

CoMo Cooks Minority Business Scholarship Application: Phase I

CoMo Cooks Shared Kitchen wants to remove barriers to entry for historically underrepresented persons owning food based businesses. To that end, and with some very generous donations from local existing business owners, we have created this immersive scholarship program. This application is the first step to seeing your business become a reality here in Mid-Missouri.

Please fill out this application to the best of your ability and return it to either REDI or CoMo Cooks. Thank you for your time and effort in this, alongside all the work you do for your business.

Please feel free to use the back of these pages for any answers that need more space than is provided between the questions.

115 Business Loop 70 W, Columbia, MO 65203

<https://comocooks.com>

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Confidentiality Policy:

There will be personal information shared in this document, for the purposes of determining admission and the impact of the program on those admitted. The information you share with us will remain strictly confidential. (We will never identify you or your data by name, or share your personal information, without your signed permission.)

Basic Applicant Information

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: ____ Last Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Website: _____

Personal Demographic Information*

Gender: _____ Pronouns: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Ethnicity: (List as many as apply) _____

Race: (Check all that apply):

Asian Pacific Islander Black Latinx/Hispanic

Caucasian/European American Native American/Alaska Native

Other, please specify: _____

Country of Origin: _____

Disability Status:

Do you have a disability that requires special accomodation: ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please describe: _____

Educational History:

Did you graduate from high school: ___ Yes ___ No

Highest level of education: _____

Household income:

___ Less than 35,000

___ 35,000 to 49,999

___ 50,000 to 74,999

___ 75,000 to 99,999

___ 100,000 to 149,999

___ More than 150,000

**sharing in this section is optional, but some of this information may be used to determine the recipients of the scholarship*

Culinary Experience

Do you have any professional food industry experience: ___ Yes ___ No

If Yes, please describe:

If No, what kind of cooking/food experience do you have?

Do you have any professional culinary training: ___ Yes ___ No

Whether Yes or No, please describe how, when and from whom you learned how to cook:

Have you ever started a food-based business (other than your current one) before:

___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes" please provide a few details about it, and dates of operation:

Are you currently running a food-based business: ___ Yes ___ No

(If "Yes" please fill out the next section with the information for your current business. If "No" then please fill out as much of the next section as possible with the information for your potential new business.)

Your Food-Based Business

Type of Business: (Check all that apply):

Baking/Desserts Specialty Foods Catering/Meal Prep Food Truck
 Food Cart Future Brick & Mortar Other (please specify below:)

Describe in more detail your products you will be producing in the Kitchen, or the business idea:

Why did you want to start a food-based business? Can you tell us your inspiration or what led to this idea?

Number of Employees (including yourself): Full Time _____ Part Time _____

Current Location: _____

How much have you already invested in your business? Please be as specific as you can about capital investments, physical assets, as well as inventory and staffing:

Please list the three biggest challenges that your business is facing right now:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Business Training

Where did you look for information about starting and running your business? Who did you seek to talk to during that process?

Have you taken any formal business classes, training, or coaching? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes" please describe what, when, and where:

If "No" would you like to participate in the future?

Please describe your vision of owning a food-based business:

Three strengths you possess as a current or future business owner:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Three perceived weaknesses you see as a current or future business owner:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If your food-based business utilizes a formal, written business plan, please attach a copy to this application.

Thank You For Your Application

I understand that this application does not guarantee acceptance into the CoMo Cooks Scholarship Program. I also verify that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this to the Kitchen Manager at CoMo Cooks Shared Kitchen or to the Entrepreneurship Coordinator at REDI downtown.

CoMo Cooks Minority Business Scholarship Application: Phase II

Congratulations on making it this far. This is the second phase of the application process for the CoMo Cooks Shared Kitchen Scholarship Program.

This section will ask questions that will make you think about your food-based business in ways you might not yet have. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers here. Treat this more as a snapshot of where your business is at this moment and that you are thinking about these questions.

These questions are being asked here because they have been stumbling blocks for past businesses, and we would like to see that you are ready to address them for your business.

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Applicant Information

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: ____ Last Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Website: _____

Sales & Location

How is your business going to get your food product to your customers? Distribution channels influence nearly every aspect of a food-based business. How you present your business to the public will determine pricing, hiring employees, hours of operation, shipping and/or packaging, and numerous other pieces of your business model. The needs of a food truck are massively different than those of a catering business, which are, in turn, both massively different than the needs of a brick and mortar restaurant.

So, how is your business going to get your food product to your customers, and what do you see as the best model for that?

Competition & Competitive Advantage

Can you identify your three biggest competitors? Please describe their business models as you see them, and a strength and a weakness for each that you can see:

1.

2.

3.

A competitive advantage is a business term that describes a difference between similar companies. Casual customers might not even be able to point it out, if asked, but as a business owner it's important for you to know what your competitive advantage is over your competitors.

What is your competitive advantage?

Long Term Vision & Growth

It is tough to start a business, especially a food-based business. We understand that. But, the driving force that keeps most entrepreneurs up at night pondering is the idea of growing their business and finding continued success. In this section we ask you to look into your crystal ball just a little bit, but the timeframe is up to you. All we ask is that you look past the roller coaster of “startup” and look forward to your business maturing.

Please list three priorities that will encourage continued growth in your business, beyond the initial startup phase:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Can you identify a milestone that would mean “success” or “you made it” in your mind, beyond the initial startup phase?

Growth means more business which means more work. What kind of milestones would cause your business to need to expand and hire more employees, and what kind of jobs or tasks do you think you would be hiring for at that point?

Money, Money, Money

This is obviously the hardest part of any startup and we know it can be a major stressor in the life of a food-based entrepreneur. The measure of a successful business is, unfortunately, often tied to it meeting financial goals, or the business owner realizing certain financial milestones. We all like to predict positive outcomes and earnings, but we ask that you take a realistic look at these questions and help us understand where you are in this process.

Describe the financial business results you would like to see your venture create:

Now, describe the personal financial results you would like to see your venture create for you:

How much capital have you planned for your food-based business' startup costs? Feel free to list things and their approximate costs if you have those ready, but please think about this question from a big picture perspective and walk us through that process as you see it:

Do you have any leads to obtaining that capital? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you have a timeframe for meeting your capital goals for startup? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes" please give some details on that timeframe:

Do you have a timeframe for meeting your revenue goals? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes" please give some details on that timeframe:

Thank You For Continuing Your Application

I understand that this Phase II application does not guarantee acceptance into the CoMo Cooks
Minority Business Scholarship. I also verify that the information provided is complete and
accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____