



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: _____

Program Title: _____

Program Category: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____ Website: _____

Email: _____

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____ 

2022 VaCo Achievement Awards Submission
Chesterfield County, Virginia – Community & Economic Development
CARES: Small Business Workshops

Executive Summary: When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, small businesses were severely impacted, and had few resources to draw upon. Chesterfield County, Virginia’s Economic Development created a CARES grant-funded series of workshops to help small businesses navigate these uncertain times while maintaining service excellence.

The Problem: Small businesses are a critical component of Chesterfield County’s economy and an important source of job creation, innovation, and growth. In March 2020, the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors approved Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to support small businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19. A support grant was marketed to county businesses, but the funds remained significantly underutilized because small business owners had difficulty understanding the grant requirements and providing the documentation required to obtain grant funds.

Program Description: The CARES: Small Business Workshops program was designed to educate small business owners and provide tools and resources to help them adapt to the challenges of operating successfully during the pandemic. The goal was to empower businesses to pivot during disruption and grow their companies. The program included:

- Nine custom videos presented by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) focusing on three core topics:
 - Business planning
 - Marketing
 - Financial management
- One-On-One Consultation – Participants who completed the video series qualified for free consultations with the SMEs who recorded the custom videos, providing business specific guidance
- Supplementary Online Courses

Vendors who were SMEs on the core business topics were invited to submit proposals outlining how they would deliver presentations on the subject(s), as well as fees for the workshop recording

and 100 hours of business consultation for small businesses qualifying for consultation. Following a review of the proposals and interviews, presenters were selected and prepaid for their services by the end of December 2020, thus meeting the initial deadline for CARES Act funding. Presenters understood that the CARES: Small Business Workshops program would be completed by the end of 2021. Due to time constraints, a videographer was hired to record the presentations, which also provided consistency and continuity to the look and feel of the videos. By the end of February 2021, all nine videos were complete. Titles included:

Core Topic	Title
Planning	The 5 Drivers™
Planning	Rise Above the Rest to Be the Best
Marketing	Reach Customers with Your Website
Marketing	Marketing Strategies and Tools for Retailers
Marketing	Marketing Strategies and Tools for Restaurants
Marketing	Marketing Strategies and Tools for B2B Marketers
Finance	Financial Management for Your Small Business
Finance	How to Apply for Funding
Finance	QuickBooks Online

Economic Development partnered with Chesterfield County's Learning & Performance Center (LPC) to leverage the county's Learning Management System (LMS) to host the custom videos and online courses for small business owners. This solution was ideal because it leveraged existing technology and provided small businesses the flexibility of completing the workshops around their busy business schedules. LPC developed a custom solution in its LMS that included:

- A secure, access-controlled custom page to allow small business owners to create an account and access content.
- A curriculum of the nine custom video courses that tracked completions to identify small businesses qualifying for free consultations with SMEs
- Playlists of the supplementary online courses
- User Guide and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Because online course libraries were already included in the county's LMS, a wide variety of supplementary online courses were available at no additional charge. The following courses were

selected to provide small businesses with the opportunity to further develop their business acumen:

Planning
Small Business Management Series
Writing a Professional Business Plan: The Do's & Don'ts
Customer Service Basics: Listening to Your Customers
Managing Change in Tough Times
Marketing
Internet Marketing 101
Marketing Communications
Digital Marketing
Preparing for Online Sales Demos and Calls
Finance
QuickBooks Pro 2020
Business Loan Basics
Basic Business Finance
Understanding Financial Information
COVID-19 Preparation & Management
Preparing for an Epidemic
Safe Re-Entry During COVID-19 for Employees
Managing Stress and Anxiety During COVID-19
Chesterfield: COVID-19 Training

Branded as part of Economic Development's "My Biz Grows Here", the CARES: Small Business Workshops program successfully launched the first week in April 2021. Economic Development marketed the program for several weeks to increase awareness. Business owners who registered for the program were sent an email providing them with instructions for accessing the system. Small businesses then created accounts and began participating in the program.

Program Costs: Net Savings: \$209,940^

The program was primarily financed using CARES funds. Program expenditures are listed in the tables below. The most significant expenditure was the cost for SMEs to provide qualifying small businesses with one-on-one consultation services. The consultation services were highly marketed to incentivize businesses to not only participate but complete the program.

Additionally, administrative costs were reduced by leveraging LPC's existing LMS and internal staffing for technical design and development. Had all administrative costs been contracted at the average market rate of \$150/hour, costs would have been ~\$156,750, thus saving the program \$106,500 (\$156,750-\$50,250). Overall, this program had a net savings of \$209,940.

Administrative Costs:

Program Expenditures	Costs
Marketing & Administrative Oversight*	\$ 42,250
LMS Development & Administration**	\$ 8,000
Total	\$50,250

* Average of 845 hours at \$50/hour (13 hours per week for 65 weeks)

** Average of 200 hours at \$40/hour

CARES Funded Costs:

Program Expenditures	Costs
Presenter Course Recordings	\$ 16,090
Videography Services	\$ 25,100
Consultation Fees	\$ 62,250
Total	\$ 103,440

^Net Savings computations:

\$ 103,440 – costs saved by using CARES funding

106,500 – costs saved by using internal resources for administrative services vs. contractors

\$ 209,940

Program Results:

Over the course of three months:

- 110 business owners requested and received access to the workshops
- 70 registered for the program
- 32 completed the entire program, thus qualifying for free consultation services

Workshop participation resulted in:

- Video Workshops
 - 320 hours of learning activity
- Supplementary Online Courses
 - 112 hours of learning activity

In summary, the CARES: Small Business Workshops program successfully offered small businesses an opportunity to receive critically important education and support during the unprecedented times of COVID-19. Overall program evaluation comments were extremely positive and small business owners expressed appreciation for the course material and the ability to participate in the program at their leisure.

Many business owners requested future access to the workshop courses after the program concluded on June 30, 2021. In mid-July 2021, course recordings were uploaded to www.MyBizGrowsHere.com, a Chesterfield Economic Development business website. With continued marketing, course videos have been downloaded 921 times.

The program has also benefited many businesses beyond the borders of Chesterfield County. The county received numerous emails and letters expressing thanks and appreciation for the support. Additionally, consultation services that were not fully utilized were donated to non-profit business support organizations that serve Chesterfield County businesses.

The following are a few comments received from small businesses that participated in the program:

“Even though we have been in business for a number of years, this information has been extremely relevant and a needed refresher in some cases and enlightening in others.”

“The content was valuable! I was so thankful that the content actually covered the impact of the pandemic too.”

“5 Stars: The courses were organized and easily accessible on the portal. The presenters did a great job with the information provided visually and verbally in simplifying it for the beginning learner to understand.”

“I thought I had built a sufficient foundation. This workshop showed me many deficient areas, I still have a lot of work to do. I am however headed in the right direction, which is encouraging.”

Program Overview: Chesterfield County, Virginia’s CARES: Small Business Workshops initiative was designed to educate small business owners and provide tools and resources to help them adapt to the challenges of operating successfully during the pandemic. By creating a readily accessible series of online courses and consulting services, it provided a unique and effective solution during times of uncertainty. By providing one-on-one consultation, the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) became an additional resource for business owners, providing individualized guidance to sustain and grow their companies. And, lastly, by uploading the video courses to the website www.MyBizGrowsHere.com, these innovative resources are accessible to small business owners moving forward. In conclusion, the CARES: Small Business Workshops program was a timely solution that kept expenses low, while meeting the business-critical needs of the small businesses the county serves.

Program Visuals: Registration Response
My Biz Grows Here
LMS: Small Business Experience



PROGRAM VISUALS

REGISTRATION RESPONSE



Thank you for your interest in our CARES: Small Business Workshop series. We hope you find this a great opportunity to learn and position your business for long-term success.

These workshops are designed to provide you with tools and resources to help you pivot your business model and adapt to the changes and challenges of operating in this current pandemic. They will also give you a starting point to prepare for future opportunities.

Several videos, presented by knowledgeable topic experts, will provide you with a wide variety of business skills and resources to help you not only survive this COVID-19 business interruption, but grow your business going forward. In addition to the workshop videos, you will have access to additional business courses on topics such as marketing, finances, and business planning.

Under CARES Act funding guidelines, licensed Chesterfield County businesses that complete all required workshops are eligible to receive one-on-one consultation with subject matter specialists, at no cost. Consultants will work directly with you to finetune your skills, which will assist you with growing your business.

Below, find your personal link to the learning portal for this workshop series. This link is assigned to your program-registered email address. Please **DO NOT SHARE THE LINK**, because it can result in you being locked out of the learning portal.

[CARES: Small Business Workshops](#)

Before accessing the learning portal and for the best experience, please make sure you are using the most up-to-date version of your device's browser. If you encounter difficulties during this workshop series at any stage, refer to the attached Frequently Asked Questions document for the possible remedy.

You will have several weeks to complete the required courses. We encourage you to complete them as soon as possible to access the free consultation services, which will be available to eligible and licensed Chesterfield County businesses. Our staff will be notified when you complete the required courses and will contact you regarding your eligibility and to help schedule your consultation appointments.

If you have any questions or need assistance logging into the portal, please contact us via email at cares@mybizgrowshere.com and be sure to **include your contact information**.

Regards,

Chesterfield Economic Development Staff





CARES: Small Business Workshops Program Launch

Chesterfield Economic Development, at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, is pleased to announce CARES: Small Business Workshops, which is funded with Chesterfield County CARES Act funds.

The program consists of several videos, presented by well-known and knowledgeable topic experts, that will provide you with a wide variety of business skills and resources to help you not only survive this COVID-19 business interruption, but grow your business going forward.

In addition to the workshop videos, you will have access to a playlist of supplemental business courses. This program is valued at more than \$1,000, but it is being offered to you at **no cost**.

The program will be accessible via an online learning platform through Chesterfield's Learning and Performance Center. You will access the content through a personalized link to the learning portal.

MY BIZ GROWS HERE





LMS SMALL BUSINESS EXPERIENCE



- **Small Business Workshops** - consists of a series of video courses. Chesterfield small businesses may qualify for 1:1 consultation upon completion of 7 courses and a final program evaluation.



- **Business Skills Playlists** – optional courses that will help you advance your skills.



The following video playlist is not required to complete this program. However, these videos are available to you as supplemental and valuable small business information. Check out a few of them that interest you, and they may also assist you in growing your business.



- **Small Business Workshops** – To access, click the “Click Here” button, then click “Open Curriculum”.