

Operation Bootstrap: Seeding Southern Illinois Start-ups Guidelines and Services



Southern
Illinois University
Carbondale

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**“Fostering economic self-sufficiency
through entrepreneurship”**

Funded by a grant from the Delta Regional Authority in cooperation with
Southern Illinois University Carbondale.



How Do I Qualify for Operation Bootstrap?

Operation Bootstrap participants must:

- Be a resident of one of the sixteen southern Illinois Delta counties of: Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Union, White, and Williamson.
- Meet the federal low- to moderate-income guidelines.

# of Persons In Household:	Income Requirements at or below:
1	\$37,350
2	\$42,700
3	\$48,000
4	\$53,350
5	\$57,650
6	\$61,900
7	\$66,150
8	\$70,450

- Have a desire to start or expand your own business.

I Meet the Guidelines, What Should I Do Now?

Take these steps to apply for Operation Bootstrap:

1. Complete an application form
2. Complete a personal interview
3. Provide proof of income
4. Provide proof of residence

Participants will be notified of acceptance into the program by October 1, 2009.*

Upon acceptance:

5. Reserve your seat in the program. (Program is limited to 45 participants.)

*If you do not qualify for the program, we will be happy to refer you to one of the other Illinois Entrepreneurship Network Programs for assistance.

How Will Operation Bootstrap Assist Me?

Operation Bootstrap is an eight-week training program consisting of 12 sessions that will guide participants through determining the viability of starting or expanding a business.

For those whose business plans are complete and realistic, an opportunity to compete for seed funding grants will be available upon successful graduation of the training program. Up to twenty grants of \$3,000 could be awarded for each training program.

This entrepreneurial business training program relies on:

- A proven curriculum from First Step FastTrac®
- A wide range of training topics, including
 - Writing skills
 - Market research
 - Market analysis
 - Financials
 - Case studies
- A special Facilitation Team and process, including
 - An experienced facilitator
 - Knowledgeable Certified Business Specialists
 - Small group exercises
 - Weekly take-home assignments
 - Individual meetings with Certified Business Specialists who will assist your preparation of a Feasibility Plan and more!

What Services Will Operation Bootstrap Provide?

Business Training & Certification—eight week (30 hour), First Step FastTrac® program

Ongoing Support

- Access to Certified Business Counselors
- Access to banking and small business experts
- Opportunity for seed money funding
- Opportunity to advertise your business through Operation Bootstrap newsletters and communications
- Participation in other Illinois Entrepreneurship programs and networking activities
- Access to successful regional entrepreneurs and other technical assistance providers
- Access to technology resources

What Will Operation Bootstrap Expect from Me?

A signed contract, stating your agreement to:

1. Attend all sessions. Only two excused absences are allowed; three absences result in automatic withdrawal from the program and ineligibility to apply for seed grant funding.
2. Be on time. Tuesday and Thursday sessions start promptly at 3:00 pm.
3. Participate in classroom discussions, activities and networking.
4. Complete take-home assignments on time.
5. Respect the confidentiality of other participants.
6. Plan and operate your business in an ethical manner.
7. Ensure your business is fully licensed and in compliance with all city, county, state and federal laws.
8. Provide Operation Bootstrap ongoing information about your business progress for a three-year period.

What Can I Expect from Operation Bootstrap?

1. Facilitators and counselors who want YOU to succeed!
2. A qualified Facilitator and experienced Business Counselors.
3. The First Step FastTrac® Entrepreneur's Handbook.
4. A calculator.
5. Ongoing support to identify resources and assist with referrals.
6. Unlimited praise and encouragement along the way.
7. Healthy refreshments at every session.
8. A continuous link to business counselors and networking opportunities.



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