About the Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence

The Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence (IEE) has been serving family and closely-held businesses in the Western Pennsylvania region for more than 20 years. The IEE provides educational programs, specialized resources and personalized support to entrepreneurs at every state of the business lifecycle -- from startup to growth to transition. The IEE’s mission is to be the innovative leader of economic renewal and growth serving enterprising people and businesses in the region.

The IEE helps Western Pennsylvania businesses grow thanks to the generous support of:

Wilke Dinsmore

Community Bank

Contact Us
Rhonda Carson Leach, Director
Urban & Community Entrepreneurship Program
Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence
Innovation Institute | University of Pittsburgh
3520 Forbes Ave. | Pittsburgh, PA 15261
P: 412-648-1544 • F: 412-648-1636
entrepreneur.pitt.edu

Candidates for the program typically have been in business for at least three years, generate more than $300,000 in annual revenue and have several employees.

Sessions cover topics such as:
• Tapping into sources of capital
• Managing company finances
• Employing marketing strategies
• Optimizing supply chain
• Breaking into new markets
• Managing human resources
BUILDING COMMUNITY BUSINESSES

Thriving communities are built on the restaurants, shops, professional services and other local businesses that make neighborhoods enjoyable places to live, work and play. Urban and community business owners, however, often face special business challenges.

The Urban & Community Entrepreneurship Program

To help business owners meet the special challenges of growing urban and community-based businesses, the University of Pittsburgh’s Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence developed the Urban & Community Entrepreneurship Program. The program provides business owners with specialized resources that include:
- Educational workshops
- Consulting services
- Collaborative partnerships
- The Community Power to Prosper educational program

EDUCATE

Take the first steps

The Urban & Community Entrepreneurship Program offers specialized educational workshops that address the questions and challenges of entrepreneurs in the early stages of developing urban and community-based businesses. Workshops include:

Make it Happen

The Make it Happen (MIH) introductory workshop provides an overview of starting a small business. Whether an idea is still being developed or a push of motivation is needed, Make it Happen is designed to help determine if this is the right time to start a business.

The First Step: Mechanics of Starting a Small Business

Seminars focus on giving entrepreneurs tools and resources to help them take the first steps of starting their business, such as performing market research and choosing a business structure.

The Second Step: Creating a Business Plan

Programs help entrepreneurs develop a business plan that will serve as a guide as they secure funding and execute their ideas.

CONSULT

Custom business strategies

Entrepreneurial experts provide business owners with one-on-one consulting to help them address particular business issues. Specifically, consultants may help:
- Generate strategic business plans
- Perform market research
- Create marketing materials
- Develop marketing plans
- Conduct website analyses

CONNECT

Join the entrepreneurial community

The Urban & Community Entrepreneurship Program partners with community organizations to identify local business owners who can benefit from and/or help fellow entrepreneurs in the program.