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**Small Business Program Seeks Entrepreneurs**

WHEELING, W.Va. – Dec. 29, 2020 – Wheeling Heritage and Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED) are now accepting applications for the fifth 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](http://wheelingheritage.org/costarters). The program will meet every Thursday evening for ten weeks, beginning Jan. 21, 2021, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., via Zoom. Applications are due Jan. 6. The cost to participate, including materials, is \$100.

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 40 entrepreneurs have completed the CO.STARTERS program. Every entrepreneur was in a different stage of the business creation process, and most had no business training or experience.

After a difficult year for many small businesses, this program can help give local entrepreneurs the tools they need to regroup, rebuild and problem-solve alongside a network of people who want them to succeed.

Wheeling Heritage and RED will continue to accept applications until Jan. 6 or until 12 people sign up.

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

**About Wheeling Heritage:**

[Wheeling Heritage](http://WheelingHeritage.org) 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.