

SEED PROJECT IDEA

Conduct a Green & Resilient Business Initiative

The following is a project idea for inspiration—ultimately, the Seed Project you choose should be based on your community's climate resilience priorities. Remember that you will have up to \$50,000 to spend on the Seed Project and about 9 to 10 months to accomplish it, so you may need to carve out a piece of the following action to fit those guidelines, and then work together on a plan for financing the next phase. This project sheet provides a suggestion for which tasks might be completed within the scope of a Seed Project; however, communities may have different starting points or capacity to advance projects and should decide which scope is achievable for them.

Project Description:

This project aims to build resilience and promote decarbonization within the business community through education, planning, technical and financial steps to make business operations more resilient and sustainable. For this action, consider a regional approach and involve regional business networks. Partnering across communities can support efficiencies of scale while also facilitating a more holistic view of business activities (e.g., employees and customers may come from the broader region even though a business itself is located within a specific community). Creating an online presence with identified resources, processes, and materials (e.g., training materials, plan templates, best practices) will help this project serve as a model for other communities in the future.

High-level List of Potential Project Tasks:

1. **Assess vulnerability:** Use the GEAR and community mapping process to identify districts, industries, or certain sectors of the workforce that will experience the greatest adverse impacts from climate change. Use this to guide the focus of your project and project team formation.
2. **Form a project team:** Informed by step 1, partner with local Chambers of Commerce, Downtown or Main Streets organizations, Economic Development Committees, organizations connected to Minority, Women, Veteran-owned, or Disadvantaged business enterprises (see, for example, [Black Owned Brockton](#) or [La Colmena Community Farm](#)), business leaders and workforce members. The project team should set objectives for the initiative, help with community engagement, and guide the implementation of specific activities.
3. **Engage resilient business champions and other vendors:** Identify and train one or more paid resilient business champions who can facilitate communication within the business community, especially those businesses or sectors likely to experience the greatest adverse impacts from climate change. Equipped with local knowledge and the cultural competency

to work with business owners and workers across cultures, the champions will also research and facilitate access to resources that close identified gaps and provide education on topics like adapting work practices in hazardous conditions. Champions should have an understanding of how climate impacts businesses, be personable, able to assist businesses with filling out paper or online forms and applications for funding, and able to organize events such as trainings or networking.

4. **Establish an online presence:** Establish an online presence (e.g. webpage, social media) for information and resource sharing.
5. **Hold discussions on climate projections and preparedness:** Educate the local business community on best available information on local climate projections and impacts utilizing the GEAR tool, [ResilientMA map viewer](#), [MA Climate Change Assessment](#), and materials from the MVP 2.0 program. Invite discussion on gaps in preparedness (both for disaster events and gradual impacts to day-to-day operations) and resource needs. Potential methods include: workshops, videos, digital surveys, breakfast/lunch & learn events. Consider repeating the program in multiple locations, times of day, or modalities to maximize participation from businesses and workforce members on different schedules.
6. **Disseminate resources:** Assemble and disseminate resources based on community needs. This may include, but should not be limited to, [business emergency plan templates](#), [industry-specific resilience planning guides](#), sources of technical assistance and funding opportunities for resilience (e.g., flood or heat mitigation) and [energy efficiency](#), and guidance on adapting work practices to protect workers in a changing climate (e.g. preventing heat stress for outdoor workers). Resilient business champions(s) will identify partners and resources that address locally identified needs and help businesses navigate these resources.

Seed Project ends – Subsequent tasks likely to be completed in future project phases

7. **Optional or additional activities**, that may occur in future project phases, may include:
 - a. Facilitating a workforce development program that builds skills within the local workforce to meet future needs, such as installing and maintaining green infrastructure or developing skills related to clean energy jobs.
 - b. Providing training to workforce members and businesses on adapting operations and protecting workers against climate extremes such as extreme heat.
8. **Measure outcomes:** Depending on the specific activities implemented, establish and track certain metrics to measure progress. This step can assist with program evaluation and may provide useful data on program reach and effectiveness if additional funding is sought. Metrics may include: number of businesses engaged; number of workforce members trained; number of businesses who apply for and receive grant funding, technical assistance, or similar resources; amount of grant funding won by businesses; or the number of businesses that adapt work practices for resilience and/or sustainability.
9. **Sustain the program:** Identify opportunities to build long-term capacity to maintain resilient business liaisons. Local business organizations may be able to serve as administrative and fiscal hosts. The municipality and project team can collaborate on sustaining funding through municipal funds, grants, dues or registration fees, and other revenue generating activities (festivals, fundraisers, etc.).