

Lessons Learned

Structuring the Program

- Leverage what is already out there ... reapplying over and over gets difficult for small businesses.
- Remember the level of sophistication of some small businesses.
- Who are you trying to help/serve? Sole proprietor vs. 2-10 employees vs. 10-25 employees vs. 25+
- There are A LOT of programs out there right now ... not many programs to help with recovery/reopening.
- For profit AND non-profit? Both? Either/or? Places of worship?
- Any strings attached? Retaining jobs? Maintain location in 12 months? Clawbacks?

The Process

- Automate as much as humanly possible.
 - Think of what you'll want to evaluate/sort by ... and program accordingly.
 - Example ... if you want to ensure wide distribution in the county ... make sure you ask for zip code or municipality in a separate field.
- Program elimination into the process ... if you only want businesses over or under a certain number of employees, then program that into the process.
- Evaluation is a people process and will require significant time/energy.
- Asking for and evaluating by minority ownership can be tricky ... seek legal counsel.
- Technical note: be careful of attachments (cross-platform, corrupt files, viruses, etc.)
- Be prepared to be inundated.

Evaluation

- Establish a clear rubric for evaluating all applications equally.
- Don't evaluate internally ... use your community partners.
- What level of risk do you want to support? Strong or struggling businesses?
- The process must be quick ... we worked around the clock and it was still too slow.