

Small Business Supporting Organizations

Below is a summarized list of organizations that can support or provide resources to small businesses. Whether you want to start or grow your business, you can receive assistance from the below organizations depending on your needs no matter what stage you are in your business development.

Click on the links below to visit their sites to learn more about those specific services and how their experienced teams can help you!

| Organization | Type of Services | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Educational Programs / Seminars | Facilities / Office Space Sharing | Professional Services Advice | Capital Acquisition Advice | Funding | Grant Writing Guidance | Marketing, Advertising, Branding | Product Design & Prototyping | Strategic Planning | Competitive Market Research | General Business Support | Business Development | Networking | Industry Resources | Real Estate Development | Employment Program | Website Development Support |
| Ben Franklin Technology Partners | P | | P | | P | | P | | P | P | P | P | P | | | | |
| Creative Entrepreneurial Accelerator Program | | | | | X | | P | | | | X | | | | | | |
| Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA) | P | | | | P* | | X | | | | | X | X | | | | |
| Erie County Redevelopment Authority (ECRDA) | | | | | P | | | | | | P | P | | P | | | |
| Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership (ERCGP) | P | X | P | P | P | X | X | | | X | P | X | P | P | | X | |
| Erie Technology Incubator (ETI) | P | P | P | | | | | | P | P | X | P | P | P | | | |
| ErieMade Business Academy | P | | P | | | | P | | | | P | P | | | | | |
| Manufacturers and Business Association | P | X | P | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NWPA Beehive Network | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Erie County Public Library | P | | | | | P | | | | | X | | X | | | | |
| Edinboro University | | X | | | | | P | | | | X | | X | | | | X |
| Gannon University | | X | P | | | | | | | P | P | | X | | | | |
| Mercyhurst University | | | P | | | | | | | P | X | X | X | | | | |
| Penn State Behrend | | X | | | | | | P | | | X | | X | | | | |
| PA Business One-Stop-Shop | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PA Business One-Stop-Shop | P | | | P | P | | | | | | P | P | | P | | | |
| Paramount Pursuits | P | P | P | | | | P | | P | | P | P | P | | | | |
| SCORE | P | | | | | | | | | | P | P | | | | | |
| Small Business Development Center (SDBC) | P | | P | P | | | P | | P | P | P | P | | P | | | X |
| Summer JAM - GECAC | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | P | |
| T.A.P. Grant | | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | | P | |
| The Northwest Commission | | | | | P | | | | | | P | P | | | | | |

Legend: P → Primary/Experienced Area X → Additional Services Provided P* → Funding to Non-Profits

Important Notice: Some of the links shown on this site are linked to third-party websites. These links are provided only as a convenience to you. OWB does not endorse these websites or guarantee the quality, accuracy or truthfulness of any content, information or services accessed through these websites.

Please find more details about each organization below:



[Ben Franklin Technology Partners](#) - For 40 Years, Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central & Northern PA has provided startup funding and business support services to tech-based startups and small manufacturers located in PA.

As an on-going initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and funded by the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority, the Program invests not only in the marketable innovations developed in our service area – many of which come to light from our annual [BIG IDEA Contests](#) – but also in business mentoring and support initiatives such as our [Transformation Business Services Network](#) and the BF TechCelerator Business Startup Boot Camps.



[Creative Entrepreneurial Accelerator Program](#) - Erie Arts and Culture is partnering with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts to help creative entrepreneurs and their businesses. The Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator Program (CEAP) matches eligible creative entrepreneurs with free local small business consulting services and financial resources up to \$2,000.



[Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority \(ECGRA\)](#) - The mission of ECGRA is to elevate Erie County by empowering nonprofits and small businesses toward economic and community development. The Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority makes investments in nonprofits, small businesses, and communities across Erie County.



[Erie County Redevelopment Authority \(ECRDA\)](#) - The Erie County Redevelopment Authority is leading Erie County's economic renaissance through sound investments in local businesses, municipalities, and real estate development.

ECRDA's mission: To facilitate the retention and creation of jobs and increase prosperity in the Erie region while building the economic development infrastructure through the acquisition, development and redevelopment of real estate in Erie County and through grant and lending opportunities to businesses and municipalities.



[Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership \(ERCGP\)](#) – The Chamber promotes and serves all businesses—large and small, from manufacturing and retail to healthcare, education and more. The Chamber provides businesses with access to resources and referrals to other businesses and plays a strong role in advocating for businesses in the area. While there are additional benefits for members, the Chamber is a valuable resource for all businesses in the area.



[Erie Technology Incubator \(ETI\)](#) - By bringing together ETI with Gannon University's Dahlkemper School of Business, [Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#) and [NWPB Innovation Beehive Network](#), these entities are dedicated to the advancement of business techniques and processes.

This entrepreneurial ecosystem encourages an unprecedented level of collaboration between budding entrepreneurs, business students, seasoned business faculty, and consultants in a facility that looks and feels like a major corporate headquarters. This type of collaboration further enhances the delivery of services to entrepreneurs in the ETI community.



[ErieMade Business Academy](#) - Free 6-month program teaches business fundamentals for artists and creatives. Receive one-on-one business mentorship with a creative business owner, and access to a monthly cohort meetup with other creative businesses. Find guidance and accountability from those who have been in your shoes, and turn your creative pursuit into something that pushes you forward.



[Manufacturers and Business Association](#) - The Manufacturer & Business Association (MBA), founded in 1905, is dedicated to helping employers face challenges by delivering services that lower the cost of doing business, ease the burden of compliance and increase productivity for its members.

The MBA accomplishes this mission by providing exclusive, valued-added services that can help businesses navigate ever-changing federal and state laws and can provide them with the training to take their workforce to the next level.

NWPA Beehive Network



[NWPA Beehive Network](#) - Since its inception in 2014, the Northwest Pennsylvania Innovation Beehive Network has worked to enhance the business expansion and development in the Erie Area. The Beehive is made up of five grant-funded centers that collaborate to encourage business growth. The centers work together to form the hive network, while location operates in its own specialized area of expertise.



[Erie County Public Library](#) - THE IDEA LAB empowers you to activate your ideas by providing access to high-tech equipment, community experts and collaborative experiences. The Idea Lab is an adult maker space that offers free access to equipment and classes. Our goal is to be an educational resource for the community to build creative skills, connect with other makers, and make cool stuff!



[Edinboro University](#) - Provides free assistance to regional entrepreneurs and organizations in areas such as public relations, advertising, graphic design & branding, web design, and social media management.



[Center for Business Ingenuity](#) - Gannon University's Center for Business Ingenuity (CBI) is a 21st century laboratory for the future of business and entrepreneurship in northwest Pennsylvania.

This facility creates synergy by incorporating the Dahlkemper School of Business (DSB), with Gannon's Erie Technology Incubator (ETI), Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and NWPA Innovation Beehive Network.



[Mercyhurst University](#) - At Mercyhurst University's Innovation Entente Lab (IEL), student analysts will provide a competitive business intelligence approach in conducting key research and the collection of data necessary to help entrepreneurs and small businesses achieve an understanding of their market, industry and competitive landscape.



[Penn State Behrend](#) - The Innovation Commons at Penn State Behrend is open to all entrepreneurs and innovators throughout Erie County and the surrounding region, including those at the student level, who are seeking a place to organize, collaborate, compose, and construct their ideas.



[PA Business One-Stop-Shop](#) - The Pennsylvania Business One-Stop Shop is a state government office equipped with knowledge, information, and resources for businesses both large and small. Serving as the first point of contact for Pennsylvania business development concerns, our team helps connect and guide businesses through all stages of development — from planning and startup to operating and expanding. Whether you're an aspiring entrepreneur or existing business, we provide complete, customer-focused service backed by firsthand knowledge and experience.



[Paramount Pursuits](#) - Paramount Pursuits is a small business incubator and economic development consulting partner, concentrating on empowering entrepreneurs and providing guidance for Main Street revitalization projects within our local communities.

Paramount Pursuits work with entrepreneurs both in person and online to guide them in establishing and growing their businesses, which directly contributes to the economic growth of their local communities. Maximizing opportunities for EVERY entrepreneur is our goal, diligently focusing on breaking down the barriers to entrepreneurship.



[SCORE](#) - SCORE has the largest network of free volunteer small business **mentors** in the nation. No matter what stage your business is at SCORE has a mentor for you. Easily request a mentor to help you start, grow, or transition your business today!



[Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#) - Gannon University Small Business Development Center provides no-cost confidential consulting services to entrepreneurs and small business owners. Whether you need help identifying local markets for your business, are developing a business plan and want a second opinion, or have compliance issues you'd like to clarify, SBDC consultants are ready to help you grow your business and address a wide variety of business needs. All services are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis.



[Summer JAM - GECAC](#) - Summer employment programs have become critical pipelines to engage youth and put them on a path for career longevity or further education

T.A.P. Grant

[T.A.P. Grant](#) - The City T.A.P. Fund is the City of Erie's first ever grant program for workforce development; designed to support and realize several elements of our Mayor's Vision, especially: Excellent Education for Everyone, an Abundance of Family-sustaining Jobs, and ultimately, Erie is a Community of Choice.

Established to provide financial assistance to businesses in any sector support job readiness and training, it also serves to enhance the City of Erie's reputation for innovation and creativity; contribute to a thriving, sustainable business culture; and improve the quality of life for residents of the City of Erie. Funding awards will be granted up to \$2,500 per trainee. Maximum grant award per company, per year is \$5000 (2 trainees per year).



[The Northwest Commission](#) - Serves as a regional-based resource for business and economic development as well as community development and planning. Comprised of a team of skilled professionals, the non-profit agency is dedicated to sustaining the economic vitality and growth by offering both free and low-cost services. This is achieved through fostering local, state, and federal partnerships across public and private sector lines. A variety of programs are offered including government contracting, international marketing, business financing, transportation, and grant services.
