



## SSBCI Southeast Manufacturing Cohort RFP FAQ

February 2, 2024

### **SSBCI Program Questions**

- 1. What is UMA's role in SSBCI nationwide?**
  - UMA has secured funding from private foundations to help better connect makers and manufacturers with SSBCI dollars being funneled through the state SSBCI programs. Our funding enables us to facilitate cohorts in multiple regions of the country. This program resulted from our analysis of the program and associated [policy brief](#).
- 2. How do small businesses access SSBCI funding in their respective state?**
  - Each state has a unique SSBCI program that they have developed and can be found [here](#). As part of that, each state has approved lenders or technical assistance providers overseen by a [state SSBCI program manager](#). To find approved lenders or technical assistance providers in your state, look up the SSBCI program site in your particular state.
- 3. What are some examples of businesses that could benefit from SSBCI funds?**
  - A furniture maker looking to add an employee so they can scale up production
  - A salsa company looking to expand operations out of a shared kitchen where they initially got started
  - A candle & personal care product company hoping to add new equipment that will help them increase their volume and add new wholesale accounts
  - A metal fabrication business looking to transfer ownership to its employees
- 4. Will UMA and this cohort be able to help specific manufacturers in our region?**
  - Whenever possible, we are happy to problem solve and identify resources or best practices that can benefit specific businesses in your network. Though in general, we will support you to create replicable tools or programs that address the needs of not just one manufacturer, but other similar businesses in your area as well.
- 5. How will this interact with the upcoming SBOP technical assistance program and funding?**
  - You can find more info on the [SBOP here](#). We are confident this cohort work will be complementary to any SBOP funding secured in the same geographies.

### **Eligibility and Applicant Questions**

- 6. I'm located in a rural area, should I still apply?**
  - Yes, please still apply. There will be no preference given to urban geographic areas, so please do apply regardless of whether you would consider your geographic focus rural, urban, exurban, suburban, etc.
- 7. What if I'm not located in the Southeast but still want to be involved? Will there be other opportunities to participate?**



- Please stay in touch by filling out a [contact form here](#). Approximately every 6 months we will launch a new cohort and you may be eligible for the next round.
- 8. What should I do if the SSBCI State Program Manager is not responsive or interested in applying?**
- We encourage you to still submit an application even if you have been unsuccessful in reaching or engaging your state SSBCI program manager.
- 9. What happens if multiple groups apply from our state or similar geography?**
- Once we receive all applications, we will alert you if any other submissions overlap with your geographic focus so you will have an opportunity to connect with one another and decide if you want to join forces or maintain separate proposals.
- 10. It was mentioned that there will be 1-3 applications selected from the region for the program: Does that mean that each state can have up to three (3) applications accepted and three cohorts? Or does the “region” consist of a group of states so 1-3 accepted applications can span across multiple states?**
- We anticipate selecting 1-3 applications in the southeast region for this first cohort. Each application is expected to have multiple team members involved (govt, ngo, lender, etc). And each application is free to span state lines for their geographic focus. It is not out of the question for us to select two applications with different footprints within the same state, but it is fairly unlikely.
- 11. Is there any funding available to the selected participants for their role with the cohort?**
- Participation in the cohort is voluntary. We have funding to supplement travel expenses for an in-person gathering for selected cohort members.
  - Each regional cohort will receive up to \$50,000 worth of in-kind technical assistance during the course of year 1
  - Each team selected for the cohort will have the opportunity to receive a participation stipend of up to \$10,000 at the end of year 1 that can be distributed to any NGO partners involved in the project.
  - If cost is still a barrier to participation, we encourage you to submit an application with that note and we will work with our funders to see what we can do.