

# PROGRAM FOR INVESTMENT IN MICROENTREPRENEURS (PRIME)

The OPENS (Optimized Path for Entrepreneurial Network Success) program, created in 2019, focuses on improving convenience, access and vital services to under-represented low income/very low income microentrepreneurs, thereby increasing new business formation rates and facilitating access to capital. The OPENS program is committed to overcoming common start-up barriers: disproportionate access to capital, lack of appropriate role models/mentors, travel challenges, lack of access to growth tools and confidence mindset challenges. The program serves qualified microentrepreneurs located throughout Northeast and East Central Indiana with an emphasis on Opportunity Zones.

## KEY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Leverage 'Trusted Connector' organizations to facilitate training and assistance for business builders
2. Provide engaging support with NIIC Navigator® online training and customized technical assistance
3. Offer access to network of technical assistance resources (including SBA-funded coaches and tools)

## COST & REQUIREMENTS

There is no cost to client microentrepreneurs — all costs have been generously funded by the PRIME Act funding of the SBA and The NIIC. Program participants will be located in Opportunity Zones across Central, Northeast and Eastern Indiana. Prospective client microentrepreneurs will be identified and supported through the established 'Trusted Connectors' partner organization network (e.g., libraries, Chambers of Commerce, social service organizations, financial institutions, Economic Service Organizations, etc.).

## SERVICES

Several experiences provided for both 'Trusted Connectors' and client entrepreneurs include:

- Trusted Connector Start-up Training (for Key Influencers)
- Remote and In-Person Intro-to-Entrepreneurship Info Sessions
- One-on-One Coaching Sessions
- Peer Group Coaching/Training Sessions
- Training Workshops
- Capital Connectivity Training and Advising



The OPENS program is funded in part through PRIME, the Program for Investment in Microentrepreneurs Act, a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. | [sba.gov](http://sba.gov)



Matching funding and resources are provided by host organization: The NIIC. | [theniic.org](http://theniic.org)

**Northeast Indiana Innovation Center** – 3201 Stellhorn Road – Fort Wayne, IN 46815  
[TheNIIC.org](http://TheNIIC.org) 260.407.6442

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