

Wisconsin Cooperative Feasibility Grant

AT A GLANCE INFORMATION

- Projects will be funded between \$5,000 and \$50,000
- This is a reimbursement grant. Awardees will need to submit proof of payment to WEDC for reimbursement for project costs.
- To receive application, email Kietra.Olson@wedc.org with “WI Coop Feasibility Study Grant” in the subject line
- For questions about this grant, please contact Kietra Olson at Kietra.Olson@wedc.org

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY Applicants must satisfy the following criteria to be deemed eligible for funding under the Wisconsin Cooperative Feasibility Grant (WCFG). An applicant must:

- Be a group of individuals actively working towards legal cooperative status in Wisconsin, or an existing cooperative operating in Wisconsin. Established cooperatives may apply for grant funds to explore a new part of their existing cooperative or to pursue the development of a second-tier cooperative.
- Hold an active quote from the consultant with whom they wish to work for their full or partial feasibility study. The project quote must be submitted on business letterhead with the application. Consultants may not be a spouse or immediate family member of anyone involved in developing or the established cooperative.
- Provide evidence of an active steering committee or board. E.g., past meeting minutes or annual report.
- Steering committee or board member names and contact information (address, email, phone number).
- Individuals, existing private businesses and 501(c) (3)s are eligible to apply on behalf of the potential or existing cooperative

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS The WCFG Program is designed to support the success of current and future cooperatives by allowing them to explore all facets of their business before large investments are made. Eligible projects include:

- Comprehensive feasibility study
- Partial feasibility study elements such as:
 - INDUSTRY BACKGROUND
 - Basic background information on the industry
 - Economic conditions of the industry
 - Implications and feasibility of entering industry
 - MARKET ANALYSIS
 - Market potential for goods or services to be handled
 - Markets to be served (current and future) and their attributes
 - Ease or limitations of entering the market
 - Marketing plan (strategies to be followed, summary of key actions)
 - Overall assessment of the marketing situation and plan
 - OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Supply of labor and its quality (including management)
- Supply of key inputs needed for operations
- Technical characteristics and specifications of required infrastructure and equipment
 - Assessment of potential operational capacity and efficiency
 - Location considerations
- FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PROJECTIONS (pro forma statements)
 - Projected revenues, operating costs, and net income
 - Capital requirements, potential and actual sources of equity, accumulation schedule, investment schedule (plant, equipment, human resources, etc.)
 - Pro forma cash flow statement
 - Income, balance sheet, and sources and uses of funds statements
 - Equity accumulation plan and financial ratio analysis
 - Financial plan summary (description of how it will all fit together)

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS Each application must include a narrative that aligns with the TIP Grant Addendum Checklist and describes the business idea, current stage of cooperative development, plan of implementation of study results, evidence of community support in the form of letters of support (2 maximum may be included) and need for financial support provided by this grant. Grant narrative should be 2-4 pages total.

Every application must include an estimate from the consultant that will be conducting the feasibility study.

Grants will be accepted on a rolling basis. The WCFG Review Committee will meet up to four times to review and award proposals. The tentative timeline for grant review is:

December 15, 2022

February 15, 2023 (if funds remain)

To Apply, email Kietra.Olson@WEDC.org with WI Coop Feasibility Study Grant in the subject line. An application and additional required forms will then be emailed to you.

The application will be emailed to you upon request and proof estimate from your desired consultant. In the event of an individual as applicant, a secure email will be provided to complete the form using the social security number. Be prepared to submit a W9 form along with your completed application.

A complete application will include all application materials, a W9 form from the person or entity applying, and a proposal from the desired consultant. Only complete applications will be considered.

PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

- Group readiness
- Demonstration of need for funding
- Demonstration of community need and potential economic impact

- Current estimate from consultant for feasibility study

REPORTING

Awardees will be required to submit reports summarizing findings, challenges and next steps for their cooperative in addition to the feasibility study that was completed.