



GETTING A JUMP START ON GRANT APPLICATIONS ACROSS THE GREAT LAKES MIDWEST

A RESOURCE SHEET FROM A WEBINAR TO PREPARE BUSINESSES FOR OBTAINING FUNDING FROM FEDERAL SOURCES

The Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center will distribute over \$10 million in Business Builder Awards and assistance to eligible food and farm business owners in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. This resource sheet is designed to assist entrepreneurs in preparing to apply for grant funding from various sources, including forthcoming Business Builder Awards. This resource follows a webinar hosted on June 20, 2024 that outlined steps to prepare for applying for grants from a federal source a grant application process. [Find the webinar recording here.](#)

FOUR STEPS TO GET A UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER:

STEP 1

Select the type of business structure that is right for your business. You can [visit the Small Business Agency here](#) to help you decide which structure is right for your business.

- Licensed Liability Company (LLC)
- Sole Proprietorship
- B Corporation
- Non-profit
- Cooperative

STEP 2

Set up your business structure by visiting your state’s licensing agency for instructions.

Illinois [Department of Commerce and Economic Development](#)

Indiana [INbiz](#)

Michigan [Licensing and Regulatory Affairs \(LARA\)](#)

Wisconsin [Department of Revenue](#)

STEP 3

Obtain a federal tax identification number, an Employer Identification Number (EIN) [Apply here through the IRS at no cost.](#)

STEP 4

Register for a Unique Entity Identification (UEI). Obtain a UEI from SAM.gov

- Go to <https://secure.login.gov/>.
- Before registering, make sure you have the following required information available:
 - Legal business name
 - Physical address
 - EIN
 - NAICS – North American Industry Classification System
 - Business start year and date of incorporation
 - Tax records

A UEI IS:

- A 12-digit number to identify businesses
- Assigned by SAM.gov
- A new version of the “DUNS number”
- Free
- Required to get some grants from U.S. government sources

Not sure if you have a UEI?
[Check the UEI status tracker.](#)

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Be prepared, do not wait for grant applications to open before developing a plan.
- Obtaining an EIN and UEI is completely free. You do NOT need to pay anyone to register your business with the state or federal government. Use websites ending in “gov” to avoid being unnecessarily charged.
- Always consider your business’s mission, vision, and values when considering grant opportunities.
- Be prepared to tell a compelling story about your business.

BUSINESS BUILDER GRANTS –

How can my business get ready for Business Builder Awards?

- Watch for updates from [Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center](#) or your [Regional Food Business Center](#).
- Connect with your [state or regional network](#) coordinator.
- Review your incorporation status and business plan.
- Consider your business values and how you would articulate them through your business story.
- Consider these questions:
 - Is your business entity registered with your state regulatory agency?
 - Do you have an Employer Identification Number (EIN)?
 - Do you have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from [Sam.gov](#)?

Follow the Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center and its partners for updates.

ABOUT THE GREAT LAKES MIDWEST REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTER

The Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center is dedicated to offering coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building opportunities for small- to mid-sized historically marginalized food and farm business entrepreneurs in support of a more resilient, diverse, and competitive food system.

Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (MI) coordinates the [Great Lakes Midwest Regional Food Business Center](#) that is comprised of network coordinators – [Chicago Food Policy Action Council](#) (IL), [Northwest Indiana Food Council](#) (IN), [Food Finance Institute of the University of Wisconsin System](#) (WI), and the [Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Food Systems](#) – who seek to take a transformational, rather than transactional, approach. Learn more at [glm-rfbc.msu.edu](#) or contact glm-rfbc@msu.edu

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