



ANN ARBOR

SPARK

# COVID-19 RESPONSE:

## Administering Financial Support to the Greater Ann Arbor Region

Washtenaw Small Business Relief Fund

**\$1.38M** awarded to **529** companies

Michigan Small Business Relief Program

**\$1.9M** distributed to **648** businesses

Michigan Small Business Restart Grants

**\$8.1M** awarded to **446** companies

Supporting Essential Workers

**\$900k** state loans    **\$196k** a2Helps    **\$23k** a2 Neighbors

Learn about these programs and more:

[AnnArborUSA.org/Business-Recovery-Center](https://AnnArborUSA.org/Business-Recovery-Center)

## **At the onset of COVID-19, Ann Arbor SPARK quickly mobilized and served the business community by working with partners to deploy critical funding, quickly.**

### **Washtenaw Small Business Relief Fund**

Days after the initial Michigan stay-at-home order, Washtenaw County approached Ann Arbor SPARK for help establishing and administering the Washtenaw Small Business Relief Fund.

Recognizing the immense need, The Song Foundation quickly backed the fund with a \$1M and additional contributions from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Bank of Ann Arbor, the New Economy Initiative, the Ralph C. Wilson Jr Foundation, Chemical Bank, Pittsfield Charter Township, and others. Overall, we were able to award \$1.38 million in grants to 529 companies.

### **Michigan Small Business Restart Grants**

In July, the Michigan legislature allocated \$100 million from the federal CARES Act for Michigan Small Business Restart Grants. Once again, the state turned toward Ann Arbor SPARK to resume its role, working with the counties in the greater Ann Arbor region as well as leading the process for Livingston and Washtenaw counties.

With an eye on diversity, our team aggressively marketed underrepresented business owners. Overall, 65 percent of applicants were women, a person of color, or veterans and 95 percent of the total funding was distributed to those businesses. In total, Ann Arbor SPARK distributed \$8.1 million in grants throughout our six county greater Ann Arbor region with 295 companies in Washtenaw and 151 companies in Livingston County receiving funding.

### **Michigan Small Business Relief Program**

Almost simultaneously, the state launched the Michigan Small Business Relief Program and asked the state's 15-regional, private-public partnerships — including Ann Arbor SPARK — to serve as the delivery vehicle of those funds to businesses who needed it most. Ann Arbor SPARK spearheaded efforts for the six-county, greater Ann Arbor region, including Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee, Monroe, Livingston, and Washtenaw. In total, SPARK distributed \$2,354,505 to 748 businesses across the greater Ann Arbor region with 648 businesses in Washtenaw and Livingston counties receiving \$1,950,080.

### **Supporting Essential Workers**

Amidst the large-scale efforts, the thousands of applications reviewed, and the millions of dollars distributed to small businesses in need, Ann Arbor SPARK also supported two grassroots efforts — a2Helps and A2 Neighbors — designed to support essential workers during the peak of Michigan's coronavirus response.

a2Helps distributed over \$196,000 in gift cards from local businesses to more than 800 frontline healthcare workers. A2 Neighbors collected \$23,000 in donations which they translated into meals from local restaurants for 2,500 frontline healthcare workers.

### **Online Resources**

Ann Arbor SPARK developed a COVID-related business resource center on its website that included information on safe return to work guidelines and best practices, grant and funding opportunities, on-demand webinars and educational content, on-demand virtual events, and more. We also worked with partners, including the Center for Automotive Diversity, Inclusion, and Advancement, Bodman, Rehmann, and others to develop information-rich webinars for businesses. Ann Arbor SPARK extended our own SPARK.ed programming, available previously only to business accelerate clients, to the public and shifted our curriculum to address the COVID crisis.