



## Marketing Mini-Grants Pitch Contest for Central-Western Downtown Dollars Guidelines, June 2015

### Background

Women, Work, and Community's (WWC) marketing mini-grant program strengthens access to markets for entrepreneurs by supporting the development of professional, well-planned marketing tools, materials, and activities.

### Marketing Mini-Grant Pitch Contest Overview

WWC will award cash mini-grants of up to \$400 to microenterprises through a pitch contest, to be held on Wednesday, June 10 in downtown Augusta at the Handley Hall Gallery. Interested contestants must complete an application. **Up to 10 contestants for the pitch contest will be selected from those who apply by June 5 to appear on June 10.**

### Important Dates

- Application (below) must be **received** –electronic or hard copy–by Friday, June 5, 2015.
- Applicants selected to appear at the contest will be **notified** by email or phone by Friday, June 5, 2015.
- **Pitch contest** will be held Wednesday, June 10.
- **Winners** will be notified by Friday, June 12.
- **Prize** checks available by July 10.

### Prizes

A total of \$800 is available in the June 2015 grant cycle for **businesses in Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, and Somerset counties**. Three businesses will be chosen from a competitive pool of applicants to receive grants: **\$400 for first prize, \$300 for second prize, and \$100 for third prize.**

### Eligible Applicants

- Eligible applicants include individual micro business owners, business partners, or groups of business owners.
- Women, men, couples, partners, and mixed groups of entrepreneurs are welcome to apply.
- Non-profit organizations are not eligible.
- **Businesses must have been in business 5 years or less, have 5 or fewer employees, and gross annual sales of \$500,000 or less.**

### Priority Considerations

- Effectiveness of the pitch
- Priority will be given to entrepreneurs operating in downtown business districts or located in the following Maine Street Maine Communities (**Augusta, Gardiner, Skowhegan, Waterville**) or **Maine Downtown Network members (Kingfield, Lisbon, Norway, Rumford)**.
- Projects which demonstrate need and realistic goals with specificity.
- Projects which demonstrate impact for the business by means of brand-raising, access to new markets, or networking/collaboration.
- Preference may be given to first-time contestants.

## **Projects**

Mini-grants support new or expanded business marketing and promotion, not the production of your product or purchase of equipment, tools, furnishings, or other fixed assets. Professional licensure and/or fees will not be funded.

## **Business Match**

Your winning grant must be matched by a 25% contribution (i.e. \$100 match required for \$400 grant; \$75 for \$300 grant; \$25 for \$100 grant). Matching funds can come from business profits, personal funds, or other sources.

## **Application process:**

1. Complete the application and submit it so that it is received no later than June 5, 2015 to:

Kathryn Ault  
Women, Work, and Community/UMA  
46 University Drive  
Augusta, ME 04330  
Email: [kathryn.ault@maine.edu](mailto:kathryn.ault@maine.edu)

2. WWC's regional review committee reviews the proposals and chooses up to 10 finalists to make their pitch the following week.
3. Finalists appear on June 10 at scheduled time to make their pitch. A time limit of 5 minutes will be observed. Pitch should promote the project described in the application. Any q&a must occur within the allotted 5-minutes.
4. Panel of judges hears pitches; rates pitches.
5. Winners notified within a couple of days of contest.
6. Winners complete a WWC registration form upon receipt of the prize check. Turnaround time from the grant deadline to receipt of funds is approximately one month.
7. WWC secures a photo of the grant recipient and issues a press release to announce the grant and promote your project.
8. When the project has been completed, the grant recipient submits a short report.

**Regional contacts: In Kennebec or Somerset**  
WWC Augusta Office  
Jean Dempster, 621.3434 or  
[dempster@maine.edu](mailto:dempster@maine.edu)

**In Androscoggin, Franklin, or Oxford**  
WWC Western Region Office  
Karleen Andrews, 557.1885 or  
[karleen.andrews@maine.edu](mailto:karleen.andrews@maine.edu)

# Central & Western Maine Marketing Mini-Grant Application

Please answer the questions below completely and return by Friday, June 5, 2015.

<b>Contact information</b> (name(s), business name, address, email, phone, website, fbpage):	
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<b>Business Start Date</b>	
<b>Gross sales</b>	\$
<b>Number of employees (excluding owner)</b>	<b>Full time:</b> <b>Part time:</b>

*Note: Business must be less than 5 years old, employ 5 or fewer people and gross no more than \$500,000.*

<b>Please tell us briefly about your business. What is your mission, and what products and/or services do you sell?</b>	
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<b>What marketing project are you proposing to do, and how does this fit into your overall business and marketing plan? What are your goals for this project (i.e. number of new customers, \$\$ increase in sales, etc.), and how will you evaluate whether you meet your goals?</b>	
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<b>Amount you are requesting</b>	\$
<b>Match funds you have available (must be at least 25% of prize award)</b>	\$
<b>Total amount for your project</b>	\$

You are encouraged to attach additional materials pertinent to your application.  
Your completed application must be received by 5:00 PM Friday, June 5, 2015 for consideration.

**Regional contacts:** In Kennebec or Somerset  
WWC Augusta Office  
Jean Dempster, 621.3434 or  
dempster@maine.edu

In Androscoggin, Franklin, or Oxford  
WWC Western Region Office  
Karleen Andrews, 557.1885 or  
karleen.andrews@maine.edu