

Small Business Entrepreneurship Advisor

HEDCO | Hartford, Connecticut

Hours: Full-Time Position

Salary: 50,000 – 65,000 (depending on experience)

Small businesses and entrepreneurs are fundamental to building and sustaining vibrant communities. Creating accessible pathways to entrepreneurship provides economic opportunity for all. While securing adequate capital is one of the key indicators for successful and profitable new businesses owners, lack of funding is a barrier that disproportionately affects minority and female entrepreneurs. Businesses that use bank loans to start or expand their businesses are more likely to have higher sales and employment.¹

Entrepreneurship can be a source of economic stability for communities when there are limited employment opportunities. Women and minority owned businesses are increasing year over year – women of color in particular are a rapidly growing segment of new entrepreneurs in the United States. In Connecticut alone, minority owned businesses increased by forty percent over five years. However, even with this increasing diversity, women and minority business owners are not well represented. Supporting women and people of color to start their own businesses has the potential to result in significant economic growth for the entire country.

About HEDCO

As a statewide not-for-profit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), we are revitalizing communities across Connecticut by helping local entrepreneurs launch successful businesses and access low-interest loans with flexible terms. Through strong community relationships, mentorship, and coaching, we transform aspiring entrepreneurs into thriving businesses owners. We are committed to making small business ownership accessible and equitable and building vibrant communities.

We are proud of our wide range of partnerships with governmental agencies, educational institutions, community groups and business organizations. Our success is rooted in our commitment our communities. As a team, we strive to meet both our individual client and local market needs, to collectively provide successful community development outcomes across the state of Connecticut.

About the Position

We seek a new Small Business Entrepreneurship Advisor to join our Hartford-based team. Our new Small Business Entrepreneurship Advisor will expertly manage a portfolio of small business clients, build relationships across the community, and support aspiring entrepreneurs who are in need of fundamental resources and dedicated mentorship as they prepare to launch new businesses.

¹ <https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/advocacy/Minority-Owned-Businesses-in-the-US.pdf>

Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, the new Small Business Entrepreneurship Advisor will proudly embrace HEDCO's mission, advancing both its social mission and adhering to its financial responsibilities. The new Advisor will build trusted relationships with our entrepreneurs, ensuring they benefit from all of HEDCO's program offerings and financial resources. This will require proactive collaboration across our organization and leveraging the expertise of our team and community partners.

The Small Business Entrepreneurship Advisor educates and coaches our aspiring entrepreneurs as they build new businesses – from business planning, strategic planning, and identifying the financial management tools that meet their needs. The Small Business Entrepreneurship Advisor will also ensure clients are well-informed about their options for financing, partnering with clients as they prepare for potential lending opportunities. The Advisor will be responsible for guiding entrepreneurs through every step of their business launch, assisting them with the loan application, approval, and closing to generating growth strategies.

Our ideal candidate has strong interpersonal and analytical skills, is attentive to detail, and consistently demonstrates professionalism. She/he is energized by mentoring small business owners and has proven experience building strategic partnerships with community and economic development organizations.

Key Responsibilities

Facilitate Entrepreneurship Education and Training

- Guide entrepreneurs through the process of launching and growing their businesses
- Promote HEDCO's programs to help clients receive the individualized support they need
- Facilitate small group trainings for new business owners in areas such as finance, administration, operations, and strategic planning

Provide Ongoing Mentorship

- Provide advice and feedback on business viability
- Provide personalized counseling and coaching to our new entrepreneurs, connecting them to the networks and experts they need to launch and grow successful businesses

Connect Entrepreneurs to Business Resources

- Manage a portfolio of entrepreneurs, supporting them as they prepare for financing and business launch
- Ensure new entrepreneurs are knowledgeable about the small business funding options that meet their individual needs and are prepared to meet with loan committees

Build Community Partnerships

- Actively participate in outreach events with small business owners and new community partners
- Collaborate with partners to ensure alignment of workshops, consulting, and other educational resources

- Develop and maintain productive working relationships with our borrowers, CDFI partners, internal team members, and the community

Qualifications

A bachelor's degree is required, a master's degree in business, management, finance, economics or related field preferred.

Candidates should have at least five years of experience in entrepreneurship, finance, business development, and management review or similar fields. Candidates must also have knowledge in business financial analysis, small business management, budgeting, and strategic planning. Writing, and communication skills are essential. Public speaking experience and familiarity with Chambers of Commerce, community development and/or economic development across the state of Connecticut is highly desirable, although not required.

This is a full-time position based in Hartford, Connecticut. It will require some travel across the state and flexible work hours.

To Be Considered

Please send a resume and cover letter to Kim Hawkins, COO & Vice President at kimh@hedcoinc.com describing your fit for the position by Friday March 15th, 2019. Materials will be reviewed on a rolling basis.