

Cooperative Development Grants

The Ohio Cooperative Development Center is making \$20,000 available to groups interested in forming cooperatives and to assist existing cooperatives in adopting new enterprises. To be eligible, the applicant must be a group exploring opportunities in cooperatives, or a cooperative expanding into a new enterprise, and be based in Ohio or West Virginia.

The Ohio Cooperative Development Center is now accepting applications for funds. **The deadline to submit an application is _____**

Two types of grants will be made available to recipients. One type focuses on feasibility and pre-feasibility study grants. Applicants should apply for pre-feasibility study grants if they are new groups who are interested in forming a cooperative, but need to uncover some preliminary information to determine if a full feasibility study is worthwhile. For example, if your group is interested in forming a vegetable cooperative but would like to go on a fact-finding trip to visit potential distributors, then a pre-feasibility study is probably in order. However, if your organization already has much of the preliminary information, and is ready to conduct a full feasibility study, then it is best to apply only for a feasibility study grant. The second type of grant focuses on hiring of services (i.e. legal or financial), or the development of marketing materials. This money is to be used to provide expertise to your cooperative or to assist in developing marketing materials to highlight the cooperative business. An example of this would be hiring assistance to develop an accounting system or hiring the services of a web developer to launch a website.

Applicants may request up to \$1,500 to perform a pre-feasibility or feasibility study. An incorporated cooperative may receive up to \$5,000 in grant funds from the program for business development activities. Only one grant per year will be available to an applicant.

Funded groups may receive up to \$5,000 from this program. However, recipients must match funds received from this program with their own resources. **This program can only provide funds for up to half of the total cost of the study or new enterprise. The other half will need to be raised by the group. At least half of that match has to be in cash, the other half can be an in-kind contribution.** For example, if your group is applying for \$5000 in grant monies, you must provide \$5000 match and \$2500 of the match must be in cash.

All grants are reimbursement grants! This means if the proposal is approved, the applicant will be asked to sign an agreement. The agreement will confirm intentions to carry out the project as proposed. The group or cooperative has one year to use the grant monies. Only once the project has been completed will applicants will be reimbursed for eligible, documented expenses.

All applications for funding will be reviewed by the "Cooperative Advisory Committee". The advisory board will evaluate the applications by assigning a point value to each question. For example, if a question is worth 10 points, the Advisory Committee can assign that question a value from 0-10 points. If the applicant does not receive approval, they may resubmit their applications after making the changes suggested by the advisory board. Applications will be reviewed as they are received. Funds will be distributed until they are exhausted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

To apply for a Cooperative Development Grant, please fill out the enclosed application form, and return it to:

Ohio Cooperative Development Center
1864 Shyville Road
Piketon, OH 45661
West.222@osu.edu

Please note that we have requested a social security number or taxpayer id number on the first page of the application. This is for tax reasons. Grant funds may be considered income and could be taxable. Therefore, it may be advisable to use the organization's id number instead of an individual's.

For more information about this, or any other project of the Ohio Cooperative Development Center, please contact Travis at (740) 289-2071, or visit our website at <http://ocdc.osu.edu>.

How to Write a Successful Proposal

Ohio Cooperative Development Center

Please type or print **clearly**. Remember that each reviewer has to read dozens of proposals.

- Don't use small type like this! (use 12 pt or larger). If you write your answer, please print carefully. **Make your application easy to read.**
- **Develop clear goals and outcomes.** Whether you are trying to solve a marketing problem or do something no one has even thought of yet, simple and clear goals and outcomes let the reviewers know **WHAT** your goal is. Make sure that you state your problem and opportunity. Then, as they read your application-they could see **HOW** you are going to reach your goal through the stated outcomes.
- **Plan ahead on how to accomplish your project.** Think about the details before you fill out the proposal. This helps you and the reviewers know that you have thought through all the steps of your project.
- **Timing is everything.** Let the reviewers know **WHEN** you will be doing the things you plan to do. A detailed timetable lets them know that you have given this work some thought and that you have a clear idea of the time that it will take.
- **Choose specialists to help you that compliment your skills.** When you ask for help from extension agents, crop consultants, non-profit groups, university specialists, Department of Agriculture specialists and others, these are called your "cooperators." Pick your cooperators carefully and make sure each one has the skills you need for your project. When you enlist the cooperation of people who have expertise in areas that you don't (eg. research, marketing, outreach, etc.) they'll help you make your project better and increase your chances of receiving funding. Include letters from cooperators, in which they describe how they will help you, along with your proposal. These are important references for you.
- **Develop a realistic budget.** Carefully itemize your expenses on the budget worksheet and enter your subtotals for funds requested and for your matching contributions. Round the cents to the nearest dollar.

If you have questions about completing the application forms, you can call Travis at (740) 289-2071 or 1-800-297-2072 (Ohio only). Just remember, the earlier you call, the more help you'll be able to receive. Good luck!

3. How will finishing this project benefit your group or cooperative? *(15 points)*

4. Please give a timeline listing the dates by which your group or cooperative plans to accomplish each step along with a completion date. Also, include an evaluation method for each step. *(20 points)*

Objective	Outcome/Evaluation	Start Date	End Date

5. What groups or individuals are helping your group or cooperative on this project and what are their responsibilities? **(10 points)**

6. Tell us what your group or cooperative has already done to determine the proposed project's feasibility. For example, what do you know about costs, customers, competition and industry trends? **(15 points)**

7. Please complete the budget worksheet. Use the blanks to list the amount requested. Fill in the matching cost share amounts that you offer as the applicant:

	Amount Requested	Cost Share Amount
Personnel	_____	_____
Travel	_____	_____
Contract Services	_____	_____
Miscellaneous/Supplies	_____	_____
TOTAL AMOUNTS:	_____	_____
	REQUESTED	COST SHARE BY APPLICANT

Signature of Applicant

Date:

***Please include with this application:**

1. Budget that lists specific items under each heading and the proposed cost.
 - for example, under contract services you could list brochure design (\$500), logo printing (\$750), etc.