



PANDEMIC RECOVERY OFFICE

Small Business Technical Assistance Final Report

Submitted by State of Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office

Paul L. Dion, Ph.D., Director

Brianna Ruggiero, Chief of Staff

Kate Randall, Project Lead

Ross Lancaster, Data Analyst III

Derek Gomes, Chief Public Affairs Officer

<https://pandemicrecovery.ri.gov>

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Small Business Technical Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10013

Pandemic Recovery Office Approval Date: May 17, 2022

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2025

Funded Amount: \$9,800,000

Expended Amount: \$8,735,746

Project Expenditure Category: 2.29 Negative Economic Impacts: Technical Assistance, Counseling, or Business Planning

Problem Statement: Businesses, particularly small businesses, suffered from a lack of experience with agile business practices as they faced pandemic-related disruptions. Many businesses did not have the knowledge or resources to quickly pivot to e-commerce, access federal and state funding, and generally plan for and adapt to a changing world.

Project Overview: The project provided targeted technical assistance — including financial, technology, marketing, and planning services — to improve small businesses’ knowledge base, resilience, and access to grant programs. The project involved two phases:

- The first phase from the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2022 through the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 helped businesses apply for direct grants offered through two other SFRF-funded projects: *Small Business Direct Grants* and *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants*. Three partners selected through a competitive procurement process – the Center for Southeast Asians (CSEA), Roads Consulting Group (RCG), and Rhode Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (RIHCC) – helped potential direct grant applicants register on SAM.gov, apply for a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, and calculate their “net need.”
- The second phase from the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2024 through the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2024 involved the provision of various technical assistance services. A central vendor coordinator, Skills for Rhode Island’s Future, connected small businesses with vetted and qualified vendors to receive up to \$10,000 in services.

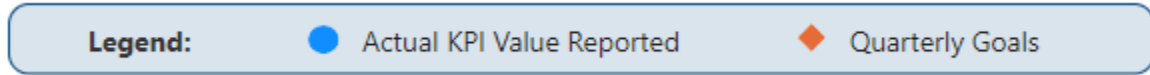
In addition to the SFRF funding used for this project, the Commerce Corporation utilized approximately \$470,000 of its own resources to serve an additional 30 unique businesses by providing over 2,900 hours of service.

Financial Overview: All program payments can be found on the [Pandemic Recovery Office's website](#) by filtering the "Project" box for "Small Business Technical Assistance." The project did not exhaust the project budget, with \$1.1 million remaining for other SFRF eligible uses as of July 1, 2024. These remaining funds were appropriated to the *Small Business Bridge Support* project, as required by 2024 H 7225Aaa.¹ The table below shows planned expenditures by fiscal quarter and actual expenditures by fiscal quarter:

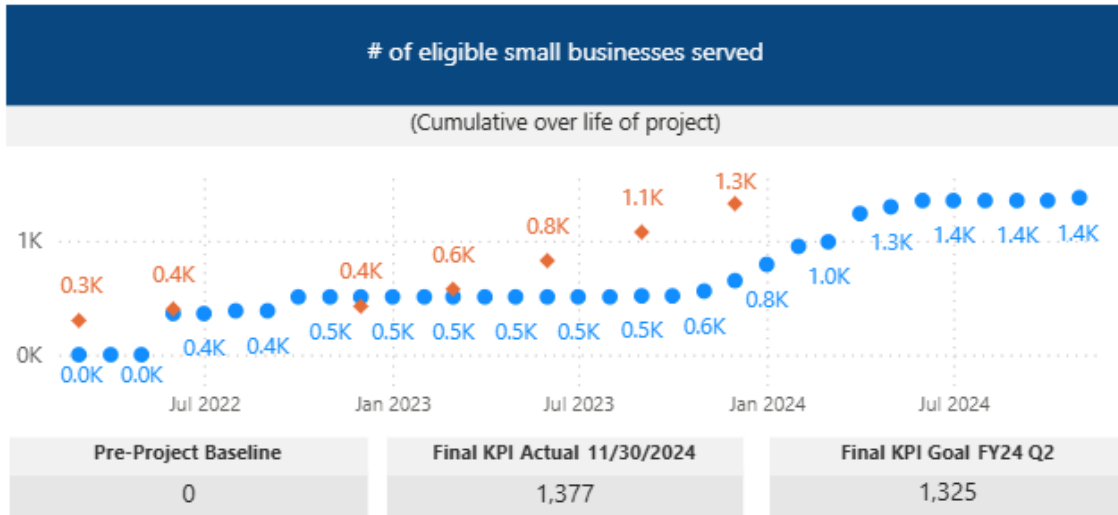
Fiscal Year Quarter	Planned Expenditures	Actual Expenditures
FY 2022 Q4	\$100,030	\$106,344
FY 2023 Q1	\$25,008	\$39,357
FY 2023 Q2	\$992,147	\$70,634
FY 2023 Q3	\$2,660,798	\$52,049
FY 2023 Q4	\$2,203,661	\$151,886
FY 2024 Q1	\$2,250,675	\$38,123
FY 2024 Q2	\$1,300,390	\$816,813
FY 2024 Q3	\$267,290	\$2,504,125
FY 2024 Q4	-	\$4,854,256
FY 2025 Q1	-	-
FY 2025 Q2	-	\$102,159
Total	\$9,800,000	\$8,735,746
<p><i>Note:</i> A single audit fee applies to all State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects and accounts for \$2,940 of the \$9,800,000 of planned expenditures and \$2,621 of the \$8,735,746 of actual expenditures in the above table.</p> <p>* Of the \$8,735,746 in actual expenditures, \$8,160,329 was for technical assistance, and \$572,797 was for vendor coordination administration.</p>		

¹ The Fiscal Year 2024 Revised Budget required that unspent amounts of funding for this project be reallocated to the *Small Business Bridge Support* project.

Key Performance Indicators: The following are the key performance indicators based on quarterly goals and monthly data collections.



1. Number of eligible small businesses served



2. Hours of support provided to small businesses



Legend:



Actual KPI Value Reported

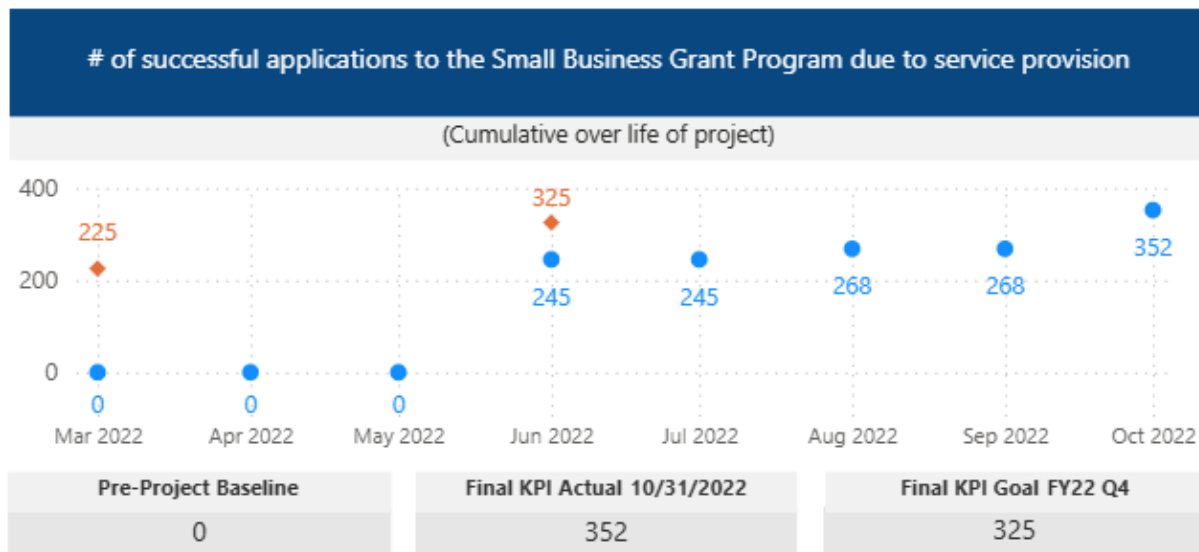


Quarterly Goals

3. Percentage of small businesses served remaining in business one year after support²



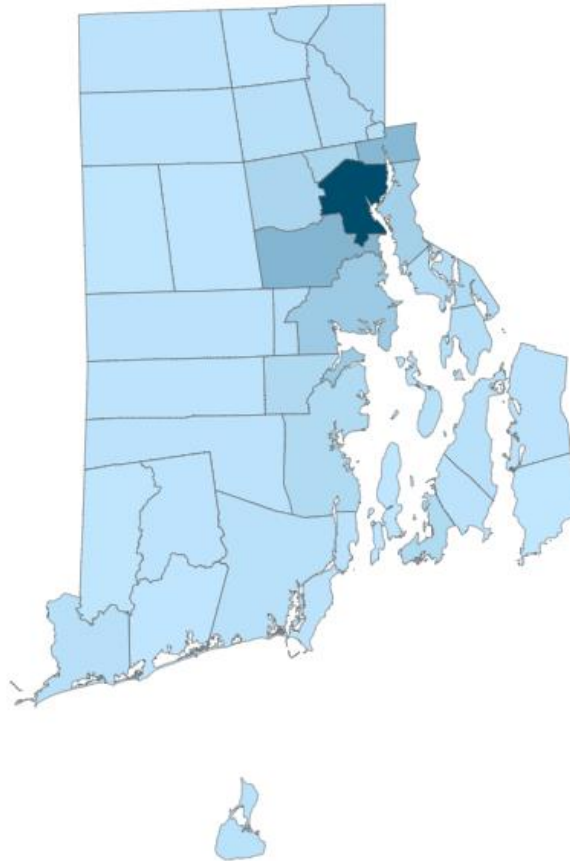
4. Number of successful applications to the *Small Business Direct Grant* program due to service provision



² Two rounds of surveys were distributed: one for businesses that received services from the beginning of the *RI Rebounds Technical Assistance Program* through March 2024 and the second businesses served from April 2024 through the end of the program. The KPI only represents the responses of the 615 businesses that completed a survey of the 914 that received it.

Demographics: The information below shows the distribution of assistance by specific criteria including location and demographic data.

Distribution of Technical Assistance Dollars by Municipality

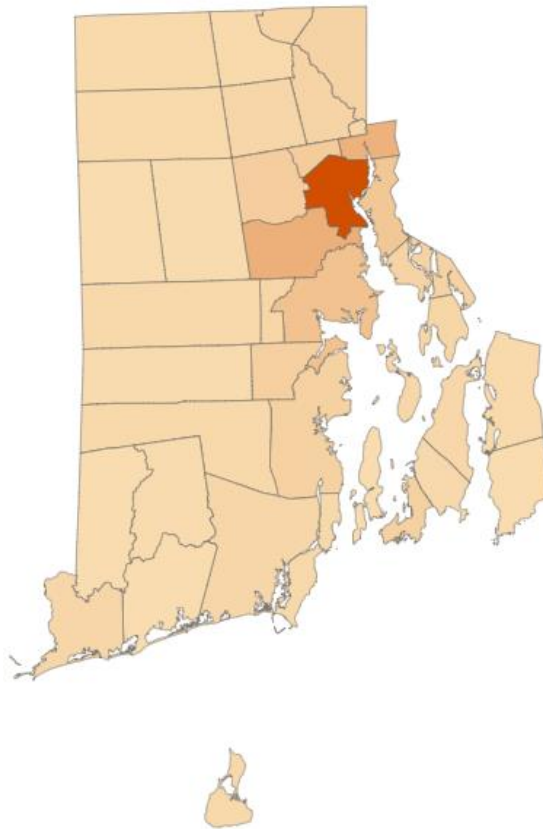


Municipality	Number of Businesses	Sum of Amount
BARRINGTON	23	\$150,043
BRISTOL	22	\$120,952
BURRILLVILLE	8	\$58,917
CENTRAL FALLS	25	\$120,700
CHARLESTOWN	6	\$23,516
COVENTRY	22	\$63,481
CRANSTON	133	\$762,420
CUMBERLAND	27	\$177,014
EAST GREENWICH	33	\$217,056
EAST PROVIDENCE	50	\$357,714
EXETER	11	\$63,954
FOSTER	4	\$10,864
GLOCESTER	8	\$50,356
HOPKINTON	4	\$8,476
JAMESTOWN	3	\$21,808
JOHNSTON	39	\$263,296
LINCOLN	23	\$153,083
LITTLE COMPTON	1	\$125
MIDDLETOWN	15	\$60,261
NARRAGANSETT	16	\$68,684
NEW SHOREHAM	10	\$70,818
NEWPORT	39	\$201,900
NORTH KINGSTOWN	37	\$200,839
NORTH PROVIDENCE	54	\$272,643
NORTH SMITHFIELD	8	\$54,098
PAWTUCKET	116	\$711,773
PORTSMOUTH	15	\$90,302
PROVIDENCE	375	\$2,422,588
RICHMOND	9	\$40,903
SCITUATE	5	\$36,865
SMITHFIELD	19	\$113,822
SOUTH KINGSTOWN	20	\$100,722
TIVERTON	7	\$55,247
WARREN	28	\$185,364
WARWICK	94	\$452,337
WEST GREENWICH	4	\$39,790
WEST WARWICK	25	\$120,682
WESTERLY	16	\$101,886
WOONSOCKET	23	\$135,033
Total	1,377	\$8,160,329

Of the \$8,160,329 in assistance, \$5,645,838, or 69%, went to support minority business enterprises, including women-owned business enterprises, (W/MBEs) as defined by Rhode Island law. The table below shows the breakdown of support for W/MBEs:

W/MBE Category	Number of Businesses	Amount Received
Racial and ethnic-minority-owned businesses (men)	193	\$1,197,569
Racial and ethnic-minority-owned businesses (women)	324	\$1,412,950
Women-owned businesses (not racial or ethnic minority)	385	\$3,035,318
Total	902	\$5,645,838

Distribution of Technical Assistance Dollars to W/MBEs by Municipality



Municipality	Number of Businesses	Sum of Amount
BARRINGTON	16	\$106,631
BRISTOL	15	\$65,605
BURRILLVILLE	6	\$48,667
CENTRAL FALLS	23	\$105,900
CHARLESTOWN	2	\$19,990
COVENTRY	9	\$26,841
CRANSTON	90	\$523,695
CUMBERLAND	18	\$131,438
EAST GREENWICH	22	\$147,523
EAST PROVIDENCE	31	\$248,933
EXETER	6	\$27,706
FOSTER	2	\$5,801
GLOCESTER	6	\$40,168
HOPKINTON	3	\$8,288
JAMESTOWN	3	\$21,808
JOHNSTON	24	\$182,511
LINCOLN	14	\$102,395
LITTLE COMPTON	1	\$125
MIDDLETOWN	6	\$13,876
NARRAGANSETT	9	\$57,807
NEW SHOREHAM	6	\$42,178
NEWPORT	20	\$118,359
NORTH KINGSTOWN	16	\$94,678
NORTH PROVIDENCE	34	\$197,702
NORTH SMITHFIELD	5	\$40,330
PAWTUCKET	83	\$611,630
PORTSMOUTH	10	\$79,864
PROVIDENCE	271	\$1,696,665
RICHMOND	5	\$21,002
SCITUATE	1	\$9,975
SMITHFIELD	10	\$73,233
SOUTH KINGSTOWN	14	\$60,978
TIVERTON	6	\$45,247
WARREN	18	\$115,373
WARWICK	58	\$278,025
WEST GREENWICH	2	\$19,790
WEST WARWICK	16	\$90,056
WESTERLY	7	\$60,948
WOONSOCKET	14	\$104,100
Total	902	\$5,645,838