

# LIBRARIES BUILD BUSINESS IN INDEPENDENCE

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.

## **Cultivate Indy Offers the Opportunity for New Voices in the Business Community**

**Cultivate Indy** is a small business center and program that works to cultivate entrepreneurial skills for low-income and minority communities living in rural Independence, KS. This initiative will provide state-of-the-art tools to help individuals have access to resources that can further their small business endeavors, such as high-quality software for graphic design, sound, and video editing. Cultivate Indy will work with over eight different local and regional organizations to provide training, insight, and guidance on starting, running, and growing small businesses. The goals of this initiative are to offer state-of-the-art resources, have 100 individuals enrolled in the program the first year, launch 20 minority/low-income owned businesses by the end of the grant period, and to create a local economic development coalition to continue and expand services following the grant period. The key component to Cultivate Indy, is that as entrepreneurs progress, they will receive memberships to local organizations such as Independence Main Street, and the local Chamber of Commerce. This will allow minority and low-income voices a seat at the table when they otherwise would not have the chance.



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