



**Opportunity WNC Entrepreneur in Residence**  
*Full-time position based out of the Asheville office*

**Background:**

Mountain BizWorks (MBW, [mountainbizworks.org](http://mountainbizworks.org)) is a non-profit certified community development financial institution (CDFI) that provides tailored small business lending and peer learning services across Western North Carolina. We do this towards a mission of building a vibrant and inclusive local economy.

Asheville & WNC as a whole are experiencing strong economic growth driven in large part by a robust local business ecosystem. Access to this progress, however, has not been shared equally among our diverse communities. For example, in Asheville there is also a major gap in business ownership rates where Hispanic and African-American individuals are 4-5 times less likely to own a business with employees than their white counterparts (2012 Census SBO). Similarly stark is the fact that average annual revenues for white-owned businesses is \$428,000 and that of Hispanic-owned businesses is \$163,000 and black-owned businesses is \$40,000. Unfortunately, these conditions are very similar to those found in communities through the U.S.

Mountain BizWorks has a strategic priority to use our platform to help address these unacceptable disparities by working directly and through partnerships towards a local economy that is vibrant and inclusive. This work, organized as the *Opportunity WNC Initiative*, engages the full organization. Closing the gap will be challenging, will require new and transformational approaches, and will require a sustained commitment. To this end, we are establishing a new Entrepreneur in Residence position to bring an entrepreneurial and client-centered approach to leading this effort, and to working closely with our growing portfolio of diverse entrepreneurial clients.

**Purpose:**

The overarching goals of the Opportunity Entrepreneur in Residence include:

- Provide leadership and bring an entrepreneurial, collaborative, and innovative approach to the development of the Opportunity WNC Initiative
- Aid the organization in meeting its goals of responsibly and effectively increasing the deployment of loan capital and technical assistance to diverse entrepreneurs in each phase of business development
- Work closely with the MBW management team to guide and develop the Opportunity WNC Initiative program in a high-impact and financially sustainable manner
- Serve as an active and collaborative member of the MBW Learning Program team

**Key Responsibilities:**

- Provide strategic and entrepreneurial leadership for the Opportunity WNC Initiative including:
  - Lead the Opportunity WNC internal team including convening regular meetings, setting the agenda, prioritizing action items, and helping the team members do excellent and transformative work
  - Help define and track program timelines, outcomes and, deliverables as set internally and requested by funders.
  - Review program metrics regularly with Entrepreneurship Program Manager and communicate these with the MBW team along with next steps and priorities
- Proactively market MBW's services directly and through partnerships to consistently increase the number and level of diverse clients served.
- Proactively connect our growing portfolio of diverse clients to MBW's pre- and post-loan technical assistance services:

- Conduct initial client intakes and assessments; help create client goals and service plans
- Proactively connect clients with relevant MBW learning programs; in some cases deliver high-quality TA directly; and where appropriate, refer clients to partners
- Assist the Lending Program with due diligence and related readiness assessments for Opportunity WNC loan applicants
- Work closely with the Lending Program to prepare Opportunity WNC target market loan applicants via TA so that we can say “yes” more often, and “not yet” instead of “no” when possible and practicable.
- Track target market client progress through the loan pipeline and to identify opportunities for TA support in a timely fashion
- Bring an entrepreneurial approach to the creation of new products and services (or the strengthening of existing ones) such as training on how to become “procurement-ready”, pre-Foundations entrepreneurial training, and Spanish-language offerings
- Aid in organizational marketing and storytelling efforts to raise the visibility of entrepreneurs of color in Asheville & WNC
- Help identify persistent barriers faced by diverse clients and opportunities to improve or extend services offered (lending, learning, and investing) to better meet client needs; work with the MBW team to plan and implement improvements
- Help ensure strong attendance/participation in MBW classes, workshops and events through active lending and learning clients, referral partners, community organizations and other stakeholders.
- Serve as the point person for cultivating relevant strategic partnerships
- Support the organization’s continual growth in cultural competence, respect, and sensitivity

**Additional Responsibilities:**

- Assist with new learning client intake, initial assessment, and/or information sessions to ascertain specific needs and connect with MBW or partner services.
- Attend and represent MBW at meetings, workshops, classes, outreach events, information and training sessions as required
- Maintain client training records as needed for effective client relationship management, grant reporting, and other documentation requirements
- Assist with annual and ongoing collection and tracking evaluation of program effectiveness and organizational community impact data
- Other learning and organizational responsibilities as assigned

**Qualifications and Experience:**

- A demonstrated commitment to Mountain BizWorks’ Vision, Mission, and Values
- A track record of engaging community groups and stakeholders in collaborative and inclusive dialogue and problem solving
- Strong understanding of the stages, needs, and challenges of starting/growing a business
- Proficiency in Spanish is highly desirable
- A background in understanding systemic and institutional racial bias and best practices in addressing them
- A track record of successful experience starting or operating one or more small businesses
- Experience in and commitment to working in a team-oriented environment
- Self-driven initiative and performance of the highest quality, with keen attention to detail
- Ability to work with clients and partners from various backgrounds
- Strong understanding of the stages, needs and challenges of starting and growing a business
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills; the ability to effectively communicate in one-on-one and in group settings; and experience communicating to diverse communities and stakeholders
- Experience with and/or understanding of adult education and entrepreneur development methods programs
- Excellent interviewing and active listening skills

- Strong computer proficiency including Microsoft Office, email, CRM or similar database tools.
- Experience in program measurement & evaluation
- Demonstrated success in building and maintain strong partner relationships
- Ability to work independently and to effectively manage time
- Flexibility to manage the variety of tasks and responsibilities of the position.

**Compensation & Benefits:**

Mountain BizWorks provides a competitive salary. Full-time position with benefits package, including: medical insurance; retirement plan; and paid vacation and holidays. Significant opportunities for growth.

Mountain BizWorks values and respects all types of diversity and strongly encourages applicants from traditionally marginalized groups to apply. We prohibit discrimination and harassment and provide equal employment opportunity without regard to, and not limited to, ethnicity, religion, race, national origin, abilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or genetic information.

**To Apply:**

Qualified/interested candidates should email their resume and cover letter to Kareen Boncales, Entrepreneurship Program Manager, [kareen@mountainbizworks.org](mailto:kareen@mountainbizworks.org). Subject line should read "Opportunity EIR Position." Initial responses to this opportunity are requested by Friday, January 17<sup>th</sup> with the position remaining open until filled thereafter.