



# The Entrepreneurship Community Partnership

A NetWork Kansas Entrepreneurship Program

**A** NetWork Kansas E-Community has made a commitment to cultivating an entrepreneurial environment by identifying and developing resources to help local entrepreneurs start or grow businesses. Selected communities partner with NetWork Kansas to establish a locally-administered loan fund to assist entrepreneurs with capital, to increase connectivity to resources available to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses, to initiate activities to generate entrepreneurial development, and to participate in a statewide partnership with other E-Communities.

The E-Community Partnership has grown from six communities in 2007 to thirty-nine in 2013. During the first six years of the E-Community partnership, more than **\$7.5 million** have been raised, generating an estimated **\$41.9 million\*** of investment in rural businesses across Kansas.

“Network Kansas has developed a structure to enable a community to engage in the business community. Communities can be creative with this structure: **if your community has vision this program can spur business investment, youth engagement, and outside investment in E-Communities.**”

Scott Sproul, Norton City/County Economic Development Director  
(Norton County E-Community est. 2012)

## Goals of the E-Community Partnership

- ★ Grow a flourishing, sustainable entrepreneurial environment supportive of business startups and expansions
- ★ Engage and/or develop entrepreneurial resources to meet identified community and business needs
- ★ Create a revolving loan fund to provide matching loans to entrepreneurs and small businesses with local control of decisions and terms

## E-Community Partnership Benefits

- ★ Creation of a locally-administered revolving loan fund through the allocation of tax credits
- ★ Priority access to NetWork Kansas opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, networking, funding, high-powered technical assistance for second-stage businesses, and more
- ★ Opportunity to attend a statewide conference to participate in peer-to-peer discussion with other E-Communities focused on developing strong entrepreneurial environments
- ★ Materials and support for fostering the E-Community, including marketing materials, training opportunities, leadership team guidance, and more
- ★ Opportunity to engage with entrepreneurship experts for consulting including KECI representatives and the national economic gardening team

\*Based on current run rates as of 12/31/2012

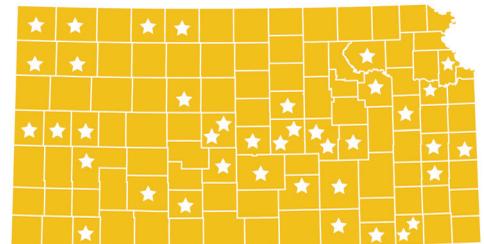
## E-Communities: A Story of Success

- ★ 116 businesses funded
- ★ \$2.5 million in loans/grants awarded to businesses
- ★ \$16.5 million leveraged in additional funding as part of E-Community funding packages
- ★ \$19 million in total funding to Kansas businesses as part of the E-Community partnership
- ★ These businesses created 316 net\* full-time jobs and 308 net part-time jobs

\*From program inception in 2007 through December 31, 2012

\*\*Net=new jobs or jobs retained due to funding

## E-Communities Across Kansas



Anderson County	Hoisington	Pottawatomie County
Augusta	Humboldt	Rawlins County
Bird City	Inman	Reno County
Chase County	Kiowa County	Salina
Chautauqua County	Leavenworth	Scott County
Coffeyville	Liberal	Sherman County
Cowley County	Linn County	Stafford County
Douglas County	Marion	Sterling/Alden
Ellis County	McPherson County	Thomas County
Finney County	Montgomery County	Wabaunsee County
Ford County	Norton County	Wichita*
Great Bend	Osage County	Wichita County
Greeley County	Phillips County	
Hillsboro		

\*Qualifying low-income areas of Wichita



## E-Community Loan Fund Benefits & Terms

E-Communities create a revolving loan fund by awarding tax credits to donors. A local financial review board approves all loan applications and determines loan terms, making the E-Community program a funding tool with the potential to make a dramatic impact on local access to capital.

- ★ Gap financing assistance provides the last amount of capital a business needs to start or grow
- ★ E-Community loan funds often mitigate risk for other public and private lenders
- ★ Local decision-making power
- ★ Funds can match up to 150% of the partner contribution
- ★ Up to \$45,000 available per project
- ★ Repaid loan funds return to the E-Community loan account to be utilized again

## To Apply to Become an E-Community

Approximately 4-6 new E-Communities are selected each year to partner with NetWork Kansas. After developing a leadership team that will create the community's entrepreneurial vision and provide direction, the group is invited to engage with NetWork Kansas staff through informational, collaborative meetings to qualify for the proposal submission process each summer. Existing E-Communities maintain their good standing by participating in entrepreneurship development activities and are eligible to re-apply for additional funds and other special opportunities.

## FAQs

### How Can E-Community Loan Funds Be Used?

For-profit businesses located in the defined E-Community area are eligible to apply for an E-Community loan to use for a variety of purposes, including: startup costs, purchasing an existing business, business expansion, working capital, inventory. For more information about qualifying and non-qualifying purposes, visit [www.networkkansas.com/communities/entrepreneurship\(e\)-communities](http://www.networkkansas.com/communities/entrepreneurship(e)-communities)

### How Do the Matching Funds Work?

Businesses can receive up to 150% of the private and/or public capital supporting the project as an E-Community loan. For example, if a local revolving loan fund or bank contributes \$20,000 to a business, the business could receive up to a \$30,000 loan from the E-Community. The maximum amount the E-Community could loan per project is \$45,000.

### Who Can Apply to Become an E-Community?

A NetWork Kansas E-Community can be a partnership between a town, a cluster of towns, or an entire county. Collaborative efforts are encouraged.

**Find out more about the E-Community partnership or schedule an introductory meeting with NetWork Kansas staff by contacting:**

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 More information is available online at [www.networkkansas.com](http://www.networkkansas.com)

*NetWork Kansas was established as a component of the Kansas Economic Growth Act of 2004 to further entrepreneurship and small business growth as a priority for economic and community development in the State of Kansas. Backed by 500+ partners statewide, the NetWork Kansas service promotes an entrepreneurial environment by connecting entrepreneurs and small business owners with the expertise, educational, and economic resources they need in order to succeed. For more information about NetWork Kansas, you can find us on Facebook, Twitter, visit us on the web at [www.networkkansas.com](http://www.networkkansas.com), or call (877) 521-8600.*

