



Minority Business Support Manager

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (RI Commerce), as the official economic development agency for the State of Rhode Island, works to drive prosperity in the state and help Rhode Island businesses and residents thrive. A quasi-public agency, the RI Commerce serves as a government and community resource to help boost business expansion in, and relocation to, Rhode Island. We are a passionate, innovative, driven, and resourceful team inspired by the belief that we can expand opportunities so that more Rhode Islanders are able to succeed.

Summary

This role will play a critical role implementing a new Minority Business Support Initiative out of RI Commerce—acting as the liaison between Commerce and local organizations providing access to capital and technical assistance (TA) to minority businesses (MBEs), developing and managing a pilot grant program dedicated to MBE businesses, and ensure our state’s MBEs have access to the right and best-fit physical space to conduct operations. Reporting progress and completion on a regular basis as well as follow up with the diverse organization selected to provide such services and programs will be a key component to this position. The role will be measured against the number of MBEs that are served through the program; the number of trainings, programs, or initiatives started by intermediaries and funded through this initiative; the number of businesses registered with the State’s Division of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (DEDI); and the impact that the pilot grant program had on recipients.

Responsibilities

Intermediary Engagement

- Maintain and manage business relationships with TA partners and organizations.
- Work to ensure cohesion and collaboration between RI Commerce and TA partners as well as alignment of TA partner efforts toward collective goal of MBE support in Rhode Island
- Build and maintain a database of programs and initiatives available to MBEs in state, including content information, and specific eligibility and access information for each program
- Promote awareness of federal and other grant programs to businesses and business serving organizations.
- Identify and promote partner programs that may benefit businesses and organizations.
- Act as an ambassador for RI Commerce with key stakeholders, including through events attendance.
- Partner with local business serving organizations to develop and execute programs and services for the RI MBE community.

Administration of Grants Programs

- Design parameters and develop metrics and structure for a grant program to business serving organizations as well as a pilot grant program for MBE business directly.
- Execute programs and initiatives, reporting regularly on progress towards goals.

- Administer the process to create any needed Requests for Proposals (RFPs), selection, and contracts associated with both the intermediary and MBE business grant programs
- Create reports and track progress against metrics based on results from the programs and initiatives from the TA partners and from Commerce and provide concise program updates in both written and oral formats
- Troubleshoot needs from MBE community throughout duration of programs to ensure processes and products are as relevant and user-friendly as possible
- Communicates in a cooperative and professional manner, treating all employees and customers with respect and courtesy while taking responsibility for, and making every effort to resolve concerns and problems.
- Maintain a database of programs, initiatives and businesses benefiting from the agreements with the TA partners

Key Competencies

- **Intelligence:** The ability to acquire understanding and absorb information rapidly. A quick study.
- **Resourcefulness:** Passionately finds ways over, around, or through barriers to success. Achieves results despite lack of resources. Goes beyond the call of duty. Shows bias for action. A results-oriented “doer.”
- **Written Communications:** Writes clear, precise, well-organized documents using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and word usage.
- **Project and program management:** Job requires the ability to juggle many concurrent programs and projects with limited staff support, ensuring smart interconnection across efforts. Someone who “sweats the details.”

Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree or equivalent professional learning required.
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in small business support and equitable economic development programming.
- Experience navigating state and federal programs and their reporting and compliance requirements
- Knowledge of and previous engagement with the Rhode Island minority business community, as well as the economic development programs, tools, resources, and federal/state grant programs available to MBEs presently
- Fluency, written and oral, in at least one language additional to English strongly preferred.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.

This role is funded through federal State Fiscal Recovery Funds for a two-year term. The term may be extended contingent on continued funding.

This role may require occasional work on nights/weekends to accommodate after-hours business support or networking events.

Resumes will be accepted until position is filled. Please submit a cover letter along with a professional resume via email to:

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation
job.opportunities@commerceri.com

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation is an at-will employer; no employment contracts exist.

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (the 'Corporation') is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Corporation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, veteran status or any other basis covered by applicable law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and business need. The Corporation will not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on any of these characteristics.