



# FRANKLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Small Business Capacity-Building Grant Program

Investing in small businesses

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The Franklin Chamber of Commerce through the newly formed Franklin Chamber Foundation awarded thirteen small businesses \$2,000-\$2,500 through its inaugural Small Business Capacity-Building Grant program in 2023. This pilot program was funded through economic development fees received through the Franklin Economic Development Commission and facilitated by the Franklin Chamber Foundation to strengthen local businesses through capacity-building projects.

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce firmly believes in fostering a thriving business environment and recognizes the crucial role that small businesses play in driving economic growth. Through this grant program, the Chamber aims to empower these businesses with the necessary resources and support to flourish in an ever-changing market. By supporting their capacity-building projects, we are not only helping them grow and succeed but also contributing to the overall economic vitality of our community.

Franklin organizations with 10 or fewer employees with a brick-and-mortar presence were eligible to apply. The grants, totaling \$30,000, provided essential financial assistance to these businesses, enabling them to implement their proposed projects and achieve their growth objectives. The Chamber received 28 applications that were reviewed and scored by members of the Franklin Chamber Foundation, Franklin Chamber of Commerce, Franklin Main Street Organization and Franklin Economic Development Commission. Grant recipients were scored on longevity, sustainability, overall impact, community involvement, community need and innovation. Each recipient demonstrated a strong commitment to improving their operations, expanding their reach, and enhancing their overall capabilities. The breakdown follows.

### Evaluation Criteria for Capacity-Building Grants

Criteria	Points Available	Score
<b>Business Longevity</b>		
Less than 1 year	0	
1-2 years	2	
3-4 years	3	
5-9 years	4	
10+ years	5	
<b>Sustainability Plan</b>	5	
<b>Overall Impact to the Business</b>	0-10	
<b>Community Involvement</b>	0-10	
<b>Letter(s) of Support</b>	0-10	
<b>Community Need</b>	0-5	
<b>Innovative Idea</b>	0-5	
<b>TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>50</b>	

**The recipients of the capacity-building grants are as follows:**

1823 Bakehouse – Advertising Initiatives

Brick Street Boutique – Display Aesthetics

Coffeehouse Five – Coffee Roaster Front-House Display

Farm Girl Mercantile – Point of Sale System and Décor Display

Generation Art and Frame – Website Improvements

Middle Davids Artisan Candles – Website Improvements

Miss Polly's Music Class – Marketing and Materials for Music Class

Possibilities Home Re-Imagined – Classroom/Education Space

Salvage Sisters Antique Market – Install Internet and Upgrade Point of Sale System

Sweat Shop Franklin – Creation of Sisters Corporate Wellness Program

T-Shirt Express – Digital Catalog

Toodleydoo Toys – Holiday Playbook Project

Wild Geese Bookshop – Website Improvements

The Small Business Capacity-Building Grant program was extremely well received by city leadership and by the organizations who applied for funding. One of the recipients said of the grant, “We are grateful to the Chamber for giving us the push we needed to partially fund our project. The funds gave us the start we needed to implement a new website but more importantly, we feel we are a valued part of Franklin. Our business is important to the health of our downtown and we are so proud!”

***continued***



Check presentation on August 31, 2023. The recipients were invited to the Chamber office to give an overview of their projects to Mayor Barnett, members of the Franklin Economic Development Commission and Franklin Chamber Board Members.