

Cherokee Nation Micro Enterprise Opportunity Loan Fund Information:

The Cherokee Nation Micro Enterprise Opportunity Loan Fund Program is designed to assist low to moderate income individuals overcome the barriers normally associated with the start up or expansion of micro-enterprise business development. This program will offer hands-on support services to all clients, including entrepreneurial training, business support technology (the use of software, computers, technical assistance, etc.) as well as any social support services such as childcare, transportation, etc. that may be necessary to ensure the clients success.

The following business qualifications include five standards of which an applicant must meet at least three to qualify for funding:

- 1) Credit worthiness
- 2) Written business plan with positive cash flow (all applicants must meet this requirement)
- 3) Collateral
- 4) Equity contribution
- 5) Experience and/or training

Eligible applicants for funding will be low to moderate income American Indian entrepreneurs or commercial businesses with the capability of successfully operating a business, but who cannot obtain funds from conventional sources due to lack of credit experience, minimum size standards, inadequate collateral or other reasons. Special emphasis will be given to individuals who reside within the targeted areas with a greater low income population and higher unemployment and poverty rates.

Eligible applicants must also meet the following criteria:

- 1) Reside and base their micro enterprise within the targeted area.
- 2) Be eighteen (18) years and older.
- 3) Have low to moderate income level as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. (Income guidelines attached)
- 4) Agree to employ low to moderate income individuals within the communities.
- 5) Have developed a very basic business plan detailing the establishment, stabilization, or expansion of their micro-enterprise.
- 6) Have completed the entrepreneurial training program and/or have adequate business operation experience.

Cherokee Nation will provide the following services for all applicants in order to increase long-term business success:

Financial Services:

Loans shall be made to American Indians to improve economic conditions in low income communities. Loans will provide qualifying applicants with opportunities to create/retain employment in targeted communities; fulfill unmet needs in communities, and increase household income through micro enterprise development. Loans shall establish, stabilize, or expand micro enterprises located in the targeted communities.

Loan information:

Loan amounts: Minimum loan amount will be \$100 and the maximum loan amount shall not exceed \$25,000.00.

Interest rates: Interest rates shall be set at New York Prime as listed on the approval date of the loan and will be fixed for the life of the loan.

Fees: Fees associated with securing the Cherokee Nation's security interest in collateral may be financed with the loan but will be collected in cash from the client at closing when possible.

Payments: Payments will be scheduled for repayment at the earliest possible date consistent with the purpose for which the loan is made. Loan terms will not exceed 7 years for loans under \$10,000 and 10 years for loans above \$10,000.00.

Support services:

Technical assistance will be offered to all American Indians residing in the targeted area. Entrepreneurial training (business plan development) or adequate experience is required of each applicant prior to access to financial services. Continuing support services include cash flow management, financial literacy skills, interpersonal relationship development and technological resources. Technological resources include access to a Business Resource Center, complete with computer usage, internet access, printing and marketing equipment, and technical assistance. Social support services will also be offered to entrepreneurs as determined necessary by Community services. These services may include transportation, childcare, or any other social support which may aid the entrepreneur in achieving success.

Thank you for your recent request for information on the Cherokee Nation Micro Enterprise Opportunity Loan fund program. We are very happy to be able to offer this unique program to you the Entrepreneur. In this packet you will find basic information on our loan program and a listing of eligibility requirements. The first step in this process is to begin writing your business plan. We realize that this is an often overwhelming task and wish to assist you in any way that we can. Below you will find a calendar of training dates listing times and locations of training classes designed to give you a successful start in your business venture. These classes will walk you thru the application and business planning process as well as count towards the training requirements required of this program. If there is not a class location or time that is convenient for you please contact our office so that we can arrange to meet your unique needs. If you have any further questions please feel free to contact our office.

Lahoma Simon Financial Resource Development Officer
(918)456-0671 ext 2533 or 1-800-256-0671 ext 2533

Cherokee Nation Small Business Development Center
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Insert training schedule here!!!!!!