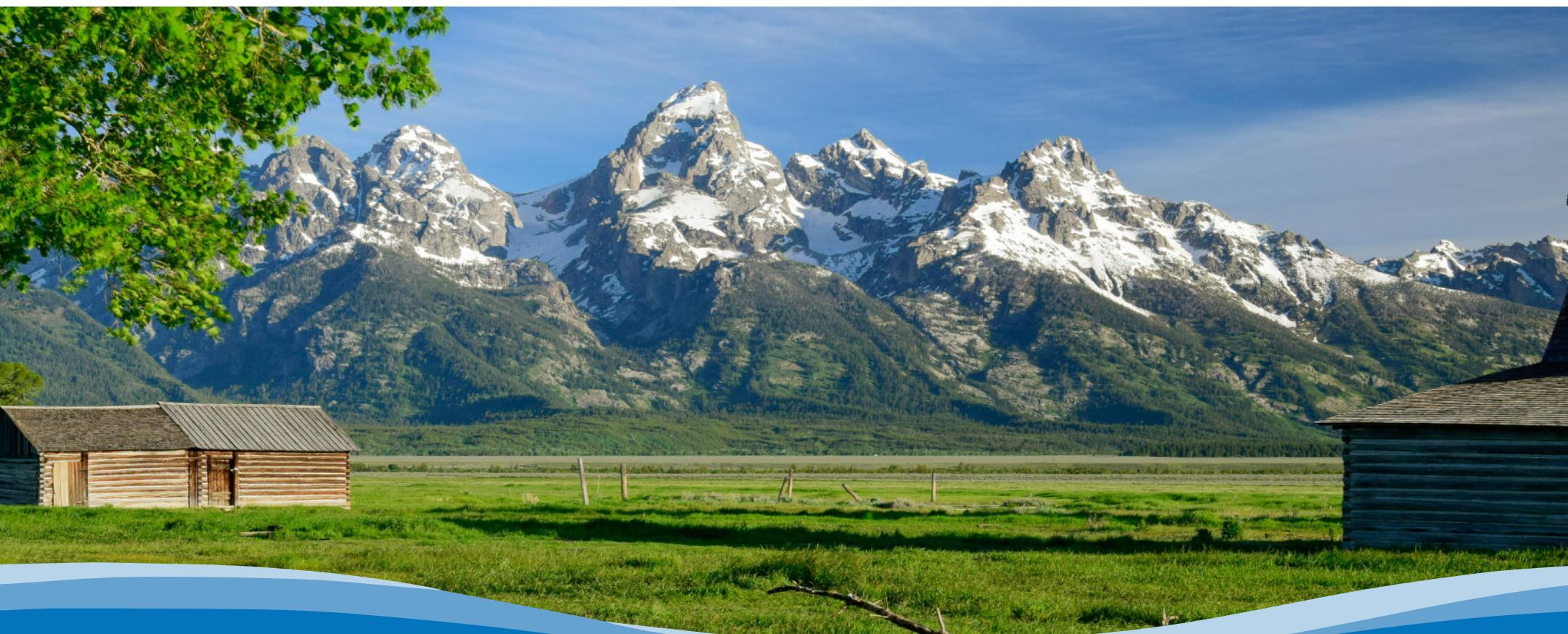




2022 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

WYOMING SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER NETWORK



Entrepreneurs Helping Entrepreneurs

Table of Contents

3 MESSAGE

FROM JILL KLINE, STATE DIRECTOR

4 OUR IMPACT

A PROVEN BENEFIT TO WYOMING'S ECONOMY

4 CAPITAL IMPACT

5 JOBS NUMBERS

6 OTHER METRICS

7 ANNUAL GOALS

8 SUBPROGRAMS

INNOVATION, OUTREACH, AND DIVERSITY

12 ABOUT US

ENTREPRENEURS HELPING ENTREPRENEURS

15 CLIENT HIGHLIGHTS

ANY INDUSTRY, ANY BUSINESS STAGE,
ANYWHERE IN WYOMING

20 MEET OUR PARTNERS

CONNECTING ENTREPRENEURS WITH EVERY
AVAILABLE RESOURCE

Wyoming is working hard to identify and make available relevant resources that will serve entrepreneurs in all stages of their ventures. We, who are in positions of economic leadership, know that entrepreneurial needs are unique and ever-changing. To this end, the University of Wyoming is proud to have the Wyoming SBDC Network as part of its entrepreneurial outreach and education efforts. Their small business advising, training, and technical assistance will continue to provide important support to small business owners. Additionally, the SBDC's collaboration with the Wyoming Innovation Partnership, UW's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and other state business resource partners will ensure the state's diverse business communities continue to thrive and meaningfully contribute to Wyoming's economy.



The efforts of the Wyoming SBDC Network have shown to be vital in supporting entrepreneurs in new, emerging, and existing state industries. The SBDC Network, along with other Business Resource Network partners such as IMPACT 307 and Manufacturing Works, support a holistic approach to serving Wyoming's entrepreneurs.

This report is evidence of the impact the Wyoming SBDC Network has on entrepreneurs and the state's economy. As the demands of small business owners in our state continue to change, the Wyoming SBDC Network has adapted by offering new services targeted to address identified needs. The Research and Economic Development Division at the University of Wyoming is looking forward to another year of partnering with the Wyoming SBDC Network and its stakeholders, including the Wyoming Business Council, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and local communities.

Steve Farkas

A.V.P For Economic Development
University of Wyoming

Message From the University Of Wyoming

A Message from the State Director

Wyoming Entrepreneurs are resilient and continue to be a main pillar of Wyoming's economy. In 2022, 98.9% of all Wyoming businesses were designated as small businesses and provided jobs for 64.1% of all employees in the state, a slight increase from 2021, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy.

Wyoming small businesses must have adequate resources and support to continue to thrive and grow. That's where the Wyoming SBDC Network team of expert business advisors come in. The SBDC Network team works hard to ensure our services remain relevant, supportive, and impactful. Our mission remains the same: helping entrepreneurs succeed while providing measurable impact to Wyoming's economy.

We continue to seek resources that support our efforts to keep Wyoming's small business economy strong. We work closely with stakeholders, funding partners (University of Wyoming, Wyoming Business Council, and the U.S. Small Business Administration), and other Business Resource Network entities to holistically support Wyoming's entrepreneurs.

The following pages demonstrate how our services, through various programs, support Wyoming's economy. Our services are tailored to each individual's needs and SBDC Network advisors ensure each individual is connected to appropriate resources.



As we move into 2023, the Wyoming SBDC Network remains optimistic that streamlined efforts with other state resources will benefit small business owners.

Help us celebrate our success by perusing the impact metrics, client testimonials, and success stories within this report and contact me or your community's Wyoming SBDC Network regional director to learn more about our efforts. We thank Wyoming's legislature for supporting some of Wyoming's hardest working individuals by supporting the Wyoming SBDC Network and the Business Resource Network overall.

We look forward to a prosperous 2023,

Jill Kline

Jill Kline, MPA

State Director

Wyoming SBDC Network

Our Impact

Capital Infusion

Proven Impact to Wyoming's Economy Since 1994

In the last 28 years, the Wyoming SBDC Network has added \$317.8 million to Wyoming's economy through capital infusion alone (not counting government contracts, SBIR/STTR awards, tax generation, client sales growth, etc.).

- Looking solely at the 2022 fiscal year, every \$1 invested in the Wyoming SBDC by the State of Wyoming returned \$8.34 to the state's economy through capital infusion.
- In the 2022 program year, our government contracting services (PTAC) helped Wyoming small businesses successfully compete for federal, state, and local contracts worth over \$98 million.
- Our Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) assistance also led to \$429,284 in awards from the state's Phase 0/00 program and federal Phase I/II programs.

The Standard For Reliable Reporting

The Wyoming SBDC Network is meticulous in its recordkeeping to ensure that our numbers are accurate, our impact is meaningful, and that our funds lead to the best possible impact for the state. In fact, in its most recent review of all 52 federal entrepreneurial assistance programs, the U.S. Government Accountability Office listed SBDCs as the standard for all other organizations to follow. Additionally, our impact must be attributed to us directly by our clients in order to maintain our National Accreditation certification.

Every year, the U.S. Small Business Administration conducts several reviews of the Wyoming SBDC Network including programmatic reviews, financial examinations, and site visits. The Wyoming SBDC Network also undergoes periodic accreditation reviews. In 2019, The America's SBDC Accreditation Committee voted to fully accredit the Wyoming SBDC Network for five years with commendations and no conditions.

Total Capital Infusion	\$5,349,420
Government Contracts	\$98,229,108
SBIR/STTR Grants & Contracts	\$429,284

For every \$1 invested by
the State of Wyoming
\$8.34 is returned
through capital infusion.



Source: Internal reporting and quarterly and annual reviews

Jobs Supported

Jobs Created

This is the number of new employees our clients say they have hired in FY22 thanks to support from the Wyoming SBDC Network.

27

Jobs Saved

Wyoming SBDC Network clients say they would have lost 26 jobs in FY22 if it weren't for the assistance from our advisors.

26

Jobs Supported

2,643

This metric includes the number of employees in a business while working with the Wyoming SBDC Network. SBA requires the tracking of this number to demonstrate ultimately how many jobs our services support indirectly.

PTAC Jobs Supported

1,963

In addition to the numbers above, the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency estimates 1,963 jobs were created or retained as a result of the more than \$98 million our clients received through state, local, and federal government contracts in FY22.

Source: Internal reporting and quarterly and annual reviews

Client Testimonial

Yellowstone Gem

Cody, WY

"This is an extremely important value added service. The individuals I've met with are focused on me, my issues and dedicate their full attention when with me. Always reply back to emails. And I can tell they are thinking how to help me when they are even not with me by way of helping to add ideas, support and implementation. Thank you to everyone involved with SBDC!"

Jamie Lindemann
Owner

Client Testimonial

Emily Felsheim Photography

Lander, WY

“ They [SBDC advisors] have been invaluable as I've entered the world of entrepreneurship as they've demystified some of the more technical aspects of business and given me support along the way by answering my questions and cheering me on. **”**

Emily Felsheim
Owner

Industry: Photography

Business Stage: In Business

Other Metrics

Client Sales Growth

\$1,596,455

total dollar amount increase since 2021



Source: Internal reporting, client attribution

Event Attendees

1,266



Source: Internal reporting

Market Research Center

268

Completed Client Projects

Source: Wyoming SBDC Network MRC

Trainings Held

58

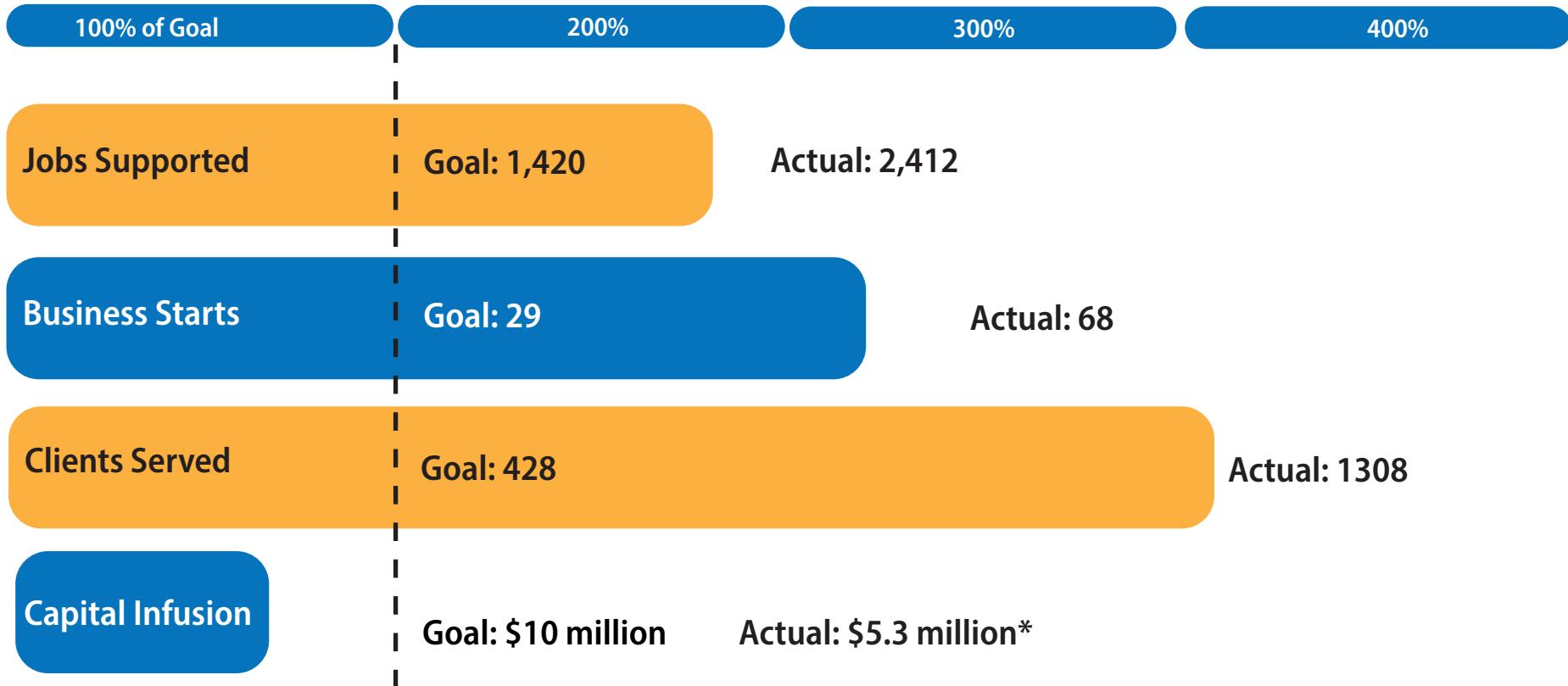


Source: Internal reporting

Annual Goals

Annual goals for the Wyoming SBDC Network are set by the U.S. Small Business Administration based on our state's population share.

Our Impact



*While capital infusion goals were not met in 2022, we attribute that drop-off to the large amount of capital infusion we accomplished in 2020 and 2021. Businesses received a record amount of capital at that time from various Recovery Program opportunities and are now starting the process of paying on that capital in 2022.

Subprograms

CARES Program Final Impact

September 30, 2022 marked the conclusion of the Wyoming SBDC Network CARES Act Recovery Program (CARES). The CARES program provided Wyoming businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with an expansive variety of educational resources, industry specific advising, equipment access opportunities, and much more.

Key initiatives of the CARES Act Recovery Program included the following:

- The Web Development Assistance Program completed 106 client projects and used 66 unique developers to do so. The majority of those developers were Wyoming small business owners.
- Provided 3,007 attendees with a catalog of 108 virtual educational training events. The majority of those training sessions were recorded and are available on demand at WyomingSBDC.org/Recordings.
- Created Shop Wyoming, Wyoming's only statewide e-commerce site (accessible at ShopWyoming.com). At the conclusion of the CARES program Shop Wyoming hosted 113 active businesses and will continue to enrich the e-commerce landscape of Wyoming small business through 2024.
- Implemented the Business Resource Locator tool, accessible at WyomingBusinessResources.org.
- Provided professional photography, videography, and podcasting equipment for easy access to small businesses to the Library 2 Business programs across the state.

CARES ACT RECOVERY PROGRAM IMPACT AT A GLANCE

CARES ACT CLIENTS

1,173



CAPITAL INFUSION

\$9,453,984



COVID-19 TRAINING

108
Events Held



Portable Assistance Grant

The Wyoming SBDC Network continued to administer the Portable Assistance Program (PAP) during the program period. The goal of the PAP is to provide targeted advising and technical assistance to address a specific negative economic condition in a targeted geographic area. The downturn of energy extraction revenues and business activities in primarily central and northeast Wyoming in 2020 influenced the SBDC Network's decision to seek funding from SBA to administer the PAP Program.

Although PAP funds are modest, we have realized significant impact through the work of our advisors in the affected areas. Advisors have worked with current and former energy sector employees seeking to exit their current employment situation and become entrepreneurs. Additionally, we have assisted entrepreneurs seeking to start specialized businesses to serve energy sector companies.

During the program period, our advisors worked with 37 unique energy sector-related entrepreneurs. As a result, there were three new business starts among those clients, five jobs created, and \$30,000 in capital formation realized. In addition to advising, our Market Research Center provided 40 hours of consultation and market research for clients related to PAP. Although the impact in terms of business starts and jobs created may seem modest, SBDC strongly believes that every business and job created in Wyoming is of great value to not only the overall economy but are of extreme value to the individuals involved in creating them.

Client Testimonial

Sew Much More, LLC

Powell, WY

// I appreciated the honesty and help [my SBDC advisor] was able to give me. I knew that he didn't have any other motive than to help my business succeed. //

Mary Black
Owner

Client Testimonial

**Felicia Jane Pilates Studio
Gillette, WY**

“ Since I spoke with P.J., I've purchased the equipment I needed and found a new place to rent in downtown Gillette, which I feel has given me some additional exposure. ”

**Felicia Jane
Owner**

Community Navigator Pilot Program

The Wyoming SBDC Network received a \$2.5 million grant to implement the SBA's Community Navigator Pilot Program (CNP Program) in Wyoming. The goal of the Community Navigator Pilot Program is to reduce barriers that all small businesses, including those owned by traditionally underserved groups such as veterans, women, and those from rural communities and communities of color, often face in accessing critical support.

The CNP Program utilizes a “hub and spoke” model. Grantee “hubs”—such as the Wyoming SBDC Network—serve as centralized, lead organizations and incorporate “spokes” to leverage partnerships with deeply trusted existing state-based or community-based organizations to help small businesses navigate and tap into critical business resources.

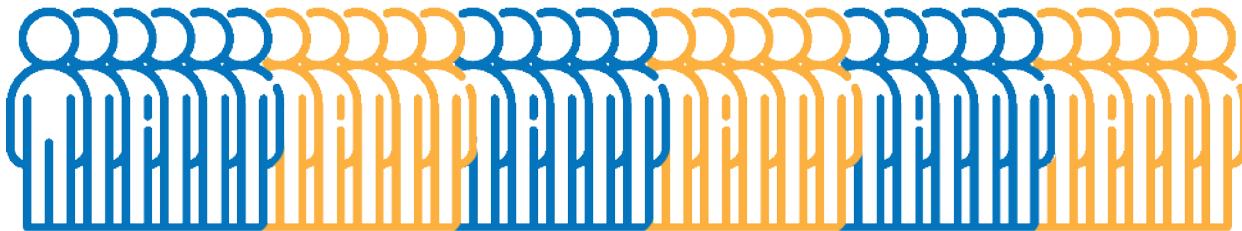
Wyoming’s “spokes” include:

- University of Wyoming Extension
- Wyoming Women’s Business Center
- Wind River Development Fund
- Wyoming Smart Capital Network
- The Local Crowd
- Wyoming Library To Business

Based on conversations with entrepreneurs across the state, CNP Program leadership has determined that one common barrier for new businesses is affording professional business service providers, like accountants and lawyers, and subscriptions to software to help with things such as bookkeeping and graphic design. Year two of the CNP Program will focus on providing opportunities to engage these services and connect diverse entrepreneurs with local resources to help them think big even if they are starting small.

CNP Program Clients Trained

805



Total Loans Awarded to CNP Program Clients

\$2,526,014



CNP Program Year One Client Diversity

71.3% Women

8.6% Hispanic

8.6% Native Americans

6% Veterans

4.3% Black

Compared to the 2021 Census estimates, our CNPP clientele remains more diverse than the overall Wyoming population.

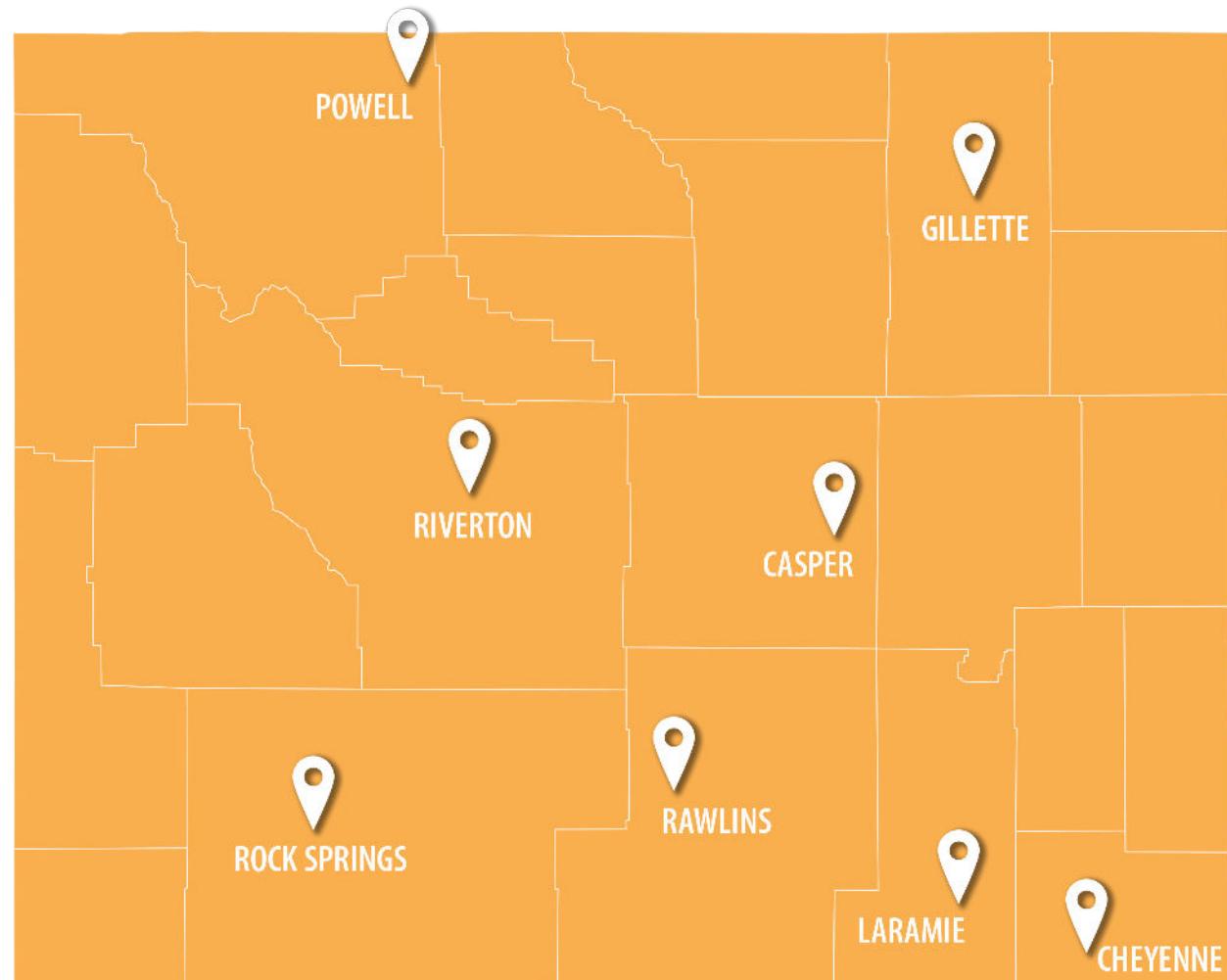
About Us

The Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network provides no-cost, confidential training and one-on-one advising to help entrepreneurs and small businesses succeed. SBDCs are cooperative efforts involving the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), a college or university, and often other public partners. There are more than 1,000 SBDCs, operating in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and many U.S. territories. Wyoming receives funding from our Host organization, the University of Wyoming, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Wyoming Business Council.

The Wyoming SBDC has eight offices located throughout the state. Our regional directors and business advisors cover every county in Wyoming and have helped entrepreneurs in every city.

The Wyoming SBDC Network offers a huge amount of advice and assistance to help you start, grow, or exit a business in any industry. The best part — our services are always offered at no-cost and completely confidential thanks to support from the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Business Council, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Locations





Advisors

Entrepreneurs Helping Entrepreneurs

Our expert staff come from a variety of backgrounds and are all trained and certified to handle every obstacle a small business owner may face. Clients also have access to our entire network's specialized skills, no matter where they are in the state.

Mandy Bailey

mandy.bailey@uwyo.edu | (307) 343-3798

- Project Management
- Risk Management
- Partnership Development
- Resource Management

P.J. Burns

pj.burns@uwyo.edu | (307) 682-5232

- Marketing
- Social Media
- Leadership & Management
- Human Resources

Rob Condie

rconde1@uwyo.edu | (307) 352-6894

- Bookkeeping Strategies
- Business Banking/Loan Preparation
- Alternative Financing Options*
- Se Habla Español

Devan Costa-Cargill

dcostaca@uwyo.edu | (307) 754-2139

- Leadership & Team Development
- Human Resources
- Business Plan Development
- Marketing Plan Assistance

Kelly Haigler Cornish

haigler@uwyo.edu | (307) 766-2904

- Product Development
- Technology Commercialization*
- Intellectual Property*
- SBIR/STTR Grants and Contracts*

Jill Kline, State Director

jkline@uwyo.edu | (307) 766-3405

Audie Cunningham

acunnin5@uwyo.edu | (307) 349-9701

- Marketing
- Marketing Plan Development
- Social Media
- Business Planning

Jim Drever

james@uwyo.edu | (307) 766-3505

- Cybersecurity/Risk Management
- Managing Technology Ventures*
- Social Media & Digital Marketing
- Product Development*

Janean Forsyth Lefevre

jforsyth@uwyo.edu | (307) 343-0765

- Government Contracting
- Procurement Advising
- Contracting Proposal Review
- Procurement Registration Assistance

Nicholas Giraldo

ngiraldo@uwyo.edu | (307) 399-8694

- Market Research
- Website Analysis
- Search Engine Optimization
- Copywriting

Kayley Harrison

kayley.harrison@uwyo.edu | (307) 766-5405

- Market Research
- Digital Marketing
- Social Media Management
- Search Engine Optimization

Mike Lambert

mikelamb@uwyo.edu | (307) 766-2688

- Market Research
- Website Analysis
- Social Media Analysis
- Geographic Information Systems

John Privette

jprivett@uwyo.edu | (307) 772-7371

- International Trade
- Product Management
- Product Development*
- Business Succession

Steen Stovall

sstovall@uwyo.edu | (307) 234-6683

- Business Development/Operations
- 2nd Stage Business Strategies
- Capital Acquisition
- Customer Relations

Cindy Unger

cindyu@uwyo.edu | (307) 234-6685

- Business Planning
- Business Plan Reviews
- Marketing Plans & Strategies
- Restaurant Start-ups

Paul Johnson, Associate State Director

pjohns45@uwyo.edu | (307) 766-3593

Client Testimonial

Olympus Games and Comics

Cheyenne, WY

 I wasn't sure what to expect when we first reached out to the Wyoming SBDC but they knocked it out of the park. [Wyoming SBDC Network Regional Director John Privette] was prompt in getting back to us, knowledgeable about the areas we needed help with, and a great guide as we worked through areas we really had very little skills or knowledge about. If anyone runs a small business or is thinking of running one, I can't recommend enough reaching out to SBDC for assistance. 

Justin Freeland
Co-Owner

Client Testimonial

Hathaway Knives
Casper, WY

// It's been truly wonderful to have the guidance of the SBDC through out my startup, my product development, and now the scaling process. Thanks for all you do! //

Gabe Hathaway
Owner

Services

Business Planning

- Business Plan Development/Review
- Strategic Planning
- Business Valuation

Financial

- Cash Flow Projections
- Financial Analysis
- Bookkeeping
- Business Taxes
- Payroll

Funding

- SBA Loan Assistance
- Business Loan Application Review
- Alternative Financing
- Innovation Contracts/Grants

Government Contracting

- Finding Contracting Opportunities
- Training
- Registration Assistance
- Proposal Review

Growing a Business

- Business Operations
- 2nd Stage Business Strategies

Management Issues

- Human Resources
- Cybersecurity
- International Trade
- Sustainability
- Risk Management
- Business Succession Planning

Marketing

- Marketing Plans
- E-Commerce
- Website/Social Media Assistance
- Graphic Design
- Search Engine Optimization

Market Research

- Situational Analysis
- Demographic/Psychographic Data
- Website/Social Media Analysis
- Geographic Information Systems

New Ideas & Inventions

- Technology Assessment
- Product Development
- Technology Commercialization
- SBIR/STTR Application Funding
- Phase I/II Application Review

Resiliency Assistance

- Strategy Development
- Risk Management
- Disaster Recovery
- Emergency Preparedness

Starting a Business

- Business Mentoring
- Training on a Variety of Topics
- Business Plan Development
- Finding Funds

And Much More!

Visit WyomingSBDC.org
to see our full list of services

Chronicles Distilling



Chronicles Distilling is a Veteran Owned small business started by former infantry Marines and brothers, Aaron and Chase Lesher. Located in the Asher building in historic downtown Cheyenne, Wyoming, Chronicles Distilling produces uniquely flavored whiskey and vodka that are distilled in house. Spirits are available for sale in bottles and as cocktails in their barroom on the main level.

One glance around the cozy barroom will make it clear that the Lesher's have put every bit of themselves into their business and the building upgrades. All of the equipment, furniture, bar, and signage was designed and built by the brothers.

After two and a half years of complex preparation and hard work building their business, the doors to Chronicles Distilling

Client Highlights

opened on July 19th, 2019. Based on the advice of their Wyoming SBDC Network advisor, John Privette, the brothers opted to put in a lot of hard work and labor themselves to reduce their business's start-up costs.

"We were able to get the proper direction in which to head in starting our business, with as little debt as possible. This has allowed us to grow quicker than

we ever could have with a loan because we reinvest 95% of the money we earn back into the company. Had we taken a larger loan, a very large chunk of our earnings would have been wasted towards payments instead of growth," said Chase Lesher.

Chronicles Distilling started out on a strong note but was stifled by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Local AM radio station KGAB reported that the barroom was closed from March 2020 to May 2021 and expressed relief when they were finally allowed to start slinging drinks again,

"Today will be a good day and we'll now be able to enjoy a nice locally-made beverage from Chronicles Distilling."

Chronicles Distilling continued to sell bottled liquor during their barroom closure and picked right back up with serving patrons as soon as they were able. As active members in the greater Cheyenne community, it is no surprise that they were named Small Business of the Year in 2022 by the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce.



Pizza Carrello

Pizza Carrello first began as a simple homemade food cart in 2011. They set up on street corners, business parking lots, parks, and at special events. As the business grew, Pizza Carrello scaled its business up from a food cart to a 7,000 square foot restaurant that seats 140 customers in Gillette, WY. Throughout 2022, the business continued to grow as they are currently undergoing a remodel that will add dozens of seats and a more streamlined kitchen operation.

Pizza Carrello LLC is a full-service, wood-fired restaurant and bar serving Gillette, WY, and the surrounding area. They currently operate Tuesday-Sunday with brunch offered on Sundays. The focus of the entire organization is the art of wood-fired oven cuisine including pizzas, artisan

bread, made-from-scratch pasta, appetizers, salads, wraps, desserts, and more. The restaurant features a 14-seat bar complete with 20 taps that serve many Wyoming beers. They also serve Wyoming spirits and craft cocktails, and offer a small rotating wine selection. Pizza Carrello also provides a variety of catering services, full bar catering, and special event partnerships.

Ariane Jimison is co-owner and chef at Pizza Carrello. Jimison and her partner, Rachel Kalenberg, started their company with only \$400 in startup funds and built every aspect of the business from the ground up. The partners collaborated on everything from logo design and marketing campaigns to building the first wood oven pizza trailer, as well as creating their original recipes.

The extensive growth that Pizza Carrello has experienced can be fully attributed to the endless hard work that founders Ariane and Rachel have put into their business. They have used Wyoming SBDC Network services to help them secure SBA loans and COVID-19 relief funding as well as organize their growth and management plans. They have been long-time attendees and beneficiaries of our one-on-one advising services and the Wyoming SBDC Network's diverse training and workshop offerings. The partners encountered extensive challenges, as many small business owners have experienced in the last few years, but they have met each challenge with resolve and determination to conquer and succeed.



In addition to providing the Gillette area with incredible cuisine, Ariane and Rachel have volunteered their time over the years to help facilitate growth in their own employees and in organizations in the Gillette community. Some examples of their extensive work in the community and as leaders in their business include Ariane offering tours and pizza-making demonstrations for at-risk youth and talking with them about the power of their choices, facilitating a mini leadership class with a group of students from the YES House, leading a Leadership Book Club with their managers, creating goal setting sessions with their employees to help each of them reach their personal and professional goals, and offering budgeting classes for employees to learn how to manage their own finances more effectively.

Aspen House Restaurant

The Aspen House Restaurant, in business since 1995, is known for its fusion of Singaporean and Western cuisine. The Aspen House Restaurant's unique dishes are only one part of the allure. Owners Lena and Jim Dirck also pay homage to their community by preserving their location's deep ties to Wyoming history. Recently, the Dircks received a prestigious award for pulling off what many business experts would think impossible.

The Aspen House Restaurant worked to make a name for itself as one of Rawlins' top restaurants for years. Two days into 2019, a burst pipe caused major damage throughout the 114-year-old building. The entire rebuilding process took about nine months. Then, just three months after reopening its doors, Lena and Jim started to notice a slowdown in customers due to the recent arrival of COVID-19. Facing a double-whammy of setbacks that almost no other restaurant like theirs has seen, the couple decided to reach out to the Wyoming Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network for help.

The Dircks' had enough capital to pay their employees for two months and met with Wyoming SBDC Network Regional Director Jim Drever to find solutions. Before there were federal aid options for businesses affected by COVID-19, Lena and Jim took Drever's advice and began looking at financing options to ensure that their staff continued to receive paychecks. Drever suggested some changes to their marketing efforts and pivoting to new strategies such as offering carry-out orders and meal kits that could be cooked at home. Just a few days later, the CARES Act was signed into law. Lena and Jim reached back out to the Wyoming SBDC Network for assistance in

applying for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). For both of those programs, aid amounts were based on Aspen House's 2019 incomes — which were already reduced due to the pipe leak repairs shutdown. The EIDL and PPP aid still provided much-needed help just in time.

In an SBDC Network Advisory meeting Lena had the following to say about the services her business received, "Without the grants and loans from the SBA, we wouldn't have been able to survive. We were really afraid that we were going to have to close our doors, but with Jim's help and the SBA funds we were able to pull through."

When the Aspen House was allowed to reopen their doors for dine-in customers, they took advantage of the building's unique layout. Dining tables could be placed far enough away from each other to maintain safe social distancing and the various nooks and crannies of the building allowed for some groups to dine in private rooms.

The Dircks' dedication to their restaurant and commitment to their employees and community is why Drever chose to nominate them for the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Small Business Person of the Year award in 2022.

"Lena and Jim really exemplified what it means to be Wyoming entrepreneurs during the pandemic," Drever said. "They were dealt a one-



two punch with the flood and the COVID-19 pandemic. To not only stay in business, but to keep all their employees on staff — it truly is admirable what they've done."

To be named a Small Business Person of the year, a nominee must show growth in revenue and employees, demonstrate resiliency and staying power, and be valuable contributors to their community. So in April of 2022, it was no surprise to Drever that Lena Dirck was announced as the winner of this prestigious title in Wyoming.

"It's an honor to be selected as Small Business Person of the Year, and I'm very thankful for the SBA, the Wyoming SBDC Network, my husband, and our wonderful team here," Lena said. "We've been through a lot over the past few years, but we continue to work hard and are proud to have the support of the Rawlins community and patrons from across the country."

Wyonics LLC

Wyonics LLC, a women-owned small business in Laramie Wyoming, was selected to receive a nearly \$1.2 million dollar Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II award from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). This award will allow them to further the development and commercialization of instrumentation platforms for the nondestructive manipulation and analysis of micro- and nano-sized materials.

According to DOE, less than 5% of their SBIR Phase II awards go to women-owned small businesses. "While these awards are selected based on technical merit and commercial potential, we are particularly proud to be one of the few women-owned small businesses receiving funding in this round," said Dr. Kristin Di Bona, CEO and cofounder of Wyonics LLC. Wyonics is the first women-owned small business in the State of Wyoming to receive a DOE SBIR award and the third Wyoming-based business to receive a Phase II.

The project, led by Dr. Di Bona, will further the product development and commercialization of a particle manipulation and analysis platform demonstrated in Phase I, with exciting applications in nuclear forensics. "We will be able to move and analyze micro and nano particles," said Di Bona. "This technology is widely applicable to the semiconductor industry, nuclear forensics, microelectronics, pharmaceuticals, and other future industries. Wyonics' platform allows tiny particles with sub-mm scale dimensions to be identified and collected in a non-destructive, non-contaminating manner."

Wyonics' specific goals for the Phase II grant are to develop a commercial prototype for their micro-manipulator platform that can "work with smaller particles in a cleaner fashion than other technologies being developed or on the market, and test applicability for nuclear forensic applications" said Di Bona.

Additionally, during the Phase II work, the team at Wyonics will explore if the technology can be used for the separation of micro and nanoplastic particles. "These particles are formed through the degradation of consumer, commercial, and industrial products," said Di Bona, "and may pose human health and environmental risks." Wyonics anticipates the platform will assist with the separation and characterization of these plastic particles which is of interest to the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The two-year DOE Phase II grant began in August of 2022, and ends in August, 2024. The SBIR project will support one new employee plus two existing employees at Wyonics. "We plan to hire an additional scientific technician soon to work in the Laramie office," said Di Bona, "and work with the University of Wyoming to support students involved on the project."

Wyonics LLC has partnered with Dr. Caleb Hill, an associate professor in the University of Wyoming (UW) Department of Chemistry and a cofounder of Wyonics LLC. A \$200,000 subaward to UW will



employ two to three undergraduate students and one graduate student to pursue some of the project's technical goals.

Wyonics Phase I and Phase II proposals were supported with Wyoming Phase 0/00 \$5,000 awards from the Wyoming SBDC Network's WSSI program. Additionally, Wyonics applied for and received \$100,000 SBIR Matching Funds from the Wyoming Business Council, the State's economic development agency, for the Phase I award and will apply for up to \$200,000 SBIR Matching Funds for the Phase II. "Economic development programs here in Wyoming have been critical to the initial success of this project. It has enabled us to continue product development and commercialization activities during gaps in federal funding, support Wyoming-based personnel, and protect our intellectual property," said DiBona.

Teton Lunch Counter

Teton Lunch Counter, located in Jackson, WY, may be new to the small business scene, first launching in the Spring of 2022, but in their brief time in business, they have made an immense impact on their community. Teton Lunch Counter is a small, women-owned business, and is Jackson Hole's only package and waste-free prepared foods provider, exclusively serving the outdoor guide and outfitting industry of Teton County. Their mission is to reduce the tourism footprint and provide tourists with only the freshest meats and seasonal vegetables from local farmers, ranchers, and small businesses. Teton Lunch Counter serves their lunches in reusable stainless steel, durable, and lightweight Bento box lunch containers. With sustainability at the forefront of the business, Teton Lunch Counter sources as much of its ingredients and meal components from other local businesses and with their reusable lunch containers have successfully kept over 20,000 single-use containers out of the landfill.



Founder, Victoria (Tori) Parker is a Sustainable Energy Development Practitioner with a Masters in Mechanical Engineering. She has seven years of experience within the built environment, namely commercial Net-Zero builds and Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. She is an aspiring chef & student of holistic nutrition culinary. After a successful first season with Teton Lunch Counter, Parker can now add "burgeoning sustainability entrepreneur" to her impressive resume of accomplishments.

Teton Lunch Counter has been using the help of their Wyoming SBDC Network advisor, Audie Cunningham, since the start of their venture, first to develop an initial business plan and now to create a more in-depth plan for year two of their business. The Wyoming SBDC Network advised Teton Lunch Counter on potential funding options for growth plans.

"The Teton Lunch Counter grew their client list and quickly discovered demand for their services and food in Teton County. Because of the success of her first season, Tori [Victoria Parker] is planning on hiring one more employee next year which will allow her to take on a few new clients. She already has a waiting list. Though Tori could take on much more and hire more employees she is also looking at her business strategy and is aware that slow and steady growth is best for Teton Lunch Counter. She always has her eye on sustainability and impact," said Cunningham.

On growing the business in 2023, founder Tori Parker says, "We will implement new efficiencies to combat high expenses and can take on another part-time employee so that we can also take on a few new clients. It is expected that we will increase sales in the summer season of 2023."

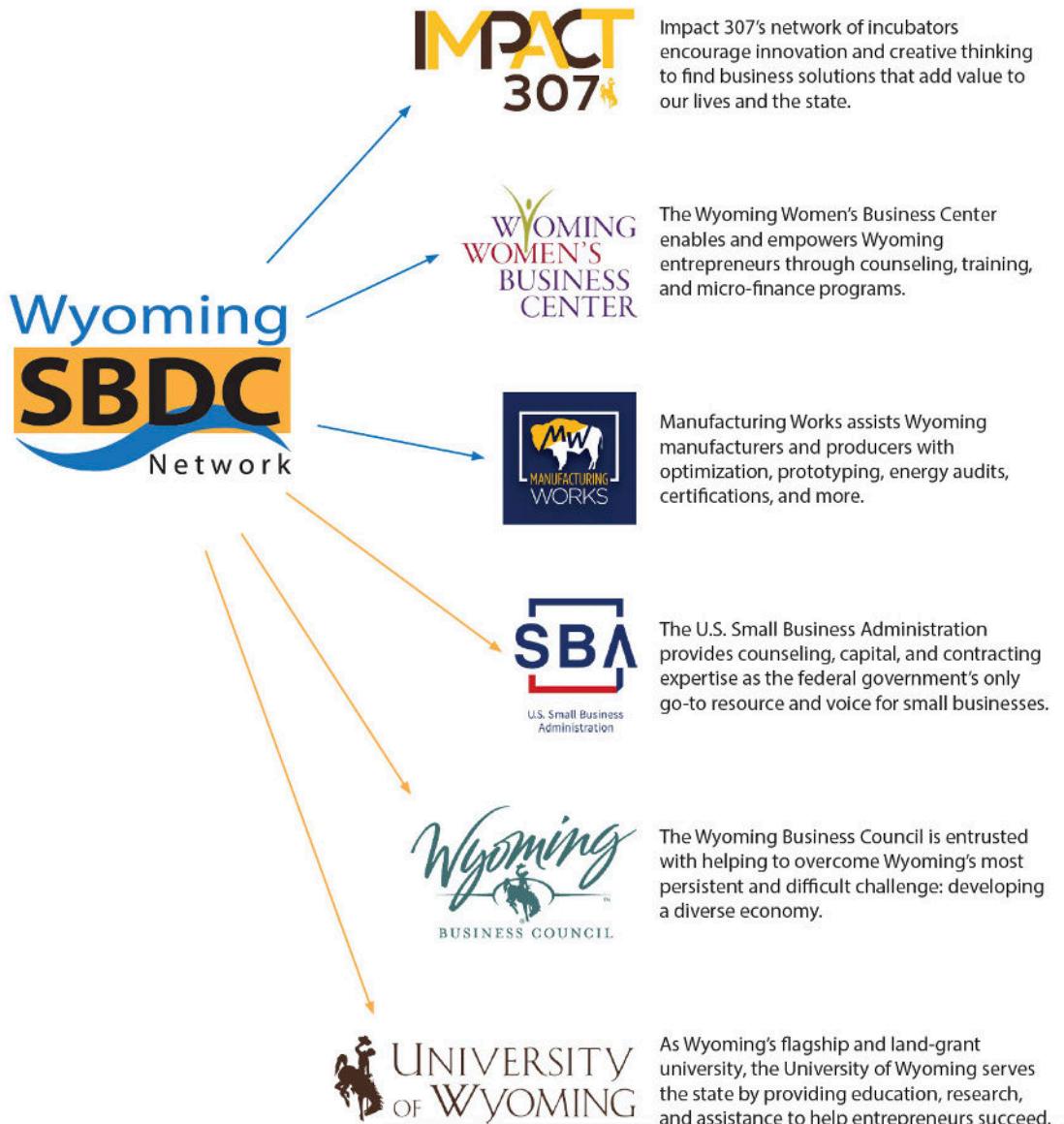
Find more about the Teton Lunch Counter and its sustainability missions at TetonLunchCounter.com.



Our Partners

Your starting point to connect with entrepreneurial resources in Wyoming.

In addition to providing no-cost, confidential advising and technical assistance on various topics, the Wyoming SBDC Network will also make the connections you need with our partners. The organizations listed here are just the beginning. Talk with your Wyoming SBDC Network advisor to find more connections for local small business assistance.

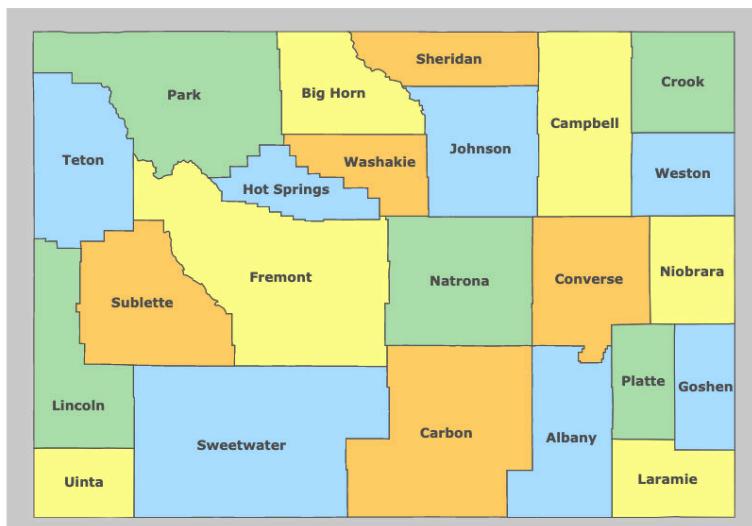


Wyoming Business Resource Locator

HOME EVENTS CALENDAR NEWS ABOUT

Select your county to view local small business resources, such as advisors, local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and downtown associations. Or select the **Statewide Resources** button to explore governmental resources available throughout Wyoming. The business resources included in this webpage include agencies supported by federal and state funds, as well as municipal entities. This resource listing is not exhaustive and does not include private entities, for-profit services, or private nonprofits.

STATEWIDE RESOURCES



Click to visit each resource.

Select a County.

Wyoming Business Resource Locator

Initiated through our CARES Act Recovery Program, the Wyoming Business Resource locator site connects Wyoming entrepreneurs with statewide and local resources.

The Wyoming Small Business Development Center created this interactive business resource tool as an informational reference for Wyoming business owners and individuals looking to start a business.

WyomingBusinessResources.org

2022 IMPACT STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

Capital Impact

\$5,349,420

Capital Infusion

\$98,229,108

Government Contracts

\$429,284

SBIR/STTR Awards

Other Metrics

2,643

Jobs Supported

68

New Business Starts

1,308

Clients Served



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Available electronically at WyomingSBDC.org/About