Participation Through Innovation
About Us

Multidisciplinary Research Team:
UIC has been a pioneer in both entrepreneurship and disability studies. In 1982 it was the first university to offer an undergraduate entrepreneurship course in a Marketing Department; simultaneously it was the first university to offer a PhD program Disability Studies. Today there are over 100 different academic programs specific to Disability Studies and to Social Entrepreneurship across the United States. This endeavor is the first research undertaken that blends these two distinct disciplines.

The researchers bring a unique perspective to national issues relating to social entrepreneurship and disability studies, having joined their departments from Finland and Australia. The newly formed partnership was created through a common vision of social justice in their respective fields, particularly as it relates to labor market theories and practices. The project synthesizes theoretically distinct operational business typology models with human rights literature; economic and social analysis; and institutional and contextual employment frameworks. This multidisciplinary approach to current market and social problems makes an important and relevant contribution to theory, policy and practices of social entrepreneurship in general and social entrepreneurs with a disability.

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Federal Resources

Chamber of Commerce for Persons with Disabilities
- Chamber of Commerce for Persons with Disabilities Website
- E-mail: info@disabilitychamber.org
- The Chamber of Commerce for Persons with Disabilities seeks to promote the business interests of businesses run by persons with disabilities and/or their direct caregivers (“Disability Businesses”) and to place businesses run by persons with disabilities on a level playing field with businesses run by others.

Disability.gov
- Disability.gov Website
- Disability.gov is an award-winning federal government website that provides an interactive, community-driven information network of disability-related programs, services, laws and benefits. Through the site, Americans with disabilities, their families, Veterans, educators, employers and many others are connected to thousands of resources from federal, state and local government agencies, educational institutions and non-profit organizations. New resources are added daily across 10 main subject areas – benefits, civil rights, community life, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, technology and transportation.

Disabled Businesspersons Association (DBA)
- Disabled Businesspersons Association Website
- E-mail: info@disabledbusiness.com
- Phone: (619)594-9905
- Founded in 1985, the Disabled Businesspersons Association is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to assisting enterprising individuals with disabilities maximize their potential in the business world, and work with vocational rehabilitation, government and business to encourage the participation and enhance the performance of the disabled in the workforce.

Education & Training Administration (ETA)
US Department of Labor Disability Program Website
E-mail: ETAPagemaster@dol.gov
Phone: (877)872-5627
TTY: (877)889-5627
US Department of Labor. The Disabilities Program develops and implements workforce disability policy and program initiatives to address structural, programmatic, and systemic employment challenges of persons with disabilities and multiple challenges to employment (including persons who are older, disabled veterans, homeless, ex-offenders, receiving TANF benefits, disconnected and disadvantaged, etc.). It provides technical assistance to the public workforce system on how to expand the capacity of the workforce system to serve persons with disabilities. ETA administers the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) to improve the education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes of persons with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed, and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
- JAN Entrepreneurship Website
- E-mail: jan@askjan.org
- Phone: (800)526-7234
- TTY: (877)781-9403
- The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace
- Resources:
  - JAN's Entrepreneurship Series: Developing Your Business Plan
  - JAN's Entrepreneurship Series: Starting a Non-Profit Organization
  - JAN's Entrepreneurship Series: Resources to Assist Veterans to Start a Small Business
  - JAN's Fact Sheet Series: Self-Employment for Artists with Disabilities

National Association for the Self Employed (NASE)
- National Association for the Self-Employed Website
- Phone: (800)649-6273
- The NASE was founded in 1981 to provide day-to-day support, including direct access to experts, benefits, and consolidated buying power that traditionally had been
available only to large corporations. Today the NASE represents hundreds of thousands of entrepreneurs and micro-businesses, and is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan association of its kind in the United States.

Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
- ODEP Employment & Entrepreneurship Website
- E-mail: odep@dol.gov
- Phone: (866)633-7365
- Fosters, promotes, and develops the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; tries to improve working conditions; advances opportunities for profitable employment; and assures work-related benefits and rights.

Small Business Association (SBA)
- SBA People With Disabilities Website
- E-mail: answerdesk@sba.gov
- Phone: (800)827-5722
- Since its founding on July 30, 1953, the U.S. Small Business Administration has delivered millions of loans, loan guarantees, contracts, counseling sessions and other forms of assistance to small businesses.

Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA)
- Social Enterprise Alliance Website
- E-mail: support@se-alliance.org
- Phone: (202)758-0194
- The Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA) is the leading membership organization in North America for social enterprises, service providers, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and venture capitalists that is actively building the field of social enterprise through networking opportunities, educational forums, strategic partnerships, and impact legislation. Our members are passionate about changing their communities, and we are passionate about providing them with the tools they need to continue their good work.

START-UP USA
- START-UP USA Website
- Phone: (804)828-1851
- TTY: (804)828-2494
Self-Employment Technical Assistance, Resources, & Training (START-UP / USA) is a partnership between Virginia Commonwealth University and Griffin-Hammis and Associates, LLC. START-UP / USA is funded by a cooperative agreement #E-9-4-6-011 from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). Congress designated the cooperative agreement funds to ODEP for the further development of self-employment as an employment outcome for individuals with disabilities. ODEP's mission is to provide national leadership by developing and influencing disability-related employment policy and practice affecting the employment of people with disabilities. START-UP / USA provides technical assistance and disseminates resources nationally to individuals interested in pursuing self-employment.

Resources:
- Illinois VR Policies
- Self-Employment Q and A: Information on Entrepreneurship for Youth with Disabilities
- VR Self-Employment Regulations by State

US Business Leadership Network (USBLN)
- US Business Leadership Network Website
- E-mail: info@usbin.org
- Phone: (800)706-2710

The US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) is the national disability organization that serves as the collective voice of over 60 Business Leadership Network affiliates across North America, representing over 5,000 employers. The USBLN® helps build workplaces, marketplaces, and supply chains where people with disabilities are respected for their talents, while supporting the development and expansion of its BLN affiliates. The USBLN® recognizes and supports best practices in the employment and advancement of people with disabilities; the preparedness for work of youth and students with disabilities; marketing to consumers with disabilities; and contracting with vendors with disabilities through the development and certification of disability-owned businesses.

Resources:
- Certification for Disability-Owned Businesses

US Department of Veteran Affairs
- US Department of VA- Veteran Entrepreneur Portal Website
- Phone: (800)826-1000
Provides veterans the world-class benefits and services they have earned - and does so by adhering to the highest standards of compassion, commitment, excellence, professionalism, integrity, accountability, and stewardship.

Work Incentive Planning & Assistance (WIPA) Projects
- Social Security Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Website
- E-mail: support@chooseworkttw.net
- Phone: (866)968-7842
- TTY: (866)833-2967
- The goal of the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program is to better enable SSA’s beneficiaries with disabilities to make informed choices about work.
- Resources:
  - WIPA Brochure for Illinois
  - SSA: The Work Site
  - About the Ticket-to-Work Program

State Resources

IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
- IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Website
- DCEO is designed to provide easy, fast access to the information you need. From our business-oriented domain name, to a user-friendly design that helps you navigate quickly, we’ve worked to make illinoisbiz.biz your one-stop tool for economic development information.
- Departments:
  - Illinois Bureau of Workforce Development
    - Illinois Bureau of Workforce Development Website
    - The Office of Employment & Training is committed to encouraging statewide economic development by cultivating a well-trained workforce. To accomplish this goal, the Office identifies youth, adults and dislocated workers who are eligible for assistance under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), assesses their employability skills and provides training as appropriate for identified sectors of growing employment demand. Ideally, this will lead to the placement of these individuals in self-sufficient employment. The Office also provides follow-up services leading to employment retention in high-wage and high-skilled jobs.
These services are provided statewide while maintaining focus on the economic needs of each region.

- Illinois Entrepreneurship Centers (EC)
  - Illinois Entrepreneurship Centers Website
  - Entrepreneurship Centers are an integral component to the Illini Entrepreneurship Network. They are targeted towards companies with high growth potential and provide the following services: access to capital; product licensing; access to technology; and access to networks.

- Illinois Small Business Development Centers (SBDC's)
  - Illinois Small Business Development Centers Website
  - Illinois SBDC's located throughout the state provide information, confidential business guidance, training and other resources to early stage and existing small businesses. They are targeted towards new and existing small businesses and provide the following services: one-on-one counseling; assistance with management, business plans and marketing; financial services; training.

- Illinois Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC)
  - Illinois Procurement Technical Assistance Centers Website
  - Illinois PTAC's provide one-on-one counseling, technical information, marketing assistance and training to existing businesses that are interested in selling their products and/or services to local, state, or federal government agencies. They are targeted towards companies interested in selling products to government agencies and provide the following services: one-on-one counseling; technical information; marketing assistance; training.

- Illinois International Trade Centers (ITC)
  - Illinois International Trade Centers Website
  - Illinois ITC's provide information, counseling and training to existing, new to-export companies interested in pursuing international trade opportunities. They are targeted to new-to-export companies interested in pursuing international trade opportunities and provide the following services: information; counseling; training.

- Illinois Manufacturing Extension Centers (MEC)
  - Illinois Manufacturing Extension Centers Website
  - The Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Illinois' mission is to continually improve the competitiveness of small and mid-sized Illinois manufacturers. The centers and affiliated support organizations help manufacturers with productivity, technology modernization, and enhanced business practices. They are targeted to manufacturing
companies and offer the following services: assessment to improve performance; benchmarking; project manager to ensure satisfaction.

- Illinois Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP)
  - Illinois Small Business Environmental Assistance Program Website
  - Located in the nonregulatory agency, this program provides free confidential information and services to help small businesses understand their environmental obligations. They are targeted to businesses required to comply with state and federal air pollution regulations and provide the following services: workshops, on-site visits, Clean Air Clips, consultant directory, Environmental Resources.

Illinois Finance Authority (IFA)
- Illinois Finance Authority Website
- Phone: (800)717-6066
- TTY: (800)526-0844
- The mission of the IFA is to foster economic development to public and private institutions that create and retain jobs and improve the quality of life in Illinois by providing access to capital. The IFA is a self-financed, state authority principally engaged in issuing taxable and tax-exempt bonds, making loans, and investing capital for businesses, non-profit corporations, and local government units statewide.

Local Resources

Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center
- Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center Website
- E-mail: info@chicagolandrec.org
- CEC is an affiliate of the Chicagoland chamber of commerce. Works with high-growth potential entrepreneurs in the early growth period of their startup. Provides advisory services and networking to assist with financing and sales.

Chicago Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD)
- Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Website
- Phone: (312)744-7050
- TTY: (312)744-4964
Participation Through Innovation

- The Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) works to meet the diverse needs of the more than 600,000 individuals with disabilities who live and work in Chicago. MOPD’s goal is to make Chicago the most accessible city in the nation.
- Resource:
  - Business Enterprises Owned by People with Disabilities (BEPD) Initiative

Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce
- Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce Website
- Phone: (708)957-6950
- The Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce is a premier business leadership organization providing cutting edge value added services to all members of the regional business community. Benefits of membership in the Chamber include great opportunities to network and create an awareness of your business name, product or service. By getting involved in Chamber activities and committees you will have the opportunity to meet and work with area business leaders on issues impacting not only your business, but also the region.

DisabilityWorks
- DisabilityWorks Website
- Disabilityworks, an initiative from the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the City of Chicago, is designed to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities throughout Illinois.

HDA’s Self-Employment Resources Network (SERN)
- SERN Website
- E-mail: sernonline@gmail.com
- Phone: (773)427-5200
- The Self Employment Resources Network began as a Task Force on Self Employment. Its current members represent state agencies, private vocational rehabilitation agencies, small businesses, parents, and advocacy groups with people having any disability. SERN is looking to expand its membership. SERN seeks to locate self-employment resources, translate those resources into user-friendly terms, facilitate networking opportunities, and to identify best practice procedures for interested persons with disabilities wanting to be self-employed.
Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Chicago

- SCORE Chicago Website
- Phone: (312)353-7724
- SCORE Chicago provides free business counseling, management consulting, and low cost workshops. We advise on how to get a business loan and offer other resources like templates for a business plan. SCORE counselors can help the entrepreneur start a business or a small business owner grow and prosper. The organization has more than 25 locations in the Chicago area.
Part 2: Business Development

Start-Up Resources

Abilities Fund

- [The Abilities Fund Website](#)
- E-mail: info@abilitiesfund.org
- Phone: (888)222-8943

The Abilities Fund offers entrepreneurs the opportunity to prepare for business by providing access to a suite of business development tools specifically designed for individuals with disabilities.

Resources:
- Choosing a Business Idea
- Feasibility: Test Your Idea
- The 5 C's: Building Blocks of Business Planning
- Staying Afloat During Start-Up
- Home Based Business
- Social Security Benefits & Self-Employment
- Legal Business Structures
- Pricing Strategies
- Networking & Mentors
- 6 Steps To Staffing Your Firm
- Microenterprise and Microlending

DisabilityBiz

- [DisabilityBiz Website](#)
- Phone: (949)413-1555

DisabilityBiz.org is a subsidiary of Seed Business Network, a nonprofit organization that provides resources to people with disabilities who are interested in starting up their own business and also counseling for continuing businesses. Information in their Business Resource Center pertains to the following areas: business start-up, business planning, business finances, business networking, and business marketing.

Resources:
- Business Resource Center
- Disability Resource Center
Disability.gov

- Disability.gov Website
- Disability.gov is an award-winning federal government website that provides an interactive, community-driven information network of disability-related programs, services, laws and benefits. Through the site, Americans with disabilities, their families, Veterans, educators, employers and many others are connected to thousands of resources from federal, state and local government agencies, educational institutions and non-profit organizations. New resources are added daily across 10 main subject areas – benefits, civil rights, community life, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, technology and transportation.

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- DisabilityWorks Website
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IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

- IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Website
- DCEO is designed to provide easy, fast access to the information you need. From our business-oriented domain name, to a user-friendly design that helps you navigate quickly, we've worked to make illinoisbiz.biz your one-stop tool for economic development information.
- Resources:
  - Step by Step Guide to Starting a Business in Illinois
  - Starting Your Business in Illinois Handbook

Institute For Justice: Clinic on Entrepreneurship

- Clinic on Entrepreneurship Website
- E-mail: general@ij.org
- Phone: (703)682-9320
- The Institute for Justice Clinic on Entrepreneurship at the University of Chicago Law School advocates for economic liberty, so that entrepreneurs from Chicago’s inner city can chart their own courses in life, build up neighborhoods, and create jobs. We provide free legal assistance, access to resources, and advocacy for entrepreneurs in the Chicago area.
iSE: Growing the Social Economy

- **iSE Website**
- **E-mail:** info@i-se.co.uk
- iSE is both strategic and operational, meaning we undertake extensive research into the needs and nature of the sector whilst also providing capacity building services, business support and sector-specific training. We work with a whole range of organisations from grass-roots community groups to national charities, community cafes, organisations working in health and social care, public sector spin-outs, cooperatives, women’s groups and individuals starting out.
- **Resources:**
  - Starting a Social Enterprise

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

- **JAN Entrepreneurship Website**
- **E-mail:** jan@askjan.org
- **Phone:** (800)526-7234
- **TTY:** (877)781-9403
- The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.
- **Resources:**
  - JAN's Entrepreneurship Series: Developing Your Business Plan
  - JAN's Entrepreneurship Series: Starting a Non-Profit Organization
  - JAN's Entrepreneurship Series: Resources to Assist Veterans to Start a Small Business
  - JAN's Fact Sheet Series: Self-Employment for Artists with Disabilities

Worksupport.com: VCU RTC

- **Work Support Website**
- **E-mail:** RRTC@vcu.edu
- Established in 1983, VCU-RRTC serves as a center of national excellence, providing resources for professionals, individuals with disabilities, and their representatives. For over 27 years, we have been at the forefront of the supported employment and workplace supports movements. Our team of nationally and internationally renowned
researchers is committed to developing and advancing evidence-based practices to increase the hiring and retention for individuals with disabilities.

Consulting Services

Foresight Sustainable Business Alliance
- Foresight Sustainable Business Alliance Website
- Phone: (773)271-1990
- The networking group provides support to members interested in business startup to be environmentally respectful, and socially responsible.

Griffin Hammis Assoc.
- Griffin Hammis Assoc. Website
- E-mail: cgriffin@girffinhammis.com
- GHA specializes in community rehabilitation improvement, job creation and job site training, employer development, Social Security benefits analysis and work incentives, self-employment feasibility and refinement, management-leadership mentoring, and civic entrepreneurship. Our customers are wide ranging and include businesses, community rehabilitation programs, state and local governments, universities, individuals, and others from the public and private sectors.
- Resources:
  - Frequently Asked Questions About Self Employment
  - Choose, Launch, Grow: Should a severely-disabled person be self employed?

Open Doors Organization
- Open Doors Organization Consulting Website
- Phone: (773)388-8839
- The Open Doors Organization (ODO) was founded in 2000 for the purpose of creating a society in which all persons with disabilities have the same consumer opportunities as those without. We aspire to teach businesses how to succeed in the disability makeit, while simultaneously empowering the disability community.

Legal Assistance

Illinois Pro Bono
• Illinois Pro Bono Website
• Illinois Legal Aid Online’s vision is to extend its role as an information resource to become a system connector: linking potential lower income users to the available online tools and court processes, volunteers to pro bono opportunities and training, legal aid advocates to best practices and to clients.

Legal Assistance Foundation
• Legal Assistance Foundation Website
• Phone: (312)341-1070
• For over 40 years, the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago (LAF) has provided free civil legal assistance to tens of thousands of low-income and elderly individuals in Chicago and suburban Cook County.

Financial Resources

Disability.gov
• Disability.gov Website
• Disability.gov is an award-winning federal government website that provides an interactive, community-driven information network of disability-related programs, services, laws and benefits. Through the site, Americans with disabilities, their families, Veterans, educators, employers and many others are connected to thousands of resources from federal, state and local government agencies, educational institutions and non-profit organizations. New resources are added daily across 10 main subject areas – benefits, civil rights, community life, education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, technology and transportation.

IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
• IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Website
• DCEO is designed to provide easy, fast access to the information you need. From our business-oriented domain name, to a user-friendly design that helps you navigate quickly, we've worked to make illinoisbiz.biz your one-stop tool for economic development information.

ODEP: Business Sense
• ODEP: Business Sense Website
• Created as a resource for small business owners and entrepreneurs, Business Sense provides an inside track for all employers on the latest information related to disability employment. Subscribe today to receive your monthly measure of Business Sense.
• Resource:
  o Creating Opportunities Through Entrepreneurship

Van City: Advice and Business Loans for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (ABLED)
• VanCity: ABLED Website
• Phone: (604)709-6965
• TDD: (604)871-5408
• The ABLED program provides loans to eligible people with disabilities to encourage opportunities for self-employment among those illustrating the capacity to operate their own businesses. VanCity works with entrepreneurs to find business planning resources, identify training needs and resources, locate other business counselling during the loan duration. VanCity also provides adaptive technology resources to facilitate the application process.

Financing & Consulting Services

Abilities Fund
• The Abilities Fund Website
• E-mail: info@abilitiesfund.org
• Phone: (888)222-8943
• The Abilities Fund offers entrepreneurs the opportunity to prepare for business by providing access to a suite of business development tools specifically designed for individuals with disabilities.
• Resources:
  o Choosing a Business Idea
  o Feasibility: Test Your Idea
  o The 5 C’s: Building Blocks of Business Planning
  o Staying Afloat During Start-Up
  o Home Based Business
  o Social Security Benefits & Self-Employment
  o Legal Business Structures
  o Pricing Strategies
  o Networking & Mentors
  o 6 Steps To Staffing Your Firm
  o Microenterprise and Microlending
**Accion Chicago**
- Accion Chicago Website
- E-mail: info@accionchicago.org
- Phone: (312)275-3000
- ACCION Chicago is an alternative lending organization dedicated to providing credit and other business services to small business owners who do not have access to traditional sources of financing. By encouraging the economic self-reliance of microentrepreneurs throughout the Chicagoland area, ACCION Chicago strives to help businesses and communities grow.
- Resource:
  - Accion Small Business Resources

**DCEO: Minority, Veteran, Women, And Disabled Participation Loan Program (MVWD/PLP)**
- DCEO: Illinois Participation Loan Program Website
- The MVWD/PLP program is a variation of the conventional PLP, in that DCEO may subordinate the loans through participating lending institutions, but the MVWD/PLP program can provide Illinois small businesses that are 51 percent owned and managed by persons who are minorities, veterans, women, or disabled, with loans up to $100,000 or 50% of the total project.

**Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago**
- Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago Website
- E-mail: info@industrialcouncil.com
- Phone: (312)421-3941
- ICNC helps companies access both public and private resources, including: finding and securing grant or loan money, accessing government services, and troubleshooting.
- Resources:
  - Starting Your Business in Illinois Handbook
  - Business Management Guides & Tools

**Asset Development**

**Assets for Independence Resource Center**
• Assets for Independence Resource Center Website
• E-mail: info@idaresources.org
• Phone: (866)778-6037
• Assets for Independence (AFI), which is administered through the Office of Community Services (OCS), enables community-based nonprofits and government agencies to implement and demonstrate an assets-based approach for giving low-income families a hand up out of poverty. AFI projects help participants save earned income in special-purpose, matched savings accounts called Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).
• Resource:
  o Understanding Asset Development for Individuals with Disabilities

Illinois Asset Building Group
• Illinois Asset Building Group Website
• E-mail: lmullany@heartlandalliance.org
• Phone: (312)870-4939
• The Illinois Asset Building Group (IABG) is a diverse statewide coalition invested in building the stability and strength of Illinois communities through increased asset ownership and asset protection. We believe that every person deserves the opportunity to save and build wealth across their life-time. Through our advocacy efforts, we are committed to addressing the growing racial wealth gap and creating safe opportunities for Illinois families to save for their future and the future of their children.

National Disability Institute
• National Disability Institute: Inclusive Credit Unions Website
• Phone: (202)296-2040
• Our strength is our expertise and proven experience in creative problem-solving and a focus on solutions that produce tangible impact for individuals, families, communities, states, and government. Through the power of collaboration with federal agencies, major corporations, financial institutions and nonprofit organizations, NDI has brought new attention to the possibilities of economic empowerment that has changed thinking and behavior at an individual and systems level.

Technical Assistance Project: Asset Development Training Series
• Disability Program Navigator Website
• The Asset Development series was designed to help Disability Program Navigators (DPNs) increase awareness of the many available Asset Development strategies and resources that exist to promote and support increased self-sufficiency and financial stability among individuals with low-incomes, including individuals with disabilities. This series was created by Miranda Kennedy, Laura Gleneck and DJ Diamond of the DPN Technical Assistance team, NDI Consulting, Inc., and Kevin Nickerson, DPN, NY State. The first ten (10) 30-Second Trainings in the Asset Development series are geared towards individuals with disabilities and provide information on basic financial literacy. Trainings eleven (11) through twenty (20) of the series provide more advanced information on resources that can be shared with One-Stop Career Center Staff, Direct Service Providers and other Disability Partners, as well as individuals with disabilities.

**Accessible Tax Information & Incentives**

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Website
- E-mail: maria.flores@eeoc.gov
- Phone: (414)297-3594
- The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. It is also illegal to discriminate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit.
- Resource:

**Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**

- Internal Revenue Service Website
- Phone: (800)829-4933
- TDD: (800)829-4059
- Resources:
  - Small Business Forms and Publications
  - Self-Employed Individuals Tax Center
  - Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center
In incubators

**Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago**

- Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago Website
- E-mail: info@industrialcouncil.com
- Phone: (312)421-3941
- ICNC helps companies access both public and private resources, including: finding and securing grant or loan money, accessing government services, and troubleshooting.
- Resources:
  - Starting Your Business in Illinois Handbook
  - Business Management Guides & Tools

**SIUC Small Business Incubator Program**

- SIUC Small Business Incubator Website
- E-mail: harfst@siu.edu
- (618)536-4451
- The SIU Carbondale Small Business Incubator Program’s mission is to accelerate the start-up and expansion of small businesses in southern Illinois. The program is here to provide the guidance and consulting necessary to make sure those start-up and expanding firms have the tools necessary to succeed.

**Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)**

**Business Center of Decatur**

- Business Center of Decatur Website
- Phone: (217)423-2832
- The Business Center of Decatur is a business incubator, in which a number of new and growing businesses operate with affordable rents, shared office services and access to professional, technical and financial assistance during early, critical stages of development.

**Gaebler Ventures**

- Gaebler Ventures Website
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- Summary of organization and the services that they offer for entrepreneurs. Including any information specific to people with disabilities.
- Resources:
  - Start A Business
  - Buy A Business
  - Business Plan
  - Running A Business
  - Entrepreneurial Finance

**Illinois Small Business Development Centers**
- Illinois Small Business Development Centers
- E-mail: ienconnect@mailmw.custhelp.com
- Phone: (800)252-2923
- TTY: (800)875-6055
- Illinois Small Business Development Centers located throughout the state provide information, confidential business guidance, training and other resources to early stage and existing small businesses.
- Resources:
  - Starting Your Business In Illinois Handbook
  - Association of Small Business Development Centers

**Jewish Vocational Services: Duman Program**
- Duman Entrepreneurship Center Website
- We know that by helping small businesses launch, expand and improve their profitability, we’re also helping them create jobs in the Chicago area. And that helps everyone. That’s why we offer support and educational training programs for all entrepreneurs, including veterans, ex-offenders and even home-based businesses.
- Resources:
  - Business Plan
  - Loan Application

**Turner Center for Entrepreneurship**
- Turner Center for Entrepreneurship Website
- Phone: (309)677-4321
- The Turner Center for Entrepreneurship is a not-for-profit program located at Bradley University. The centers which make up the Turner Center for Entrepreneurship provide business counseling, technical assistance, training, and educational activities for
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individuals interested in owning their own businesses. We not only work with individuals in the community, but also with students hoping to start their own businesses. We also help existing entrepreneurs and businesses who want to expand or take advantage of new opportunities and technologies, are interested in marketing their products and services internationally, or are seeking to commercialize new products and technologies.

- Resource:
  - Illinois Small Business Development Center

Women’s Business Development Center

- Women's Business Development Center Website
- E-mail: wbdc@wbdc.org
- Phone: (312)853-3477
- TDD: (800)526-0844
- The mission of the Women’s Business Development Center (WBDC) is to provide services and programs that support and accelerate women’s business ownership and strengthen their impact on the economy.
- Resources:

Technologies

Abilities Fund

- The Abilities Fund Website
- E-mail: info@abilitiesfund.org
- Phone: (888)222-8943
- The Abilities Fund offers entrepreneurs the opportunity to prepare for business by providing access to a suite of business development tools specifically designed for individuals with disabilities.
- Resource:
  - Loans for Assistive Technology

iLoan Program Loans for Assistive Technology

- iLoan Program Website
- E-mail: wparbs@iltech.org
- Phone: (217)522-7985
- TTY: (217)522-9966
The iLoan Program provides loans to Illinois residents with disabilities and/or their families or other authorized representatives on behalf of the person with a disability to purchase assistive technology devices and services and limited home modifications. The iLoan Program also provides loans to Illinois residents with disabilities, 18 years and older to purchase equipment, services, and limited home modifications for self-employment and telework. The interest rate for an iLoan is variable from 5.5 percent to 7.5 percent based on the term of the loan. This rate is fixed for the term of the loan. Loan amounts range from $500 to $25,000. Services specifically for veterans with disabilities.

IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
- IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Website
- DCEO is designed to provide easy, fast access to the information you need. From our business-oriented domain name, to a user-friendly design that helps you navigate quickly, we've worked to make illinoisbiz.biz your one-stop tool for economic development information.
- Resources:
  - Incubators/Research Parks
  - Illinois University Research Centers
  - Technology Grants & Programs

VA Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority (ATLFA)
- Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority
- E-mail: atlfa@atlfa.org
- Phone: (804)662-9000
- The Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority offers creative and flexible services to open doors for individuals who might not otherwise be eligible for borrowing.

Social Networking

ASHOKA Innovators for the Public: Social Entrepreneur group
- Ashoka Innovators for the Public Website
- E-mail: info@ashoka.org
- Phone: (703)527-8300
- Networking association that provides financial and entrepreneurial assistance to its members. The main resource they provide is a fellowship opportunity that provides
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fellows a living stipend for three years to allow individuals to focus on entrepreneurial growth (for established entrepreneurs). Also has pay-for membership network.

BPlans.com: Up and Running Blog
- Global Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Article

Chicago Entrepreneur Meetup Group
- Chicago Entrepreneur Meetup Group Website
- The Chicago Entrepreneur Meetup group seeks to provide all entrepreneurs with the tools and services, training and education, resources, and a positive social network to share ideas, explore opportunities, and provide the support they need along their journey to personal and entrepreneurial success.

DisabilityBiz Membership Website
- DisabilityBiz.org Membership Website
- Phone: (949)413-1555
- DisabilityBiz.org is a subsidiary of Seed Business Network, a nonprofit organization that provides resources to people with disabilities who are interested in starting up their own business and also counseling for continuing businesses. Information in their Business Resource Center pertains to the following areas: business start-up, business planning, business finances, business networking, and business marketing.

Global Entrepreneurship Week
- Global Entrepreneurship Week Website
- E-mail: cgrieco@unleashingideas.org
- Phone: (202)536-4448
- Global Entrepreneurship Week is the world’s largest celebration of the innovators and job creators who launch startups that bring ideas to life, drive economic growth and expand human welfare.

Global Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (GNED)
- Global Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Website
- Phone: (623)773-2774
• The Global Network for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (GNED) is committed to the endeavor of becoming the foremost global resource to which business owners and entrepreneurs as well as potential business owners with disability can turn at any stage of their business journey.

JJ's List
• JJ's List Website
• E-mail: info@jjslist.com
• Phone: (847)869-0000
• JJ's List is a website where people with people disabilities can receive support and rate disabled operated business and services. The list was founded based on a commitment to help improve the long-term economic and social futures of people with all disabilities.

Job Accommodation Network YouTube Channel
• JAN YouTube Channel Website
• E-mail: jan@askjan.org
• Phone: (800)526-7234
• TTY: (877)781-9403
• The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.

Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship
• Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship Website
• The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship's mission is to provide programs that inspire young people from low-income communities to stay in school, to recognize business opportunities and to plan for successful futures.

Skoll Foundation: Social Edge
• Skoll Foundation: Social Edge Website
Social Edge is the global online community where social entrepreneurs and other practitioners of the social benefit sector connect to network, learn, inspire and share resources.

Schwab Foundation for Social Impact
- Schwab Foundation for Social Impact Website
- E-mail: info@schwabfound.org
- International Networking and financial support foundation to connect social entrepreneurs, and provide support for community development. Network of social entrepreneurs that are provided mentorship and financial support.
- Resource:
  - Online Application

YoungEntrepreneur.com
- YoungEntrepreneur.com Website
- Young entrepreneurs are everywhere. Between the makers, tinkerers, inventors and creative types just coming up today, entrepreneurship may be an aspiration, but it’s not a hobby. Maybe you’re not Mark Zuckerberg-famous yet, but you’ll get there. And we’ll be there to help. We’re committed to chronicling the ups and downs of young entrepreneurs and startup founders, and serving as a resource for solid information and insights. Founded in 1999, YoungEntrepreneur.com has become one of the largest online forum communities for entrepreneurs worldwide.

Social Value Development

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute, Northwestern University
- Asset-Based Community Development Institute Website
- E-mail: abcd@northwestern.edu
- Phone: (847)491-8711
- The Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) is at the center of a large and growing movement that considers local assets as the primary building blocks of sustainable community development. Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future.
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- Resources:

**Center for Nonprofit Success**
- Center for Nonprofit Success Website
- Phone: (202)469-6773
- The Center for Nonprofit Success is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide the training, knowledge and resources to help nonprofit organizations succeed. We believe that the most important asset in an organization is its people, and our programs and services are designed with your most important asset in mind.

**Network Impact**
- Network Impact Website
- Phone: (415)495-4230
- Net Impact is a leading nonprofit that empowers a new generation to use their careers to drive transformational change in the workplace and the world. At the heart of our community are over 40,000 student and professional leaders from over 300 volunteer-led chapters across the globe working for a sustainable future. Together, we make a net impact that transforms our lives, our organizations, and the world.
- Resources:
  - Chicago Net Impact Chapter
  - Net Impact: Learning & Resources

**Seminars & Online Courses**

**Abilities Fund Exploring Self-Employment Workshop**
- Exploring Self-Employment Workshop Website
- Exploring Self Employment (ESE) workshops provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the information they need in order to decide if self employment is the right choice for them. Participants explore critical issues related to business planning in an interactive group setting. The workshop provides tools and information to help participants learn about testing business ideas, analyzing markets, finding customers, examining personal and business finances, and business planning. Services provided by NVR, Social Security benefits planning, and access to capital for Nebraskans are also discussed.

**Start-Up USA: Training**
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- **Start-Up USA:** Training Website
- **START-UP / USA** provides technical assistance and disseminates resources nationally to individuals interested in pursuing self-employment. This includes live web cast series with successful entrepreneurs who share their secrets for success.
- **Resources:**
  - Webcasts
  - Online Seminars

**Syracuse Entrepreneurial Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities**

- **Syracuse Entrepreneurial Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities** Website
- **E-mail:** ebvinfo@syr.edu
- **Phone:** (315)443-6007
- **The Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV)** offers cutting edge, experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management to post-9/11 veterans with disabilities resulting from their service to our country. The EBV is designed to open the door to business ownership for our veterans by 1) developing your skills in the many steps and activities associated with launching and growing a small business, and by 2) helping you leverage programs and services for veterans and people with disabilities in a way that furthers your entrepreneurial dreams.

**Training and Technical Assistance for Providers Online Seminars**

- **T-TAP** Website
- **Phone:** (804)828-1851
- **TTY:** (804)828-2494
- **T-TAP** seeks to evolve their programs to provide integrated employment outcomes (i.e., non section 14(c) employment) in non-stereotypical jobs based on customized employment strategies and individual choice; and to increase wages of people with disabilities who are currently working at less than minimum wage through the use of customized employment strategies and individual choice.
- **Resources:**
  - Self-Employment as a Customized Employment Outcome
  - Using the Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
  - Self-Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (1)
  - Self-Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (2)
  - Self-Employment
WorkSupport.com: VCU RTC

- WorkSupport Website
- E-mail: RRTC@vcu.edu
- This online course will cover the basics and frequently asked questions that individuals with disabilities may have when thinking about starting a business. The course content is appropriate for individuals with disabilities as well as those who support them including family members, community rehabilitation providers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, employment specialists, and others.

- Resources:
  - Link to Course Info @ Worksupport.com
  - Link to Course Info @ Start-Up USA
Part 3: Grants & Funding Opportunities

Grant Opportunities

Abilities Fund: Nebraska Self-Employment Services
- Nebraska Self Employment Services Website
- Phone: (877)518-0802
- Nebraska Self Employment Services (NSES) provides technical assistance and ongoing business support services exclusively to entrepreneurs with disabilities in Nebraska.

BusinessUSA
- BusinessUSA Access Financing Website
- Business USA is a product of collective thoughts and inputs from the following agencies who have pledged their commitment to making this site a one-stop shop for everything related to business in the USA.

IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
- IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Website
- DCEO is designed to provide easy, fast access to the information you need. From our business-oriented domain name, to a user-friendly design that helps you navigate quickly, we've worked to make illinoisbiz.biz your one-stop tool for economic development information.
- Resources:
  - Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Grant Opportunities
  - Notice of Intent to Award WIA Grants

The Rural Illinois Customized Employment Sustainability Project (RICES)
- RICES Website
- Collaboration between Health & Disability Advocates' Self-Employment Resources Network (SERN) and Griffin-Hammis Associates. Summary of organization and the services that they offer for entrepreneurs. Including any information specific to people with disabilities.
Awards & Fellowships

ASHOKA Innovators for the Public: Social Entrepreneur group

- Ashoka Innovators for the Public Website
- E-mail: info@ashoka.org
- Phone: (703)527-8300
- Networking association that provides financial and entrepreneurial assistance to its members. The main resource they provide is a fellowship opportunity that provides fellows a living stipend for three years to allow individuals to focus on entrepreneurial growth (for established entrepreneurs). Also has pay-for membership network.

Chicago Innovation Awards

- Chicago Innovation Awards Website
- Phone: (312)988-1516
- Chicago Innovation Awards seeks to make Chicago a recognized hub of innovation by igniting a new narrative for our region, strengthening its economic future and building the spirit of innovation throughout the community.

Judd Jacobson Memorial Award

- Judd Jacobson Memorial Award Website
- E-mail: juddjacobsonaward@couragcenter.org
- Established in 1992, the Judd Jacobson Memorial Award recognizes pursuit or achievement of a business entrepreneurial endeavor by a person with a physical disability or sensory impairment. The award recipient receives a special plaque, a $5,000 cash award to advance their entrepreneurial business endeavor and is honored at a special event at Courage Center.

Open Doors: UIC Fellowship & Intern Program

- Open Doors Organization Website
- Phone: (773)388-8839
- Open Doors Organization has established fellowships and intern programs with the University of Illinois-Chicago whereby graduate students from the University’s Department of Disability and Human Development receive a stipend from ODO through the University for tuition, books, and housing in return for their work at Open Doors.
Schwab Foundation for Social Impact

- Schwab Foundation for Social Impact Website
- E-mail: info@schwabfound.org
- International Networking and financial support foundation to connect social entrepreneurs, and provide support for community development. Network of social entrepreneurs that are provided mentorship and financial support.
- Resource:
  - Online Application
Part 4: Additional Information & Resources

Community Colleges & Leadership

Coleman Entrepreneurship Center at DePaul University
- Coleman Entrepreneurship Website
- Phone: (312)362-8000
- DePaul’s Coleman Entrepreneurship Center is a partner to the university’s nationally ranked academic entrepreneurship program in the Driehaus College of Business. The Center serves as an entrepreneurial hub for DePaul students, faculty and alumni, as well as the broader Chicago business community.

National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship
- National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship Website
- Phone: (413)306-3131
- National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE) is a non-profit organization for educators, entrepreneurs, and distinguished business development professionals to provide quality programs and services in entrepreneurship education and serve as advocates for “entrepreneurship movement.”