



Proposal for Creative Business Consulting Program

Submitted to: City of Durango

Submitted by: Local NEWS Network

Date: February 13, 2025

Budget: \$10,000

Overview

This program provides LTAC grant recipients with tailored business support to ensure they maximize their grant funding while building a sustainable creative enterprise. Through interactive workshops, peer networking, and one-on-one consulting, we will empower participants with the skills and knowledge to thrive as creative entrepreneurs.

Beyond business education, this program is designed to foster a support network of peers in the community, encouraging collaboration, resource-sharing, and long-term connections among local artists and creative organizations.

Scope of Work & Program Structure

This program will be conducted twice per year, corresponding with each round of LTAC grants:

- Spring Cohort: March – June 2025
- Fall Cohort: July – October 2025

Program Timeline

To ensure efficiency and maximize value for grantees, we have designed a structured yet flexible approach:

1. Kickoff Meeting & Online Survey for Participant Self-Assessment

- Attend LTAC's kickoff event for each grant cycle (March & July) to introduce the program, explain learning tracks, and set expectations.
- Provide an overview of the online survey and Learning Tracks.
- Send each grantee an online survey to assess their business knowledge, goals, and comfort level. This survey will include a self-assessment to help determine the appropriate Learning Track to attend.

2. Learning Tracks (two tracks per cohort, 2 hours per session)

- Two in-person training workshops per cohort to provide practical skills and peer engagement.
 - Track 1: Business Basics - Introduction to Business & Business Formation
 - Track 2: Growth & Strategic Expansion – Marketing, Partnering and Collaboration
- Each track will include a component on Financial Stewardship of Grant Funds. *We would like to meet with you prior to program kickoff to better understand your expectations on grantees financial responsibilities.*

3. Peer Group Meetings (2 per cohort, 1.5 hours per session)

- Two virtual peer networking sessions per cohort (March – June and July – October).
- Each 1.5 hour session will focus on a specific topic relevant to creative entrepreneurs, such as:
 - Engaging local community resources to expand visibility and funding opportunities.



- Building a strong volunteer team to enhance capacity and event success.
- Leveraging AI for marketing, operations, and creative processes.
- Developing a strong donor list and fostering long-term supporter relationships.
- Sessions will include breakout discussions to encourage collaboration, idea-sharing, and community-building.

4. One-on-One Consulting (Between April – November throughout both Cohorts)

- Grantees who complete at least 1 Learning Track and attend a Peer Group session will qualify for a 1-hour individual consulting session.
- Sessions will be customized to address grant-specific business challenges (e.g., financial tracking, marketing, legal structure).
- If additional expertise is required, we will coordinate with local business or nonprofit resources to fill that expertise.

Deliverables

- Program Plan & Schedule: LNN will provide a detailed plan and schedule 1 week prior to each cohort kick off.
- All program resources will be made available via a micro website that we will create specifically for the program and will make accessible to all past, current and future cohorts.
 - Program Presentations and Resources for each Learning Track
 - Recording of Peer Group Meetings
- Participation Tracking and Reporting will be provided for each round of cohorts on May 15 and Nov 30 or upon request.

Task	Estimated Hours Program Development & Preparation	Estimate Hours with Grantees
Program Planning, Deliverables & Reporting	12	
Learning Tracks - 2 hours per workshop (in-person)	4	8
Peer Group Sessions – 1.5 hours each; 2 per cohort (virtual)	3	6
One-on-One Consulting (Apr – Nov) – 1 hour each per grantee	10	20
Total Hours: Pre, Post hours, 2 Cohort Programs	30	34

LNN will invoice \$6000 after the completion of the 1st workshop or May 15, 2025 and \$4000 after the 2nd workshop or November 30, 2025, whichever comes first.

This proposal ensures an efficient, high-impact consulting program that meets the needs of LTAC grantees while fostering long-term collaboration within the creative community.

We look forward to the opportunity to bring this vision to life.

Laurie Sigillito
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Local NEWS Network



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About LNN & Our Expertise

Local NEWS Network (LNN) is a Tech Media and Marketing Company with a strong focus on supporting small businesses and non-profits in rural America. Our expertise in web services, marketing, and advertising uniquely positions us to develop and execute a Creative Business Consulting Program that meets the needs of LTAC grantees in Durango.

Laurie Sigillito - After a successful career in technology and management, Laurie opened the Durango FASTSIGNS® in 2009. In 2013, she purchased Inside Durango TV, which has grown into Local NEWS Network now reaching 5 communities. She was the Colorado State Competition winner in 2018 for her business plan to launch a visual communications company. Laurie was also recognized as Entrepreneur of the Year by the Durango Chamber of Commerce in 2020 and awarded FASTSIGNS Franchisee of the Year in 2015.

Nathan Morris - After working in Austin and Silicon Valley, Nathan co-founded Web Services Management in Durango in 2010, a boutique company specializing in website support, SEO strategy, and digital marketing solutions for small businesses. With a strong entrepreneurial background, he has developed content management systems (CMS) and scalable, cloud-based tools to help businesses optimize their online presence. Nathan's expertise in web technologies and marketing strategies ensures businesses have the digital infrastructure needed to grow and thrive.