



ENTREPRENEURIAL RESOURCES IN NWLA

If you are considering starting your own business, there are several resources in Northwest Louisiana that can assist you in making that decision, or helping you along the path to growth if you are in the early stages of start-up. In some cases, these organizations provide assistance to existing businesses that simply need greater knowledge of certain areas of their business, such as legal or accounting issues.

Check out the list of resources below to see if one of them may be able to provide the big next step you've been waiting for to move forward in the start-up process or grow your business to the next level.

BUSINESS INCUBATORS

You've probably heard the term "business incubator" before, but you may not really know what they do or how they may be able to help you start or grow a business. According to the National Business Incubation Association, "business incubators nurture the development of entrepreneurial companies, helping them survive and grow during the start-up period, when they are most vulnerable. These programs provide their client companies with business support services and resources tailored to young firms. The most common goals of incubation programs are creating jobs in a community, enhancing a community's entrepreneurial climate, retaining businesses in a community, building or accelerating growth in a local industry, and diversifying local economies."

Common services of small business incubators include:

- Assistance researching, accessing and applying for funding
- Connecting a company with critical networking opportunities
- On-site assistance for conducting everyday business
 - Rental space
 - Employee access to office equipment
 - Internet access
 - Janitorial services
 - Security system

Below is information about some of the business incubators in Northwest Louisiana.

Small Business Incubator, Southern University

The Small Business Incubator of Southern University at Shreveport serves small, women and minority-owned businesses within the northwest region of Louisiana. In addition to offering furnished office space and business support services (e.g. telephone, copy machine, conference rooms access) they also offer networking and funding assistance. Additional information can found at:

<http://www.susla.edu/Pages/SWMOBusinessIncubator.aspx>.



Metro/Regional Business Incubator, Coordinating and Development Corporation

CDC's Metro/Regional Business Incubator is a 36,000 sq. ft. facility that provides subsidized rental space for tenants primarily engaged in manufacturing and warehousing/distribution. In addition to the leased space, tenants have access to conference rooms, a training center, shared office equipment, an employee break room, and full access to the Business Incubator staff for any counseling and technical assistance they may need.

Additionally, the "Incubator without Walls" program was designed to help businesses that are not within the Metro/Regional Business Incubator gain access to resources that may be vital for operating a business. For more information visit:

<http://www.cdconline.org/Businessincubator.htm#Metro/Regional>.

Technology Business Development Center, Louisiana Tech University

Part of the Enterprise Center of Louisiana Tech University, this incubator supports and facilitates the establishment, growth, and success of technology-based businesses along the Interstate-20 corridor. The TBDC has established a set of core services that inform, assist, and educate technological entrepreneurs and enterprises. Basic information and referral services connect entrepreneurs with the agencies, programs, and resources needed to begin and pursue development of their businesses. TBDC service is focused on identifying, gathering, and organizing information necessary to plan, start, and grow a technology business. To find out more about TBDC, visit:

http://www.latech.edu/enterprise/about_TBDC

CO-WORKING

Co-working? Is that the same thing as working at an incubator? No, it's not. While the purpose of an incubator is to provide resources to assist start-ups, co-working spaces exist to provide community to solo practitioners and possible start-ups. Co-working is an emerging trend for a new style of working. It is the social gathering of a group of people, who are still working independently, but who share values and who are interested in the synergy that can happen from working with talented people in the same space (Wikipedia). It's a way to feed off the creative energy of other independents that can foster inspiration and often result in collaboration.

CoHabitat Shreveport is a planned co-working space currently in the early stages of development. There is the possibility that it may have a temporary home in downtown Shreveport over the coming months while a permanent downtown home is renovated. If this is a concept that sounds interesting to you, join the CoHabitat Shreveport community by filling out this [short survey](#) and you'll be kept in the loop on its progress and any upcoming events. TO learn more about the concept, check out parent [CoHabitat Dallas](#).



OTHER START-UP AND SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

Louisiana Small Business Development Center

The mission of the LSBDC is to enhance the economic well being of the citizens of Louisiana by providing comprehensive, high-quality assistance to existing and potential small businesses. It fosters the formation and growth of small businesses in order to expand and diversify the Louisiana economy. The LSBDC is committed to implementing both the initiatives of the U.S. Small Business Administration and Louisiana's master plan for economic development.

The Louisiana SBDC centers, located throughout the State, sponsor various workshops, conferences, and courses each year. Instructors include LSBDC staff, private-sector professionals, government experts, and university faculty. The programs are priced nominally to serve the small-business community. The LSBDC website provides links to articles, publications, and other materials that may be beneficial to small businesses.

Louisiana State University at Shreveport, Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, and University of Louisiana at Monroe all host branches of LSBDC. To access information about the Louisiana Small Business Development Center, including locations for its various centers and a schedule of events, visit <http://www.lsbdc.org>.

Technology Transfer Center (Shreveport), Louisiana Tech University

The Technology Transfer Center (T2C) is a modern conference center and educational facility with video teleconference/distance learning capabilities. The T2C is used by Louisiana Tech University to facilitate technology transfer activities through meetings, conferences and workshops. With less focus on specific companies, TTC teaches individuals aspects of networking and more complex ideas of the technology market. As an organization within the TBDC, the Technology Transfer Center provides graduate and post graduate level classes relating to Engineering, Technology, and Business Administration. More information is available at: <http://www.latech.edu/tech/engr/ttcs/index.html>.