

Scope of Services

Project Overview

The intended purpose of the allocated funds is to support Knox St. Studios' (KSS's) 'Durham Rising: Supporting Underrepresented Entrepreneurs Initiative', which is designed to offer a multifaceted solution that encompasses financial, intellectual, and relational capital to address the persistent challenges faced by historically underrepresented businesses in Durham County, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. KSS will utilize the funds to establish a comprehensive entrepreneurial support system tailored to the unique needs of historically underrepresented businesses with 50 or fewer employees in Durham County that have confronted economic challenges and disparities in access to opportunities, education, and economic inclusion.

Knox St. Studios (KSS), alongside community partners, seeks to connect, and encourage current and aspiring HUB/SEDI entrepreneurs impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic by creating a comprehensive and holistic entrepreneurial support system for qualifying small business operating in Durham County. KSS's work will educate, advise, and prepare businesses to excel and thrive through Capacity Building, Access to Networks, and Access to Capital.

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Nonprofit Grant Program, Phase 2 Small Business Support, KSS is one of two entities to receive funding under this program. KSS will work in partnership with Forward Cities, the other recipient under the grant program, to support the E3 small business ecosystem that maximizes the coordination of service-delivery and impact for Durham County entrepreneurs. "Durham Rising" reflects the program name submitted in the initial ARPA application and funded parties will work to achieve consistent branding of the ARPA-funded E3 small business ecosystem moving forward.

Project Objectives

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, historically underrepresented businesses in Durham County have found themselves navigating an unprecedented landscape rife with challenges. The challenges faced by these businesses were not just economic; they extended to disparities in access to opportunities, education, and inclusion. While the broader economy and some small businesses are showing signs of recovery, it's crucial to recognize that historically underrepresented businesses continue to grapple with these challenges. Despite North Carolina's recognition as the number one state for business by CNBC in July 2022, a sobering report from Prosperity Now, known as the "Road to Zero

Wealth," projects a disconcerting future where African-American wealth may dwindle to zero by 2053. This jarring revelation underscores the critical need for a new approach to business support.

The overarching goal of KSS's project is to establish a comprehensive entrepreneurial support system tailored to the specific needs of historically underrepresented businesses with 50 or fewer employees in Durham County. KSS's project includes the following goals and objectives:

Objective 1: Identifying and Prioritizing Historically Underrepresented Businesses for Support

This project's pivotal objective is to proactively identify and prioritize historically underrepresented businesses for targeted support. KSS's focus encompasses two distinct groups: the first comprises early stage businesses (1-3 years in operation) that emerged during the global pandemic, often out of sheer necessity. The second group encompasses growth-stage businesses (4-8 years in operation) that not only endured the challenges of the pandemic but are now navigating the recovery phase or scaling their operations. KSS will be leveraging its extensive network of established partnerships to effectively reach out to and recruit owners of historically underrepresented businesses, ensuring they receive the tailored support necessary to address their unique challenges and fuel their continued growth and success.

Objective 2: Providing Access to Skill-Building Programs

Recognizing the importance of equipping small business owners and their employees with essential digital skills in today's rapidly evolving landscape, the second objective for the project will be to facilitate access to skill-building programs. The focus will be on connecting small business owners and their employees with programs that offer certifications in Digital Marketing and e-commerce, UX Design, Cybersecurity, Project Management, and Data Analytics, empowering entrepreneurs with the tools they need to thrive in the digital age.

Objective 3: Providing Access to Trusted Advisors

As historically underrepresented businesses need more than transactional assistance, the third objective of the program is to provide small business owners with access to trusted advisors and mentors. Trusted Advisors will be included in every part of KSS's project. In the Early Stage Incubator, the Associate Director acts as a trusted advisor and connector during the **10 hours** of cohort check-ins. During the Support to Scale program, KSS's contracted investment services firms will offer at least **10 hours** of individual consultation to help the entrepreneurs move through the necessary steps to secure funding to scale.

Additionally, KSS's Startup Weekends and similar events will provide participants with informal opportunities to connect with advisors who are committed to their long-term success.

These advisors will offer essential guidance and mentorship, ensuring that entrepreneurs and businesses have the support they need to navigate the complexities of the business world.

In sum, KSS will provide **25/30 hours a month** of direct 1:1 counseling to total a minimum of **500 hours** over the course of the contract. Services may ramp up starting in month four. Eligible counseling hours may include entrepreneurs referred from Forward Cities as well as counseling provided to KSS program graduates upon completion of programming outlined in the Scope of Services. While counseling referrals will prioritize technology and growth-stage businesses (4-8 years in operation), referrals to KSS may go beyond those criteria as defined by the needs and makeup of the entrepreneurs within the ecosystem.

Objective 4: Enhancing HUB Sustainability and Scalability through Capital Readiness

The fourth objective of the project will be to enhance the sustainability and scalability of participating small businesses through a focus on capital readiness and preparing business owners to be in the best financial position to sustain and scale their ventures. KSS will identify investment services firms to collaborate with its team on business topics including improving loan preparedness, enhancing business and personal credit, mastering P&L management, and honing general business practices. In addition, KSS's contracted investment services firms will offer technical assistance programs to help current business property owners and aspiring owners navigate the acquisition and management of commercial real estate to help create more sustainable businesses, as well as Venture Capital preparedness.

Objective 5: Provide HUBs Access to Capital

To help remove barriers for HUBs to accessing crucial resources, KSS's project will provide a centralized platform for businesses to access the right resources tailored to their unique needs. One of KSS's partners in this project, NC IDEA, an entrepreneurial ecosystem builder and grant maker, has committed up to \$100,000 in Micro and Seed grant funding to offer immediate financial support and to position these businesses for future funding opportunities. No County funds will be used to provide grant funding to participating businesses.

Objective 6: Holistic Support

Through this project, KSS will also aim to provide holistic support to assist entrepreneurs in overcoming obstacles that might otherwise hinder their access to the resources, events, and training provided. This comprehensive approach will ensure historically underrepresented businesses have the necessary support to thrive and succeed.

Objective 7: Utilize Data and Reporting for Better Service Offering and Outcomes

To improve KSS's service offerings and outcomes under the project, KSS will contract through a Request for Proposals with an organization to support data collection, research, and reporting. This partnership will allow KSS to leverage data and insights to better understand the challenges faced by historically underrepresented businesses. This will ensure that KSS's project will be responsive, effective, and continuously improving to meet the evolving needs of these businesses.

Project Description

KSS will serve the lead organization for the Durham Rising initiative. KSS's main responsibilities include coordinating and seamlessly integrating the services offered by its partner organizations and competitively selected contractors. KSS will also assume the overall management and strategic direction of the project. This involves executing a comprehensive strategy for outreach and engagement designed to attract entrepreneurs to the programs and assessing their specific needs. Following these assessments, KSS will ensure participants receive customized support by connecting them with the appropriate services offered within its primary programs: the Early Stage Accelerator and Support to Scale Incubator.

MWBE Participation

In addition to prioritizing Historically Underrepresented Businesses to participate in its programming, KSS will seek to intentionally partner with MWBEs to provide services to the County under this grant.

Early Stage Accelerator

The Early Stage Accelerator will be facilitated by KSS and offered twice (**2 cohorts**) during the grant period. This process is specifically designed to nurture small cohorts of **5-7 diverse businesses and individual entrepreneurs**, preparing them for the next phase of their business development. This unique program will combine comprehensive guidance, specialized curricula, and immersive entrepreneurial experiences to foster creativity, critical thinking, and effective problem-solving, among other entrepreneurial skills.

In partnership with NC IDEA, KSS will provide access to the Ice House Entrepreneurship Program (IHEP), a versatile curriculum emphasizing developing an entrepreneurial mindset. IHEP offers **30 hours** of programming, empowering participants through experiences that cultivate essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and innovative problem-solving. The NC IDEA team, in partnership with Knox St. Studios, will be responsible for identifying and training facilitators, providing course licenses, and facilitating the integration of the Ice House curriculum into our project activities.

To maximize accessibility and engagement, the Early-Stage Accelerator will be designed to be hybrid, with IHEP modules available virtually and supplemental programming, primarily directed by KSS, offered in person. Sessions will be hosted at KSS's physical location and, where applicable, virtually to ensure broad participation. Efforts will also be made to utilize other venues, engage more community partners, and expand the program's reach. KSS's Project Manager will play a crucial role in coordinating the use of space and identifying additional locations, fostering accessibility and engagement with other Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESOs), and thereby creating a seamless entry point for entrepreneurs.

Each cohort will also participate in five cohort meetings, totaling **10 hours** of peer learning and sharing, to be facilitated by the KSS Project Director. These meetings will be a platform for the contracted Data Firm and KSS to gather insights into the entrepreneurs' ongoing needs, allowing for further customization of the program offerings as it progresses. This approach will not only enhance the curriculum but also strengthen the support network around each entrepreneur, ensuring they receive the most relevant and practical guidance and resources.

Start-Up Weekend

KSS will host **two** Start-Up Weekends as part of the Early Stage Accelerator program, each offering a dynamic and intensive entrepreneurial experience. These weekends are meticulously crafted to foster entrepreneurship, innovation, diversity, and opportunity, providing significant benefits to early-stage businesses. Entrepreneurs dedicate **50 hours** to the in-person event itself, and an additional **50 hours** per weekend are allocated for preparation, amounting to over **100 hours** of preparation across both weekends.

The staffing for these weekends involves KSS's full support, with all three budgeted KSS positions actively providing services to ensure the event's success. This comprehensive involvement underscores KSS's commitment to delivering a high-impact experience for the participants.

Typically, the Start-Up Weekends serve **35 to 50 entrepreneurs**, offering them an opportunity to expand their networks. The events benefit from the contributions of around **20 volunteers** who play a crucial role in building relationships with entrepreneurs and business owners, thereby broadening their support networks.

Support to Scale Incubator

The Support to Scale Incubator will have **two cohorts** over the grant period, one dedicated to commercial real estate and the other to venture capital. This initiative, led by KSS as the primary convenor and manager, will be a collaboration with an RFP-selected investment services firm designed to propel business owners 4-8 years into their journey toward significant growth and scalability. KSS will facilitate the incubator, managing both people and content, and work closely with participants to build an enriching experience tailored to their growth needs.

Each cohort member is allocated **16 hours** of program time, which is divided into 8 hours of session engagement and 8 hours of guided support. This structured approach ensures that each entrepreneur receives focused and personalized assistance. The incubator is set to serve a total of **10 entrepreneurs**, with an expectation of 5 participants per cohort, allowing for intimate and impactful engagement.

The program's curriculum will be designed to guide businesses toward sustainable growth and expansion through various means. For the commercial real estate track, this will include facilitating property ownership and effective management of real estate assets. For the venture capital track, the focus will be on assisting in securing growth capital through venture funding, equity, and loans, providing strategies for mergers and acquisitions and offering succession planning guidance.

In collaboration with the contracted investment services firm, the Support to Scale Incubator will offer comprehensive technical assistance, catering specifically to the unique needs of each cohort. The incubator will address the immediate requirements of current business property owners and entrepreneurs aspiring to navigate the complexities of commercial real estate or venture capital, while also covering broader aspects such as funding preparedness, improving business and personal credit, mastering profit and loss management, and refining general business practices.

This initiative will focus on impact investing, particularly emphasizing support for Main Street entrepreneurs from SEDI communities. The goal of this component of the project is to increase the number of businesses owned by people of color that own the real estate where their companies operate, fostering a more equitable and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Through this targeted support, the planned Support to Scale Incubator aims to

empower businesses for long-term success, contributing positively to the communities they serve.

In addition to the previously mentioned support tracks, the project will offer the following services:

Access to Capital

NC IDEA is committed to providing up to \$100,000 in grant funding to advance the project's objective of creating pathways for high-growth entrepreneurship opportunities within the ARPA project participants. Collaborating with NC IDEA, the KSS team will design an awards program tailored to offer critical early-stage funding. The awards program will prioritize female and minority-owned businesses that either meet or have the potential to meet NC IDEA's grant eligibility criteria. No County funds will be used to provide grant funding to participating businesses.

Access to Upskill – Technical Education Program

Knox Street Studio will procure certification programming relevant to small businesses to offer comprehensive skill development in digital disciplines. The project plans to focus on the following certifications: Digital Marketing and e-commerce & Cybersecurity, with the option to offer Project Management, UX Design and Data Analytics. KSS plans to provide approximately **50 employees of eligible small businesses** (including sole proprietors) with the skills and certifications necessary to thrive in today's digital landscape and support the work in their respective small businesses.

Participants in the program will engage in a comprehensive curriculum, choosing between two specialized tracks: digital marketing or cybersecurity. The curriculum is crafted to provide participants with a well-rounded and practical skill set through a blend of foundational topics, hands-on exercises, and real-world applications.

Digital Marketing Track

The digital marketing track encompasses vital areas such as customer engagement, content marketing, and analytics. According to projections by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the roles in the industry will grow by over 6% in the next decade. Participants will gain a profound understanding of modern marketing strategies, equipping them for roles in an industry experiencing exponential growth.

Cybersecurity Track

The curriculum covers critical topics for those opting for the cybersecurity track, including risk management, network security, and Python automation. With the demand for cybersecurity professionals projected to grow by an impressive 32% over the next decade,

participants will acquire skills that are not only in high demand but also essential for safeguarding digital systems.

Supplemental Offering

In addition to the core curriculum, the program offers enriching supplemental experiences to ensure holistic skill development and empowerment.

Life Skills and Tech Talks: Industry experts will conduct engaging talks that provide valuable insights, share industry trends, and offer practical advice to participants on business/life skills, including personal financial accounting, homeownership, and demystifying entrepreneurship. These sessions aim to equip participants with specific skills and the broader knowledge needed for success in their professional and personal lives.

These supplemental offerings are integral to the program, ensuring participants receive not only technical skills but also the practical knowledge.

Support Structure

Recognizing the unique needs of our participants, we will provide a robust support structure that combines the benefits of virtual accessibility for the course with the option for in-person connections.

Personalized One-on-One Check-ins: Understanding the importance of individualized support, the program includes at least eight personalized one-on-one check-in sessions. These sessions give participants dedicated time to address their specific challenges, set personalized goals, and receive guidance tailored to their unique circumstances.

Collaborative Cohort Bi-Weekly Virtual Check-ins: To foster community and mutual support, we will conduct bi-weekly virtual check-in sessions for the entire cohort. These collaborative sessions build connections among participants, share experiences, and create a supportive network. In a virtual environment, these check-ins serve as a platform for community building, ensuring that participants feel connected and engaged throughout the program.

To further support this objective, KSS will lead a **Tech Industry Awareness Campaign** to include workshops focused on increasing and promoting the pipeline of tech entrepreneurs with a possible youth focus. KSS will host a minimum of **5 workshops** focused on growing tech skills for entrepreneurs that feature the application of technology fields and/or include panels of tech companies to promote emerging fields.

Project Summary

- Start-up Weekends
 - Total program hours: 100 (50 hours of service delivery, 50 hours of prep)
 - Number of entrepreneurs: 35-50 (x2)
 - Number of cohorts: 2
- Access to Trusted Advisors
 - 500 hours of 1:1 direct counseling
- Access to Upskill
 - Certification and Training
 - Number of entrepreneurs receiving tech certifications: 30
 - Personalized One-on-One Check-ins: 8
 - Collaborative Cohort Virtual Check-ins: Bi-Weekly
 - Number of entrepreneurs receiving upskill training: 20
 - Tech Skills Workshops
 - Number of workshops: 5
- Early-stage Accelerator (with third party support)
 - Total program hours: 40 (30 hours of programming, 10 hours of peer learning)
 - Number of entrepreneurs served: 5-7 (x2)
 - Number of cohorts: 2
- Support-to-Scale Incubator (with third party support)
 - Total program hours: 32
 - 8 hours of session engagement and 8 hours of guided support (x2)
 - Number of entrepreneurs: 5 (x2)
 - Number of cohorts: 2
- Access to Capital (with third party in-kind donation)
 - \$100,000 in grant-funding

Project Impact

The success of the Durham Rising project will be evaluated through a comprehensive framework that focuses on quantitative and qualitative metrics including surveys and focus groups. KSS will work alongside the selected Data Services firm to ensure that KSS is measuring the program's impact.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Evaluation Measures:

Business Growth and Viability

- Business Survival Rate: Target - Achieve a 75% business survival rate among program participants.
- Revenue Growth: Target - Facilitate an average annual revenue growth of at least 10% for participating businesses.

Access to Capital and Funding

- Amount of Capital Secured: Target - Help businesses secure at least \$750K in capital collectively through grants, loans, and equity investments.
- NC IDEA Grant Outcomes: Target - Facilitate at least 10 grants from NC IDEA MICRO and SEED programs for project participants.

Skill Development and Education

- Certification Completion: Target - 75% of participants complete certifications through the offered program.
- Feedback and Self-assessment: Target - Receive positive feedback and self-assessment from at least 90% of participants.

Impact on Equity and Inclusion

- Demographic Data: Target - Ensure that at least 60% of project participants come from historically underrepresented communities.
- Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Certifications: Target - At least 50% of participating businesses without HUB Certification achieve HUB certification.

Support to Scale Incubator Outcomes

- Property Ownership: Target - Help a minimum of 1 historically underrepresented businesses acquire commercial real estate.
- Financial Management: Target - Improve loan preparedness and financial practices for at least 70% of participating businesses.

Community and Regional Impact

- Community Feedback: Target - Collect positive feedback and experiences from at least 80% of the local community and participating businesses.

Delivery of Services

Knox St. Studios (KSS) will be responsible for performing the work and achieving the stated goals and objectives of the "Durham Rising" project. The leadership team of KSS, including Talib Graves-Manns, Lee Gray and Richard Brown, brings a wealth of experience, expertise, and a deep commitment to community development, social impact, and economic empowerment. Knox St. Studios is under the leadership of Talib Graves-Manns, who serves as the Executive Director of AB Community, doing business as Knox St. Studios. Since 2015, Mr. Graves-Manns has played integral roles in various entrepreneurial ventures and initiatives.

Notably, he served as the Google Entrepreneur-in-Residence from 2015 to 2016. Furthermore, he has been instrumental in establishing a CDFI-backed HBCU Entrepreneurship Center. His extensive experience includes co-founding and managing Partners in Equity and Black Wall Street Homecoming. In these roles, Mr. Graves-Manns has been responsible for various cross-functional tasks and day-to-day operations, with a significant focus on business strategy and driving growth. Mr. Graves-Manns has earned a degree in psychology from Hampton University in Hampton, VA, in 2003. Additionally, he completed his MBA at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, in 2009.

Lee Gray serves as the Associate Director at Knox St. Studios and complements the leadership team as a dedicated professional with a passion for community-oriented and social impact endeavors. In her role, Lee effectively manages programs, oversees project implementation, and sets the strategic direction for the organization. Lee is a North Carolina A&T State University graduate, and her career path has seen her lead teams in Design and Visual Merchandising for well-known national clothing brands such as Nordstrom, Belk, and Bevello. Her experience extends to Community Development at the state level, where she contributed her skills and expertise. She has also been selected as the Ecosystem Builder-in-Residence for the statewide Black Wall Street Forward initiative in Fayetteville. Lee's educational background includes a Masters in Operations Management, a B.S. in Marketing and International Business, and career certificates in Non-Profit Management, Fashion Design, and Merchandising.

Richard Brown is the Director of Tech Career & Apprentice at Knox St. Studios, where he spearheads the Google Certificates program and oversees various initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide. With a diverse background spanning community organizing, construction project coordination, and software engineering, Richard brings a wealth of experience to his role. Prior to joining Knox St. Studios, he served as a Community Organizer at the Community Reinvestment Association of North Carolina and as a Construction Project Coordinator at The North Carolina Institute of Minority Economic

Development. Additionally, Richard has worked as a Software Engineer at The Iron Yard, bringing technical expertise to his community-focused endeavors.

In addition to the leadership provided by Knox St. Studios and its team, KSS will utilize an RFP process to ensure that we have a Data Services Firm and Investment Services(s) firms that are adept at and have experience in working with underserved populations and businesses.

Ecosystem Support

Knox St. Studios is part of a pair of organizations that received support through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Nonprofit Grant Program, Phase 2 Small Business Support. The underlying intent of these awards is to create a small business ecosystem that maximizes the coordination of service-delivery and impact for Durham County entrepreneurs. To that end, Knox St. Studios will support the ecosystem through the following activities:

- Bi-weekly check-ins with Forward Cities attended by Executive Director and Program Director
- Monthly E3 Alliance meeting attended by Executive Director and Program Director (80% of meetings)
- Attendance at and session content for Monthly E3 networking/workshop event by Program Director or other paid staff
- Attendance by all paid staff at the Inaugural ecosystem-wide gathering event
- Coordinate receipt of client referrals with Forward Cities through Sourcelink (no cost associated) as well as all metrics referenced in “Project Summary” and “Project Impact” sections
- Once the ecosystem needs assessment is completed by Forward Cities, implement a feasible recommendation for an education program that is within scope.

Project Sustainability

KSS has crafted a sustainability plan for the "Durham Rising" project to ensure its long-term impact and effectiveness even after ARPA funding is no longer available. This comprehensive approach encompasses various strategies and partnerships to secure ongoing support and resources.

First and foremost, diversifying funding sources will be a key element of the sustainability plan. While ARPA funding provides a crucial initial boost, KSS recognizes the need to

secure additional grants, donations, and investments from the public and private sectors. This includes identifying and pursuing opportunities at the federal, state, and local levels and engaging with philanthropic organizations, foundations, and corporate partners who share our commitment to promoting economic development and inclusion.

KSS's project also places a strong emphasis on building and strengthening partnerships with organizations and institutions that align with its mission. These collaborations will not only provide financial support but also in-kind contributions and resources that complement our offerings. KSS will seek potential partnerships with local universities, community colleges, business associations, and economic development agencies, as these can significantly contribute to our sustainability.

Moreover, KSS plans to generate revenue through fee-based services and programs tailored to businesses and entrepreneurs requiring specialized support. These offerings will create a reliable revenue stream to support ongoing operations while ensuring KSS can continue providing our services at no cost to those who need them most.

Timeline and Milestones

The below serves as a targeted project timeline for the initiative:

Quarter 1

- Project embarks on Project Initiation. Project Director will assemble project team, coordinator partners, release RFP and complete partnership agreements are thoroughly reviewed and finalized, ensuring that roles and expectations are clearly defined.
- Project shifts its focus to Outreach and Enrollment. The Outreach Coordinator will engage in a robust awareness campaign, and outreach activities are initiated to actively engage potential participants and entrepreneurs. Data Services Provider will provide support by developing process and assessment tools to ensure that businesses and entrepreneurs meet the criteria (Business must have less than 50 employees, and have less than \$2 million in annual revenue). Potential participants will be assigned to the Early Stage Accelerator and Support to Scale Incubator Cohort based on initial assessments.

Quarter 2/Quarter 3

- Commencement of Program Delivery for Cohort(s) 1. The Early Stage Accelerator extends its support to early-stage businesses, providing them with the essential

tools they need. Simultaneously, the Support to Scale Incubator imparts valuable skills and knowledge to participants, while the Techstars Start-Up Weekend ignites entrepreneurship and innovation within this cohort.

Quarter 3/Quarter 4

- Start Up Weekend
- Support to Scale moves into individual support and execution.

Quarter 4

- Year 1 Evaluation is undertaken. This comprehensive assessment is led by Data Services Firm and focuses on evaluating the project's performance and identifying areas for potential improvement and adjustment.

Year 2

- Follows a similar trajectory of Year 1 for Cohort(s) 2 of Support to Scale, Early Stage Accelerator, and Start Up Weekend.
- This project timeline remains flexible, allowing for necessary adaptations to effectively address the participants' capacity and needs. This adaptability ensures that the project remains responsive, continually aligning with its objectives to make a meaningful impact.

Budget Proposal		
Durham County Government - ARPA Nonprofit Grant Award		
Expenses	Notes/Explanations	Total Requested Budget Amount
Personnel Costs Contribution	Name/type of position, salary, benefits, other compensation	Personnel Costs Contribution
Program Director (Executive Director) Project Coordinator (Associate Director) Admin and Outreach Manager (Director)	<p>Program Director/Executive Director: The Program Director is responsible for overseeing the entire project, managing staff, and ensuring program goals are met. This includes strategic planning, decision-making, and project coordination. The Program Director is also the primary point of contact for grant management, fiscal management and reporting.</p> <p>Project Coordinator: The Project Coordinator assists the Program Director in managing the day-to-day operations, ensuring project milestones are achieved, and facilitating communication among team members. The Project Coordinator is also the primary liaison with program participants and supports in Data Collection and Milestone tracking.</p> <p>Admin and Outreach Specialist: responsible for engaging with the community, identifying potential participants, and promoting the program. They play a vital role in recruiting historically underrepresented businesses. In addition, the outreach specialist will recruit and engage with partner organizations who will participate in mentorship opportunities and volunteer for Start Up weekend, and other programs. Also provides administrative support to the project team, manages documentation, schedules meetings, and handles logistical aspects of the program.</p>	Year 1 Salary: \$175,000 Fringe: \$12,000 Year 2 Salary: \$175,000 Fringe: \$12,000
	PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	\$374,000.00
Program Costs		
Equipment & Supplies	Technology and Software: This budget supports the acquisition and maintenance of necessary technology and software tools, which enable efficient project management, participant engagement, and reporting 2 years of programming. Program Materials: Program materials encompass various educational resources, training materials, and supplies needed to support skill-building programs and workshops for the historically underrepresented businesses 2 years of programming. Food, Decorations, Signage for StartUp Weekends, Convenings and Program Meetings	\$29,000.00
Space and Convening Costs	Facility rentals in Durham County for special events such as Startup Weekends and Cohort Convenings, etc.	\$22,000.00

<p>TA Service Provider Compensation</p>	<p>All third-party contracts will be awarded through a competitive Request for Proposal process as required by the Uniform Guidance and the County’s current grant agreement contract (Uniform Guidance governs all procurement and subawards).</p> <p>Marketing and Outreach Manager: Marketing and Outreach funds are allocated for activities that raise awareness about the project, promote participation, and reach potential historically underrepresented business owners effectively for 2 years of programming. Also includes, marketing consultant contract.</p> <p>Data Services Firm: We will engage a Data Services firm based in North Carolina that will provide a suite of assessment, data, research, and reporting services tailored to our specific needs. This firm will bring to the table a wealth of expertise in working with historically underrepresented businesses, which is critical for our objectives. The Data Consultant from this firm will specialize in data analysis and reporting, offering us the insights necessary to understand the unique challenges faced by these businesses. Our partnership with the firm will ensure that KSS gains the requisite knowledge to offer support that is meticulously tailored to the needs of underrepresented businesses, thereby enhancing our impact and effectiveness.</p> <p>The scope of services from this firm will include a comprehensive assessment and data collection phase, where a thorough investigation of the current landscape for underrepresented businesses within our industries and regions of interest will be conducted. This will be followed by the development and implementation of strategic data collection methodologies aimed at gathering relevant and efficient information.</p> <p>In the subsequent data analysis phase, the firm will employ advanced statistical and data analysis techniques to scrutinize the collected data. This will enable us to identify trends, challenges, and opportunities specific to underrepresented businesses, ensuring that our insights are both accurate and reliable.</p> <p>Finally, the Data Services firm will prepare detailed reports that encapsulate the findings from their analysis, including actionable insights and recommendations. These reports will be instrumental in guiding KSS to better support underrepresented businesses.</p> <p>Moreover, the firm will provide data visualization and executive summaries to make the complex data understandable to</p>	<p></p> <p>\$75,000.00</p> <p>\$80,000.00</p>
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	non-technical stakeholders within KSS, facilitating a broad-based understanding and application of these insights to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for underrepresented businesses.	
	<p>Investment Services Firm(s): We will engage Investment Services Firms that specialize in delivering a comprehensive suite of technical assistance programs, tailored specifically for growth-oriented businesses seeking to expand through commercial real estate acquisition or venture capital investment. These firms, selected for their extensive experience in supporting SEDI (Socially, Economically, and Disadvantaged Individuals) business communities, will offer various services designed to meet the unique challenges and opportunities these groups face.</p> <p>The scope of services will encompass a thorough Business Owner Assessment to guide businesses toward sustainable growth and expansion. This will include support for property ownership, assistance in securing growth capital via venture, equity, and loans, and strategic advisement on mergers, acquisitions, and succession planning. In the realm of Service Placement, the firms will craft customized strategies for launching and managing (examples) fundraising campaigns, grants, investors, and loans, alongside deploying marketing strategies to connect with various stakeholders, including customers and investors, authentically. This effort aims to assist both current business property owners and entrepreneurs eager to acquire and effectively manage commercial real estate.</p> <p>A distinctive element of our approach will be Peer Networking, incorporating peer mentoring initiatives that have shown significant benefits in capacity building, networking, and capital raising. Moreover, the Capital Underwriting Preparation service will cover funding preparedness, enhancement of business and personal credit, mastery of profit and loss management, and the refinement of general business practices, offering valuable learning opportunities from funders actively investing in companies.</p> <p>Tech Certifications: Knox Street Studio will procure certification programming relevant to small businesses to offer comprehensive skill development in digital disciplines. The project plans to focus on the following certifications: Digital Marketing and e-commerce, UX Design, Cybersecurity, Project Management, and Data Analytics.</p>	<p>\$80,000.00</p> <p>\$18,000.00</p>
	PROGRAM COST SUBTOTAL	\$322,800.00
Admin Fee/Indirect Costs		
Admin Fee/Indirect cost	calculated at 9.4% of the total project budget,	\$72,000.00
Total Expenses (ARPA Request)		\$750,000.00