



Entrepreneur Guide Certification

Wikipedia states “A guide is a person who leads people through unknown or unmapped country, or conducts travelers and tourists through a place of interest.” Entrepreneur Guides are expected to assist local business developers much in the same way that mountain climbing guides are expected to show novice climbers the way while sharing knowledge and assuring the safety of their clients. The notion that once climbers can venture out on their own after gaining some experience with the guide is an attractive strategy to many entrepreneurs with the caveat that they can return for more advanced assistance when they face new challenges.

Entrepreneur Guides actively assist entrepreneurs through venture development and growth. Prospective Entrepreneur Guides must illustrate that they possess selected characteristics, training, and experience prior to certification by TCRE. They must also demonstrate satisfactorily that they can develop and implement strategies that will assist entrepreneurs in their community to accomplish economic development.

You must submit documentation to TCRE that shows they have completed the following in order to receive certification:

1. You attended a “Developing Entrepreneur Ready Communities” kickoff workshop which includes topics such as understanding community and economic development basics, making the case for entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy, identifying and working with entrepreneurs, gathering the necessary resources, marketing your program, evaluating your progress and sharing success stories.
2. You provided technical assistance to at least five entrepreneurs either starting or growing business ventures. A business assistance form is provided to document your experience providing assistance to entrepreneurs.
3. Entrepreneur Guide Assessments (EGA) are completed by each of the entrepreneurs to whom technical assistance described in 2 above is provided and by three additional references involved in economic development in your community. You are also expected to complete an EGA as a self-assessment. All assessments should be signed by each preparer and include contact information.
4. You provided leadership to two educational programs on topics of interest to local entrepreneurs. Programs can be in conjunction with other specialists and resource providers, but should relate important subject matter to participants. You may wish to consult with TCRE for suggestions, assistance, co-sponsorship or cooperation if necessary. Participant evaluations will serve to demonstrate satisfactory completion of this requirement.
5. You developed an operations plan illustrating how you plan to sustain support for entrepreneurs in your community, either by yourself or in partnership with others.

The final step in the certification process will be a briefing with a TCRE representative to discuss all materials and expectations of Entrepreneur Guides. An important component of the certification program is an agreement on continued support for your objectives as well as those of TCRE and the methods for accomplishing those objectives.

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