



99 King's Highway
Dover, DE 19901
(302) 739 - 4271
business@delaware.gov

Media Contact

Andrea Wojcik
Division of Small Business
O: (302) 672-6802
C: (302) 554-0060
andrea.wojcik@delaware.gov

For Immediate Release

EDGE Competition Reopens Sept. 1 to benefit Early-Stage Delaware Small Businesses; Informational Webinar Aug. 30

DOVER, Del. (Aug. 29, 2023) – On the heels of a well-attended ceremony to announce winners from the Spring 2023 competition, the Fall 2023 Encouraging Development, Growth and Expansion (EDGE) application period opens **Friday Sept. 1**. The Delaware Division of Small Business (DSB) will be accepting EDGE grant applications from Sept. 1 through Sept. 29, from promising early-stage businesses throughout Delaware.

In advance of the competition's reopening, DSB is hosting an EDGE informational webinar on **Wed. Aug. 30 at 10 a.m.** Interested persons can register through de.gov/edge. For anyone unable to participate, a recording will be placed on the web page later the same day. Additionally, DSB is hosting a companion webinar on how to use its free business analytics tool, SizeUP Delaware, to strengthen EDGE applications on **Wed. Sept. 6 at 1 p.m.** Registration for this webinar is also available on de.gov/edge. The web page is also where EDGE applications will be made available, starting Sept. 1.

Businesses that are less than seven years old and employ no more than 10 employees are eligible to apply for an EDGE grant.

“We’re proud to be able to offer this opportunity to early-stage small businesses,” said **DSB Director Regina Mitchell**. “It’s a way to help level the playing field for those that don’t have access to the same level of capital that larger businesses do.”

EDGE grants are awarded through a competitive selection process. Five STEM-based companies can receive up to \$100,000 for eligible expenses while five Entrepreneur Class (non-STEM) businesses can receive up to \$50,000. This round, DSB is hoping to see a greater number of STEM applications coming from Kent and Sussex counties.

EDGE is a matching grant program. DSB matches a winning business’s investment on a 3-to-1 basis. The business can spend grant funds on expenses that help improve the company’s long-term chances of success, such as a marketing campaign to help acquire more customers or purchasing a needed piece of equipment that can increase production capacity.

Applications for the competition round will be accepted until **Sept. 29 at 4 p.m.** After several rounds of internal scoring, finalists will be invited to pitch their grant proposals to a panel of expert judges at the end of November. Winners will be notified in early December.

“Small businesses are the backbone of Delaware’s economy” said **Secretary of State Jeff Bullock**. “The EDGE grants will enable small businesses that might otherwise fail, to have a stronger chance at succeeding.”

Since EDGE launched in 2019, \$5.0 million has been awarded to 80 promising Delaware small businesses in industries ranging from renewable energy technology to fitness centers to restaurants. This will be the eighth round of the program since its launch.

Businesses should visit de.gov/edge for eligibility requirements, to download the grant application and to see frequently asked questions. Visit our website at business.delaware.gov to connect with a Regional Business Manager for application assistance.

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The Delaware Division of Small Business is a service-focused state agency, within the Delaware Department of State, that is committed to helping businesses start and grow in Delaware. Our Regional Business Managers can help you navigate government processes, connect with partner organizations that offer resources to small businesses and identify opportunities to access capital.

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