

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GUIDE



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



PROGRAM SUCCESS METRICS

WELCOME MESSAGE

The Department of Commerce and its partners work together to enhance and sustain economic prosperity for the people of Montana. Through a full suite of strategically integrated economic development programs, Commerce helps to start and grow Main Street businesses.

Different businesses have different needs. Whether it's financial or technical, Commerce provides a wide range of assistance.

Several important tools in the state's economic development toolbox will sunset July 1, 2019, unless renewed by the 66th Montana Legislature. Some of these programs are included in the following guide and are marked as such. These programs were created by Governor Marc Racicot in 2000 and have a two-decade record of generating revenue, supporting job creation and business growth. Collectively, the programs have assisted more than 15,000 businesses and created or retained more than 12,000 jobs since 2012.

While the metrics used to measure success may vary from one program to the next, the message is the same: These programs work, and they're making a difference in the lives of Montanans across the state.

Learn more about how Commerce is working for Montana at COMMERCE.MT.GOV.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund: Job Creation	4
Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund: Planning	5
Certified Regional Development Corporations	6
Montana Board of Research & Commercialization Technology	7
Montana Innovation Partnership	8
Montana Manufacturing Extension Center	9
Montana SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program	10
Montana Small Business Development Centers	11
Office of Indian Country Economic Development	12
Office of Trade & International Relations	13
Primary Sector Workforce Training Grant	14

BIG SKY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND

JOB CREATION

Provides funds to promote long-term economic growth in Montana. Funds are awarded to assist basic sector businesses to create good-paying jobs for Montana residents.

Annual State Funding	\$2.3 million*
Businesses Assisted	99
Leveraged Assets	\$568.6 million
Total Amount Awarded	\$16.6 million
Jobs Created	2,510

2012-2018 SFY Data

*Annual state funding depends on trust fund interest earnings and therefore varies from year to year. This number is an average of interest earnings from SFY 2012–2018.

“Aventus Group made a commitment to Billings and to Montana when we founded the company in 1996. Today, we are one of Montana’s top 10 largest employers through our co-employment relationship. The ability to create more jobs in Montana has been impacted in a positive way by the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund program. These are jobs that could be located in another state, but we have chosen to locate them in Montana.”

J.J. Hutzenbiler, Aventus Group, Billings

406.841.2250
bstf.mt.gov
docbstf@mt.gov

BIG SKY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND PLANNING

Provides funds to promote long-term economic growth in Montana. Funds are awarded to assist with economic development planning efforts that help grow the economy and/or create jobs.

Annual State Funding	\$766,000*
Businesses Assisted	238
Leveraged Assets	\$44.6 million
Total Amount Awarded	\$5 million

2012-2018 SFY Data

*Annual state funding depends on trust fund interest earnings and therefore varies from year to year. This number is an average of interest earnings from SFY 2012–2018.

“The Big Sky Trust Fund was used for the initial planning of the redevelopment of the historic Central School facility in Roundup that now houses the Musselshell County Social Services program and soon to be commercial and apartments. The planning grant also was the beginning of the Creekside Marketplace and Pavilion project in Lewistown. Neither of these projects would have come to fruition without this initial planning assistance.”

Kathie Bailey, Snowy Mountain Development Corporation,
Lewistown

406.841.2250
bstf.mt.gov
docbstf@mt.gov



CERTIFIED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDC) support a community-based approach to business assistance, facilitating an efficient delivery of economic development programs with annual funding that provides local, on-the-ground services that strengthen the economy through job creation and business development.

Annual State Funding	\$425,000
Businesses Assisted	6,647
Leveraged Assets	\$62.7 million
Jobs Created/Retained	3,984
Loans Provided	672
Total Loan Value	\$45.2 million

2012-2017 CY Data

“The Certified Regional Development Corporation program provides Bear Paw Development with the capacity to serve the community development needs of the City of Havre. The program allows Bear Paw’s staff to secure and administer funding packages to keep our community’s infrastructure up-to-date and functioning properly. It is critically important to continue to have the State of Montana partner with regional development corporations, especially in rural areas.”

Tim Solomon, City of Havre

406.841.2594
crdc.mt.gov
doccrdc@mt.gov



MONTANA BOARD OF RESEARCH AND COMMERCIALIZATION TECHNOLOGY

Encourages economic development through investment in research projects that have a clear path to commercialization.

Annual State Funding	\$1.275 million
Research Funded	50
Leveraged Assets	\$2.7 million
Follow-on New Funding	\$129.7 million
Projects Funded	\$4.7 million

2012-2018 SFY Data

“MBRCT has been crucial to the startup of Prime Labs. While we have been successful in obtaining a large federal grant for seed funding, it alone would be insufficient to get to a minimally viable product. As commercial problems continue to increase in complexity, and private equity in Montana continues to be scarce, MBRCT will only become more important in helping companies get from concept to commercialization.”

Rob Smith, Prime Labs, Greenough

406.841.2760
mbrct.mt.gov
seanbecker@mt.gov



MONTANA INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH (SBIR) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Montana Innovation Partnership (MTIP) powered by MSU TechLink Center is a strategic partner for Montana innovators, entrepreneurs, and inventors to help them access critical R&D funding and craft effective commercialization plans.

Annual State Funding	\$50,000
Businesses Assisted	424
Leveraged Assets	\$38.9 million
Total Federal Innovation Awards	106
Annual Average Awards to MT Companies	\$5.56 million

2012-2018 SFY Data

“MTIP’s proposal help early on was very valuable. As scientists, we build up these ideas in our heads and then we realize we are so deep in our own minds and have forgotten how much context we must build with the audience for our ideas to land. I cannot overstate the value of sending a proposal to a skilled editor who can help translate big ideas on paper.”

David Driscoll, Glacigen, Belgrade

406.994.7788
montanainnovationpartnership.org
techlinksbir@montana.edu





MONTANA MANUFACTURING EXTENSION CENTER

Provides information, training, decision support, and implementation assistance to Montana's 2,841 manufacturers. Assists manufacturers in adopting new advanced technology, techniques, and business practices.

Annual State Funding	\$400,000
Businesses Assisted	868
Leveraged Assets	\$3.6 million
Jobs Created/Retained	3,164
New/Retained Sales	\$665.5 million

2012-2018 SFY Data

“MMEC’s assistance has allowed Pardue Grain to stand up a new, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, which will add 12 permanent, good-paying jobs. Without them, it would have taken us twice as long to get up and running. MMEC has been a critical asset in all aspects of designing and building an SQF2-compliant facility, explaining the hiring and on-site education of a capable and dedicated workforce, and ensuring efficient and safe production of high-quality products.”

Roger Sammons, Pardue Grain, Cut Bank

406.994.3812
montana.edu/mmec
mmec@montana.edu



MONTANA SBIR/STTR MATCHING FUNDS PROGRAM

Assists technology-based Montana companies with gap funding for advanced technology development when working on federal Small Business Innovation Research or Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) projects. This additional funding increases the likelihood that these companies will be able to develop products and services that can be successfully commercialized.

Annual State Funding	\$375,000
Businesses Assisted	27
Matching Funds Leveraged	\$7.3 million
Projects Funded	\$1.5 million

2012-2018 SFY Data

“We greatly appreciate the program’s support in commercializing our biomineralization technology. We have completed negotiations on our Phase II, the contract award for \$1 million has been finalized, and we are off and running.”

Brian Park, Montana Emergent Technologies, Butte

406.841.2760
msmfp.mt.gov
seanbecker@mt.gov



MONTANA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

PROVIDING TOOLS AND GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

For an individual who is looking to start a new business or expand an existing business, the SBDC network is the best place to start. The SBDC network supports ten centers around the state, focusing on counseling in areas such as financial analysis, business planning, training and workshops, and loan packaging assistance to help small businesses achieve their goals of growth, expansion, innovation, and success.

Annual State Funding	\$125,000
Businesses Assisted	5,333
Leveraged Assets	\$252 million
Jobs Created/Retained	4,061
Workshop Attendees	8,018

2012-2018 SFY Data

“The SBDC team played a monumental role in the development of the Sassy Biscuit Co. Their guidance was instrumental in transforming a dreamer’s ideas into reachable goals. With the SBDC’s enormous efforts, I was able to obtain financing. Without their assistance, the Sassy Biscuit Co. wouldn’t be as successful as we are today.”

Jilan Hall-Johnson, The Sassy Biscuit Co., Billings

406.841.2747
sbdc.mt.gov
mtsbdc@mt.gov



OFFICE OF INDIAN COUNTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TRIBAL BUSINESS PLANNING GRANTS, NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS ADVISORS (NABA), MONTANA INDIAN EQUITY FUND

The Office of Indian Country Economic Development (OICED) provides funding for enterprise development, startups, and tribal member-owned businesses on or near reservations, and provides entrepreneur training and technical assistance to tribal communities in Montana.

Annual State Funding	\$800,000
Businesses Assisted	207
Leveraged Assets	\$11 million
Tribal Jobs Created and Retained/Trained	354
Businesses Assisted by NABAs	3,368

2012-2018 SFY Data

“I am very thankful for the Office of Indian Country Economic Development for giving us the collateral we needed to purchase our business. Commerce support with First Community Bank and Great Northern Development Corporation made our dream a reality. Without programs like these, it would have been almost impossible to become the business owners we are today.”

Lynelle (Nells) Garfield, Wolf City Auto/NAPA Auto Parts,
Wolf Point

406.841.2775
indiancountry.mt.gov
doctribal@mt.gov



OFFICE OF TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS EXPORTMONTANA

ExportMontana helps Montana manufacturers and service providers achieve their business expansion and export goals by diversifying their customer base and increasing sales. Assistance provided includes market assessment, access, and development so Montana-based employers can take advantage of regional, national, and international trade promotions and grants for developing new markets.

Annual State Funding	\$300,000
Businesses Assisted	1,821
Leveraged Assets	\$300.2 million
Commodity Exports	\$10.1 billion
Jobs Created/Retained	974
International Missions Supported	154

2012-2018 SFY Data

“The contacts we made at the IWA Outdoor Classics tradeshow resulted in increased annual sales of 20% and are helping Bitterroot Tool and Machine expand into the global market. Our goal is to double our shipments to the export market this year, which means growing our workforce.”

Ed Greef, Bitterroot Tool and Machine, Stevensville

406.841.2783
exportmontana.com
exportmontana@mt.gov

PRIMARY SECTOR WORKFORCE TRAINING GRANT

Provides grant funds to existing and new Montana businesses for new worker training and to encourage job creation and business expansion in primary sector businesses.

Annual State Funding	\$600,000
Businesses Assisted	39
Leveraged Assets	\$54.4 million
Total Funding Awarded	\$5.1 million
Workers Trained	1,072

2012-2018 SFY Data

“When U.S. Optics contacted the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and Montana West Economic Development in Kalispell, they were very interested in relocating to the Flathead Valley from California. The company created well paid jobs for 17 people. The company also received a Workforce Training Grant that allowed them to hire people with confidence that they would be able to train them for the company’s specific needs.”

Kimberly Morisaki, Montana West Economic Development, Kalispell

406.841.2250
wtg.mt.gov
docwtg@mt.gov

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund

406.841.2250 bstf.mt.gov docbstf@mt.gov

Certified Regional Development Corporations

406.841.2594 crdc.mt.gov doccrdc@mt.gov

Montana Board of Research & Commercialization Technology

Montana SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program

406.841.2760 mbrct.mt.gov | msmfp.mt.gov seanbecker@mt.gov

Montana Innovation Partnership

406.994.7788 montanainnovationpartnership.org techlinksbir@montana.edu

Montana Manufacturing Extension Center

406.994.3812 montana.edu/mmec mmec@montana.edu

Montana Small Business Development Centers

406.841.2747 sbdc.mt.gov mtsbdc@mt.gov

Office of Indian Country Economic Development

406.841.2775 indiancountry.mt.gov doctribal@mt.gov

Office of Trade & International Relations

406.841.2783 exportmontana.com exportmontana@mt.gov

Primary Sector Workforce Training Grant

406.841.2250 wtg.mt.gov docwtg@mt.gov



MARKETMT.COM