

APPLICATION PERIOD: February 3 – March 18, 2026

The Women's Business Development Council's Ignite Grant Program is designed to help Connecticut women-owned businesses grow! Grants between \$2,500 and \$10,000 will be awarded for clearly defined projects that will have a measurable impact on the business, its growth and profitability. The grant funds cannot be used towards operating expenses, payroll, or real estate improvements.

Eligibility

Businesses must:

- be at least 51% woman-owned
- have been established for at least two years
- have a record of annual sales/revenue in the last 12 months greater than \$25,000 and less than \$2,000,000
- be headquartered in CT, registered in the state of CT, and owned by a CT resident
- be owned by a woman at least 18 years old
- be in good standing with the CT Department of Revenue Services (DRS)
- have an established business checking account
- utilize a formal, digital bookkeeping/financial system (e.g., QuickBooks)
- be a for-profit business
- have invested at least \$2,500 into the business in the last 12 months (unless business is located in a distressed municipality)

The following businesses are not eligible:

Child care businesses (visit <https://ctwbdc.org/childcare-business/funding> for info on funding opportunities for child care businesses); businesses or individuals that have previously received an EMG or WBDC municipal grant; medical marijuana; liquor stores and alcohol distributors; adult businesses such as strip clubs; vape retailers; tobacco shops and smoking lounges; businesses having to do with gambling; gun stores and ranges; cash advance, check cashing, or pawn shops; bail bonds; collection agencies or services; and auction or bankruptcy or fire or "lost-our-lease" or "going-out-of-business" or similar sale; current WBDC vendors or contractors (former vendors are eligible a year after working with WBDC)

Information Sessions

For more information on the application process

Tuesday, February 3	12:00 – 1:00 PM
Wednesday, February 11	2:30 – 3:30 PM
Wednesday, February 18	5:30 – 6:30 PM
Thursday, February 26	12:00 – 1:00 PM
Wednesday, March 4	5:00 – 6:00 PM
Thursday, March 12	1:00 – 2:00 PM

How to Calculate Projections

For more information on how to create projections for your application

Monday, February 23	5:30 – 6:30 PM
Thursday, March 5	5:00 – 6:00 PM
Tuesday, March 10	1:00 – 2:00 PM

Register for these sessions at ctwbdc.org/class-listings

What Previous Recipients are Saying

"The Ignite Grant allowed us to upgrade our bottling equipment, dramatically improving efficiency across our production process. We can now produce more in less time, reduce operational stress, and bring products to market faster. This increased capacity also enables us to offer a wider variety of products, driving stronger sales and growth."

"I am incredibly grateful for the Ignite Grant, which provided vital funding for another reformer and three chairs for my Pilates studio enabling us to accommodate one more client during our busiest times, reducing waitlists and enhancing client satisfaction. We have seen a significant increase in revenue. This grant has truly made a transformative impact on our studio but also prompted me to reflect deeply on my business and future goals!"