

## Rural Business Development Grant Program

### Success Story: Space on Main Stimulates VT & NH Economies with Entrepreneur Education

**\$25,135**

Investment by  
Space on Main

**\$32,965**

USDA Rural Development  
RBDG funds

**7,000**

Square feet of community-  
based coworking space

**12,500+**

People who've visited  
since Oct. 2018 opening

**141**

New jobs created

**10**

Established jobs saved

#### A Good Idea Strengthens COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

In 2018, businesswoman Monique Priestly and a few creative-minded citizens launched Space on Main (SOM), a versatile facility that enriches the community spirit of towns in the Cohase Region of Vermont and New Hampshire. SOM leverages area talent to give people access to entertainment, services and technologies they wouldn't otherwise experience. Through education, entrepreneurship, innovation and the arts, residents can learn, teach, work, play, perform and engage their neighbors, all in one place.

#### The Balanced Approach to ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Though building community through personal connections is a wonderful idea, it's not easy to pull off. Priestly and her team provide affordable equipment, work spaces and classes for all ages and backgrounds, ensuring equitable access to education and technology, but materials, programming and facility operations come with a hefty price tag. In order to keep things running and up to date, SOM requires significant contributions outside of user fees, including donations and government funding.

#### Encouraging Entrepreneurship through BUSINESS EDUCATION

Through USDA Rural Development (RD), SOM secured Rural Business Development Grants (RBDGs) in 2021 (\$14,700) and 2022 (\$18,265). The funds are used to support entrepreneurs through new and established curriculum focused on business education. Provided services include planning and formation, accounting/legal reviews, sales & marketing, online business development, financing strategies and basic HR. With these funds, RD will help SOM leverage the creation of an estimated 141 new jobs.

**For program regulations and requirements, please go to the USDA RD [RBDG Fact Sheet](#)**

