



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

February 1, 2024

Governor Janet T. Mills  
1 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Maine Coworking Development Fund Report pursuant to 5 MRSA §13056-G, sub-§5.

Dear Governor Mills and members of the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business:

Title 5 MRSA §13056-G enacted in the first session of the 127<sup>th</sup> Legislature directed the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) to implement a “Maine Coworking Development Fund”. This program was updated and recapitalized during the first session of the 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature and through the Governor’s budget. The Maine Coworking Development Fund was established within the department to strengthen opportunities for entrepreneurship, stimulate innovation in the State by increasing the availability of collaborative workspace environments, and address a regional market demand for affordable work environments that support communication, information sharing and networking opportunities. The fund was established to match public and private funds to further this purpose.

Pursuant to 5 MRSA §13056-G, sub-§5, the department submits the following information constituting the annual report for this program:

**A. The number of applications for collaborative workspace projects submitted to the department.**

From the most recent cohort - A public notice for the 2021 Maine Coworking Development Fund and Program was announced on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Department posted the grant guidelines and announcement of a competitive grant process on the DECD website. DECD also released a press release and posted on social media. Questions were accepted from October 8<sup>th</sup> through November 1<sup>st</sup> with answers being posted on DECD’s website. The deadline for proposals was November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and the Department received 18 grant applications. This is a substantial increase from the eight



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

proposals received in response to the 2017 Request for Proposal but slightly less than the 22 received for the 2020 round.

The award committee met on December 3rd, 2021 to determine successful applications and award amounts.

The members of the awards committee for this fund were as follows:  
SarahJoy Chaples, Small Business Development Manager - DECD  
Maggie Drummond-Bahl, Maine Connectivity Authority  
Brian Whitney, Maine Technology Institute

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 DECD notified thirteen of the twenty applicants of their selection as grant recipients. Seven of the grantees were fully funded and the remaining six received partial funding of their request. All contracts have been fully awarded and all \$200,000 in available funds have been designated. \$10,000 of available funding was spent on advertising with \$5,000 going to both Cloudport and CoVort in FY22.

This information has remained consistent since the last report, dated August 12, 2022.

The next application period for the FY24/FY25 funds is expected after the completion of the MJRP Coworking Grant (early 2024).



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**B. The number of applications for collaborative workspace approved by the department.**

From the FY22/23 funding cohort

The following collaborative spaces were awarded grants:

COWORKING SPACE/VENDOR	CITY	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AWARD AMOUNT
Engine, Inc.	Biddeford	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 3,267.00
Factory 3 LLC	Portland	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Think Tank Biddeford LLC	Biddeford	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 11,250.00
Union + Co LLC	Bath	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Cloudport LLC	Portland	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Up With Community, LLC	Lewiston	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Bricks Coworking LLC	Waterville	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
SYNC Gorham	Gorham	\$ 8,095.00	\$ 8,095.00
The Third Place	Portland	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
Four Directions Development Corporation	Orono	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Sunrise County Economic Council	Machias	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Ancient York Lodge	Lisbon Falls	\$ 19,888.00	\$ 19,888.00
Main Street Skowhegan	Skowhegan	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
		<b>\$ 230,483.00</b>	<b>\$ 190,000.00</b>

*Note: \$10,000 of the \$200,000 legislatively approved budget was used for a joint marketing campaign*

**Partially Funded:**

- Engine, Inc. (Biddeford)
- Factory 3 LLC (Portland)
- Think Tank Biddeford LLC (Biddeford)
- Union + Co LLC (Bath)
- Cloudport LLC (Portland)
- Up With Community, LLC (Lewiston)

**Fully Funded:**

- Bricks Coworking LLC (Waterville)
- SYNC Gorham (Gorham)
- The Third Place (Portland)



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

Four Directions Development Corporation (Orono)  
Sunrise County Economic Council (Machias)  
Ancient York Lodge (Lisbon Falls)  
Main Street Skowhegan (Skowhegan)

This information has remained consistent since the last report, dated August 12, 2022.

**C. The number of collaborative workspaces created (or expanded) through the fund.**

From the FY22/23 funding cohort

Partially Funded:

Engine, Inc. (Biddeford) – Improvements – Tools, furniture, marketing, events  
Factory 3 LLC (Portland) – Improvements – Kitchen and insulated overhead doors  
Think Tank Biddeford LLC (Biddeford) - Improvements – Office furniture  
Union + Co LLC (Bath) – Improvements – Furniture, technology upgrades, program funding  
Cloudport LLC (Portland) – Improvements – Phone booth, meeting technology  
Up With Community, LLC (Lewiston) – Improvements -Business Plan/Consulting, overhead cost

Fully Funded:

Bricks Coworking LLC (Waterville) – Improvements – Phone booths, Fellow Program  
SYNC Gorham (Gorham) – Improvements to the site – 3D Printer, signage, bike rack, phone booths  
The Third Place (Portland) – Improvements to the suite -kitchenette upgrade, conferencing technology  
Four Directions Development Corporation (Orono) – New Location  
Sunrise County Economic Council (Machias) – New Location  
Ancient York Lodge (Lisbon Falls) – New Location  
Main Street Skowhegan (Skowhegan) – New Location

This information has remained consistent since the last report, dated August 12, 2022.



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**D. The numbers of tenants and participants engaged in each collaborative workspace.**

The information below is as of the end of 2023.

<b>COWORKING SPACE/VENDOR</b>	<b>Number of Tenants</b>
Engine, Inc.	18
Factory 3 LLC	55
Think Tank Biddeford LLC	37
Union + Co LLC	60
Cloudport LLC	182
Up With Community, LLC	11
Bricks Coworking LLC	22
SYNC Gorham	18
The Third Place	25
Four Directions Development Corporation	0
Sunrise County Economic Council	2
Ancient York Lodge	
Main Street Skowhegan	0

See appendix for more details.



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**E. The number of jobs provided by each collaborative workspace.**

The information below is as of the end of 2023.

<b>COWORKING SPACE/VENDOR</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>
Engine, Inc.	2
Factory 3 LLC	1
Think Tank Biddeford LLC	2
Union + Co LLC	4
Cloudport LLC	2
Up With Community, LLC	1
Bricks Coworking LLC	1
SYNC Gorham	1
The Third Place	1
Four Directions Development Corporation	1
Sunrise County Economic Council	1
Ancient York Lodge	
Main Street Skowhegan	1

See appendix for more details.



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**F. The number of tenants that have left collaborative workspace and that are operating in the State and the number of jobs they have provided.**

The information below is as of the end of 2023. Answers reflects tenants who have left in the past year.

COWORKING SPACE/VENDOR	Tenants who have expanded out
Engine, Inc.	0
Factory 3 LLC	3
Think Tank Biddeford LLC	2
Union + Co LLC	2
Cloudport LLC	4
Up With Community, LLC	0
Bricks Coworking LLC	0
SYNC Gorham	3
The Third Place	0
Four Directions Development Corporation	0
Sunrise County Economic Council	1
Ancient York Lodge	
Main Street Skowhegan	0

See appendix for more details.

Please contact Jake Daniele, DECD’s Small Business Development Manager if you have any questions regarding this report.

Sincerely,

Heather Johnson  
Commissioner



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

cc: Jake Daniele, Small Business Development Manager, DECD

**Appendix:** Individual Responses from Cohort members as of the end of calendar year 2023 in reference to the most recent grant round (FY22/FY23).

**Engine, Inc.**

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**Yes**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**We had 18**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**We have 2**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**We had members leave because our landlord sold the building in Oct 2023, so starting summer of '23 we saw membership lessen as people were trying to find more permanent spots.**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**The grant funding helped us cover rent, supplies, maintenance, and staffing coming off the pandemic. It helped us stay consistent in our offering and hours which helped support our community or artists. Programmatically is allowed us to contribute toward our 1st IGNITE cohort, which had access to studios or maker space. We also met there monthly.**





STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

### Factory 3 LLC

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**No. Our coworking business opened in 2019.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**As of December 15, 2023, we have 55 members. In 2023, we averaged more than 11 potential members per month stopping by for tours or joining directly, and 71 students per month attending our classes.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**We have one paid staff member, the Director, Patrick W. Russell.**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**We are aware of five members who left in 2023 because they found other space to do their work. Of these, we are aware of three who had businesses at least partly dependent on Factory 3.**

- **The owner of a tailoring shop in Auburn, joined Factory 3 in 2022 to teach sewing classes. After opening a second shop in Portland, she left Factory 3 in 2023, and is now continuing to teach, but now out of her shops. She has also hired one our other members part time to work for her while the other member are still teaching for Factory 3. This part-time job is directly arbitrable to the two being members of Factory 3.**

- **A member with a part-time woodworking business left Factory 3 in 2023 after purchasing a house where he has space to continue his work.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

- **A member with a part-time woodworking business left Factory 3 in 2023 after expanding into larger studio space in Biddeford to continue his work.**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**In 2023, Factory 3 continued to expand its membership, facilities, and class offerings. Our studio spaces are consistently filled to capacity. We've added significantly to our technology space with a fully refurbished work area, two new laser cutters, and a state-of-the-art new 3D printer. Our woodshop has a new woodworking table built by our members. We have regular monthly member meetups to foster community among our members. Thanks to a grant from Maine Medical Center, we are able to offer discounted tickets for our classes to our neighbors through the Libbytown Neighborhood Association. The new glass overhead doors purchased and the new kitchen built with the Coworking Development Fund grant are a central part of the continuing improvements to our common space, making it a more welcoming, functional space for members, students, and guests.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**Think Tank Biddeford LLC**

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**No**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**Monthly - 37 and fluctuating. Drop In - This time of year is pretty much 1-3, summer is 10 plus**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**Two**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**Two**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**The funds have been instrumental in proving an upgraded work space environment. Members are happy to have new and upgraded technology. Better work stations, office upgrades and such to run their business lives.**

**Faster internet. All the upgraded infrastructure attracts remote businesses and their employees to the area to stay connected.**

**The community continues to grow and connect. This plays a major role in the economic growth of our town.**

**These are the important pieces that it is hard to put a matrix to.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Union + Co LLC

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**Our coworking space, Union + Co, has been in operation since May 2019. The funds from this round helped us expand our business as we moved to a new location in downtown Bath in September 2023.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**We have almost 60 monthly members and since moving into our new space, have typically between 10 - 15 day users a month.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**Yes, we have two part-time paid staff, in addition to myself (co-founder/co-owner) and Sean Ireland (co-founder/co-owner). Our staff work between 7 - 12 hours per week, but we would love to have them on more/longer!**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**Yes, we have had two clients venture out on their own. Soft Corner Midwifery owner Morgan Miller started her practice in one of our private offices. She now owns and operates a birthing center with +/- 9 employees. [Maya Rook](#), another former Union + Co member, built her history-focused events, yoga, and meditation business from scratch in Bath after moving from upstate NY. She was able to secure a space in the downtown and now hosts a range of classes from her own Firefly Studio. <https://www.fireflystudio.me/>**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**The DECD grant funding was integral to Union + Co's operations in two ways: Supporting our ongoing efforts to promote arts, culture, and economic and community**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**development; and supporting the physical infrastructure that makes the former possible. Since receiving the grant, we have put on 11 free Lunch + Learn events, free and open to the public, from small business advising to City Council Roundtables, to Human Productivity. We have also had a very successful series of outdoor concerts and events over the past three years. These initiatives are important to welcome the community into our space and introduce them to the concept of coworking in a low-stakes environment.**

**Additionally, we used the DECD grant to fit up our new space at 31 Centre Street with appropriate equipment to allow for a functional and safe work environment, and to foster the flexible event space. We are now located on the ground level and provide a resource for the community.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Cloudport LLC

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**The funds from this round help is implement phone booth, meeting room technology and 10 monitors for our floating area for people to plug into.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**Right now we have 182 monthly reoccurring members. We have seen a net positive monthly gain every month in 2022. Natural churn is typical for work change situations, moving, family dynamics etc.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**Currently 2 paid Full-time staff including Myself and my assistant.**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**We have had multiple companies that have outgrown our floating space that we captured with our 11 office expansion. Capturing successful companies and keeping that vertical integration is important for the networking and experience entrepreneurs to remain within the building/ecosystem. We have had roughly 4 companies leave in 2022 because we could no longer support their growth due to space limitations.**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**Our space has truly reached its capacity and we are battling controlling capacity. We are currently in discussion with SBA to support a possible policy change that would allow CoWorking to be looked at as a business and not fall within Real Estate Investment category. This policy change would allow us to purchase a neighboring property as part of the 504 program and do an extensive remodel to help with the overflow and vertical**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**growth of companies while tripling our size. The modern buildout with top of the line technology to help entrepreneurial growth is what we see a huge need for. Build it and they will come has never been more true in our ecosystem we feel.**

**The grant funding has allowed us to facilitate the purchase and implementation of equipment that we would have struggled to provide within our small margins otherwise.**

**The phone booth demand at our facility is through the roof and a quiet place to take calls is always a struggle even after going from 2 (2019) to 8 (2023) currently with possible need of purchase 2 more soon to keep up with said demand.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Up With Community, LLC

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**Yes! The funds helped us to move fully into our new space with private office options, a conference room and ADA accessibility. We've had numerous community groups use our space for gathering, and business meetings. Our members have used the space well to support community projects and support families and neighbors. We have fully been integrated into the community as a space for working, creating, and gathering.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**We have 11 monthly members, we typically have 1 to 2 drop-ins a month.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**I am remunerated for a portion of my time working on the space.**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**Not this year!**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**The Angolan and Congolese communities are rapidly growing in Lewiston. Leaders from each community are members here and have used the space for business events, community gathering and member support meetings. It has been energizing to connect with these communities in our space. We have several members who have shared that they struggled to find a safe, healthy and affordable space to launch their businesses - they have felt so inspired by their peers and encouraged by the space we offer them to share their services with our community and keep growing their businesses in Lewiston/Auburn!**





STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Bricks Coworking LLC

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**No**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)

**22 active, 2-4 drop ins per month**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**0 No direct FTE; CMGC staff supports Bricks staffing operations, but largely via CMGC operations budget; RJ is "Community Manager" but doesn't draw a salary**

4. In the past year, have any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**0 None that we are aware of**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**i.) Bricks has continued to be utilized as a hub of innovation and events in downtown Waterville;**

**(ii.) CMGC and Dirigo Labs hold a majority of accelerator operations, technical assistance opportunities, and startup programming directly out Bricks;**

**(iii.) (Free) Monthly community workshops are held out of Bricks (e.g., Dirigo Labs Speaker Series);**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

- (iv.) Partnering on, and support of, Mid-Maine-based college students that are involved with Maine's Innovate for Maine Fellows Program (UMaine program) are housed at Bricks (for free), and are actively monitored and managed by CMGC and Bricks team;**
- (v.) LMI and DEI area residents and area students and entrepreneurs are granted free or reduced memberships, TA, and business addresses at Bricks;**
- (vi.) Area business and institutions (e.g., hospitals) hold recruiting and workforce events for physicians and medical staff at Bricks;**
- (vii.) State (e.g., Live + Work Maine) and regional (e.g., KVConnect) attraction and Young Professional orgs. and associations events at Bricks;**
- (viii.) Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce often holds its "Meet the Reps" events at Bricks, which hosts state, regional, and local legislators, reps., councilors, and civic and business leaders at Bricks to discuss pressing public policy issues (e.g., PTDZ);**
- (ix.) Public annual meetings by CMGC-DL are held at Bricks;**
- (x.) Dirigo Labs Entrepreneur in Residence (EiR) program's EiRs are housed at Bricks;**
- (xi.) Central Maine Programmers Group holds meetings at Bricks; (xii.) and all events, networking, and workshops - excluding private functions - are free and open to the public. Bricks resides in a census tract with an annual median family income of approx. 18k. It is projected, and a goal, that Bricks is the most - or one of the most - dynamic, productive, and rural coworking spaces in the state of Maine.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## SYNC Gorham

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**The funds were used to enhance and improve the experience and functionality of the space.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**I have 18 private offices that have been fully tenanted for over 2 years. My drop in membership to use the coworking bench space grew from 1 to 6 in the past 12 months and several local businesses have used the conference room.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**No paid staff. the business is owned and operated by me.**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**We have had three successes with businesses that out grew the space and we celebrated them getting their own spaces. I am not sure of # jobs added, but each business went from 1 person to at least 2 or 3.**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.

**The grant funding was very helpful to add some elements and improve the space to enhance the experience of users. The private phone booth was probably the best addition making the coworking membership option more appealing. Each of the improvements would not have been possible without the matching grant.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## The Third Place

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business.

**We used the funds to increase our amenities in the space. We did not have a teleconference room. Now members have the ability to hold group meetings with a better hybrid experience. We are also in the process of upgrading the kitchenette space to accommodate a full size fridge and additional food storage. This was a bit of a barrier for folks working in the coworking suite. No food storage was a problem for holding workshops with food or members bringing and storing lunch.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**We have 25 members who use the space for various reasons. Some use for meetings or workshops only and some use the suite for clients and regular work. It's only a 1,500 sq. ft. space. most of our members are folks that have offices or spaces in other parts of the state. Our space is used as a Portland satellite.**

**We don't do drop ins. Everyone that is a member has access.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**I am the only paid staff person.**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**We have retained all of the members that we started with.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Four Directions Development Corporation

1. Did you use funds from **this** round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**We have been working on re-opening our Native Entrepreneur and Coworking Center in Pleasant Point on the Passamaquoddy Tribe reservation. We are also working on opening a new Native Entrepreneur and Coworking Center in Littleton on the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians reservation.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**Due to our Native Entrepreneur and Coworking Center not being open we do not have any members at this time. However, we are continuing to provide one-on-one business counseling and training to any entrepreneur or business owner by zoom or webinars.**

**Since our centers are closed we do not have any current drop in clients at this time.**

3. Do you have paid staff?

**We have paid staff but not through Maine Coworking Development Fund grant.**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**None to report.**

5. I would also welcome any updates you would like to provide about your space, how the grant funding has benefitted your community etc.

**Our Pleasant Point location was originally scheduled to open in 2020 but never opened due to COVID-related and public health purposes. We did have our coworking space identified, secured, and furnished with five (5) workstations with computers with Internet access and printers. We are in the process of confirming new dates with tribal leaders to have an Open House for the Passamaquoddy Entrepreneur and Coworking Center. We are also finalizing the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians Coworking**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**MAINE.**  
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**location. Space has been secured and furnished with desks, chairs, printer and five (5) workstations. We are in the process of confirming a day for tribal leadership participation for the Open House. We hope to have both locations open and operational in the next few months.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Sunrise County Economic Council

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**No. We used funds to further develop a virtual community for the small business owners, entrepreneurs, innovators, and business students of Washington County, and beyond.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**We finally opened to the public this past summer (soft launch) and in a more public-facing way this fall. We had several day and week pass users this summer who needed a professional meeting space and/or did not have dependable internet access in their travels. We currently have two office lease members, a designated desk lease member, and two floating coworking members.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**Yes. MaineStreet Business Building (MSBB) is managed by the Director of Small Business & Entrepreneurship. The facility and operations management and member experience at MSBB accounts for approximately .20 FTE of the Director's salary. MSBB opened to the public this past summer (soft launch) and in a more public-facing way this fall. We had several day and week pass users this summer who needed a professional meeting space and/or did not have dependable internet access in their travels. We currently have two office lease members, a designated desk lease member, and two floating coworking members.**

4. In the past year, have any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**One of MSBB's office lease members moved to a larger office building available for lease on Main Street in Machias to continue and grow their property management and renovations business, which currently employs 4-5 individuals and shares labor with local contractors.**



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc. These responses help to show the benefit of the program.

**Coworking Development Funds allowed staff to participate in and facilitate virtual networking and learning experiences that built relationships and provided small business startup and development learning opportunities and connection to resources across the technical assistance provider network, locally and statewide. Through virtual small business startup incubators and accelerators and networking, MSBB (a program of Sunrise County Economic Council) reached 91 aspiring entrepreneurs and 66 small business owners during the two-year grant performance period.**

**We will continue offering virtual programs and services, as we have done since the small business division at SCEC formed, and we are excited to bring that momentum home to 19 Main Street in Machias as well. A team of 6 small business and entrepreneurship-focused team members are on the team and work from MaineStreet Business Building as well as virtually and on-the-road. Services include coaching, training, technical assistance in technology and grant/pitch preparation, contract procurement assistance, loans, and so much more.**





STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**MAINE.**  
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**Ancient York Lodge**

This coworking location closed: The group worked with DECD to produce a fair and equitable outcome during unfortunate circumstances. \$10,944 was returned to the Coworking Development Fund.



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

## Main Street Skowhegan

1. Did you use funds from this round to help launch/create your coworking business?

**Yes, the funds went into the continual operations of our coworking center, The Skowhegan Center for Entrepreneurship.**

2. How many monthly members do you currently have? How many drop in clients do you get in a typical month (average from last year would be great)?

**At this time, we do not have any monthly members, however we do have between 5-10 individuals, businesses, and non-profits who use it regularly for meetings, classes, and to host other events.**

3. Do you have paid staff? Please indicate the number of paid, part and full time staff (including yourself).

**Yes, 1 (myself)**

4. In the past year, has any of your clients (that you know of) ventured out on their own?

**None of our previous coworking members have ventured out on their own as a result of outgrowing their space, however, because of the Center and the programming we are now able to hold, we have seen an increase in business activity within the town. For example, our Business Lab program, hosted at the Skowhegan Center for Entrepreneurship, has assisted 20 entrepreneurs spread through 3 cohorts. From the program, we have had a new business open up in our downtown, Joe's Flat Iron Cafe, which has created roughly 4 positions, 1 full-time and 3 part-time. Another business has seen their sales increase by approximately 80%, and one entrepreneur has been able to transition from working on a full-time job to working on his business full-time.**

5. Please include a brief update about your space. Supporting information about how the grant funding has benefitted your community, enabled a project, contributed to your success etc.



STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON  
COMMISSIONER

**The funding received has been instrumental in helping us start and operate our coworking center. While the coworking membership has been low, we are certainly filling a need within our community by providing a space for businesses and individuals to conduct meetings, classes, and gather as a third place. Our programming has also been influential in providing local support to our entrepreneurial ecosystem by offering a multitude of business classes, ongoing 1:1 support, as well as connecting with industry partners. As mentioned above, our Business Lab program has seen much success as well as success with our participants. One of which being Joe's Flat Iron Cafe, which provides a fantastic third space for community members to work, meet, enjoy a multitude of refreshments, and has filled a large gap in the community. We are constantly working towards bettering our current programming and expanding with new programs that will be beneficial for our local entrepreneurs and business owners.**