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Small Business Program Seeks Entrepreneurs

WHEELING, W.Va. – Jan. 14, 2019 – Wheeling Heritage and Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED) are now accepting applications for the third session of CO.STARTERS, a program for entrepreneurs and small business owners. The program equips entrepreneurs of all kinds with the insights, relationships and tools needed to turn business ideas into action.

Those who are interested in starting a business or want to expand a current business can apply at wheelingheritage.org/costarters. The cost to participate, including materials, is \$200. The program will meet every Thursday evening for nine weeks, beginning March 14, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Orrick, 2121 Main St. Applications are due Feb. 28.

Drawing from the experience of successful entrepreneurs and start-up veterans from around the globe, CO.STARTERS walks creative small-business owners through lean, effective business modeling methods in a simple and intuitive way, and with the help of a supportive community. Rather than treating a start-up like a large corporation and writing a detailed business plan, CO.STARTERS participants are encouraged to build and test small models first. In the process, participants receive real-time customer feedback, update their models to meet customer needs and avoid creating businesses based on incorrect assumptions.

So far, more than 20 entrepreneurs have completed CO.STARTERS sessions. Every entrepreneur was in a different stage of the business creation process. Most had no business training or experience.

“Each person who has completed the program had a great idea, but they weren’t sure how to go about the business side of things,” said Alex Weld, project and outreach manager for Wheeling Heritage. “This program helped them get the skills they need to get started, and also provided them with a network of people willing to help them succeed.”

Wheeling Heritage and RED will continue to accept applications until Feb. 28 or until 16 people sign up.

“This is much less like a classroom than typical entrepreneur training programs. It’s more informal, and gives participants the ability to feel comfortable and learn together,” said Valerie Piko, Small Business Coordinator at RED.

This program is made possible due to community volunteers, a generous contribution from BB&T Bank, as well as funding from Wheeling Heritage and RED. To learn more about the program and to sign up, visit wheelingheritage.org/costarters.



About Wheeling Heritage:

[Wheeling Heritage](#) is a catalyst for the revitalization of Wheeling. Through historic preservation, community development, and the arts, we help to tell Wheeling's story and shape its future. We seek to improve the quality of life in Wheeling by preserving and investing in our city, collaborating with others, and engaging the citizens of Wheeling in our work.

About RED:

Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED) is a private, nonprofit development corporation that serves Ohio, Marshall and Wetzel Counties in the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia, with emphasis on creating jobs and stimulating the local economy through assisting with local business expansion, recruiting new business investment, and encouraging small business development through entrepreneurial activity. RED also is active in the SBA 504 program and offers financial assistance through various state and local loan programs. RED was established as Ohio Valley Industrial Corporation in 1926, and incorporated as OVIBDC in 1961.