

# LIBRARIES BUILD BUSINESS IN APPLETON



LIBRARIES ADVANCE ENTREPRENEURSHIP across the United States. With the relevant technology, resources, and staff expertise, libraries are well-equipped to support entrepreneurs and local small businesses in conducting market research, developing business plans, gaining access to emerging technologies, and sustaining small business amidst economic uncertainty. America's libraries have a critical role in addressing inequities in economic opportunity.



**Libraries Build Business** is a national initiative of the American Library Association, supported by Google.org, to partner with a cohort of 13 public libraries. The cohort will build local capacity and expand services for small businesses and entrepreneurs with a focus on businesses owned by people from low-income and underrepresented groups, such as Black, Latinx, and women-owned businesses. With the goal of identifying promising practices and models for library-led entrepreneurship initiatives, the cohort, in collaboration with the ALA project team, will develop and evaluate practical resources for the field to ultimately scale successful entrepreneurship programs in the nearly 17,000 public libraries.

Representing 12 states and including rural and tribal, urban, and suburban communities, the cohort will create a playbook of promising models and lessons learned available to all public libraries across the country.

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## Small Business—Big Impact Shares Culturally Relevant Business Expertise

Local business retention and expansion is a priority of the City of Appleton, as entrepreneurship increases and local businesses expand. This was affirmed in the 2010-2030 City of Appleton Comprehensive Plan. To this end, Appleton Public Library designed **Small Business—Big Impact (SB-BI)** to support business startup, retention, and expansion efforts for people of color and immigrants. Public libraries are resources for market research, business planning, and technology; yet these services are not always visible or accessible, particularly to people of color, immigrants, and non-English speakers. SB-BI strives to bridge this gap by working with people of color and immigrants to create a platform for sharing culturally relevant business expertise and experiences.

The library currently offers online courses, market research databases, books, and other materials for businesses and entrepreneurs. SB-BI will spotlight these resources and include a series of customized group and one-to-one programs with an expert. SB-BI programs include networking opportunities, market research instruction, one-on-one business consulting, entrepreneur storytelling, and informational workshops.



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