgement from a community organization indicating the business was in operation in February 2020. Letters or emails can be from any of the following:
 - Chamber of commerce
 - Main Street or Connect Communities organization
 - Local business improvement district
 - Neighborhood economic development association
 - Local economic development organization
 - County economic development organization
 - Municipality, including tribal government
 - County
 - Local bank, credit union or community development financial institution
 - U.S. Export Assistance Center - Wisconsin
 - Regional economic development organization
 - Regional Planning Commission
 - Trade association

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Sample text for a letter or email can be found at wedc.org/WAI-Small-Business-Grant.

- Three-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code that best fits the business. This information may be included in a business's tax return, or through the NAICS website: <https://www.naics.com/naics-code-description/>.

Grant recipients will become **We're All In** businesses by pledging to observe safety protocols in their shops, cafes and places of work to protect their customers, employees, and communities. This network of Main Street businesses will form the backbone of a broader **We're All In** initiative to be joined by major Wisconsin businesses, communities and other associations to encourage support for and demonstrate best health and safety practices in public places.

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About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) leads economic development efforts for the state by advancing and maximizing opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, communities and people to thrive in a globally competitive environment. Working with more than 600 regional and local partners, WEDC develops and delivers solutions representative of a highly responsive and coordinated economic development network. Visit wedc.org or follow WEDC on Twitter @WEDCNews to learn more.

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