



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The USA Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative (USAWEC) is a 3-month business leadership and management blended-learning program run by the Center for Global Enterprise (CGE).

The inaugural cohort of U.S.-based entrepreneurs will run from August 1-October 30, 2021 and will expose 50 female business owners to the skills needed to build successful, resilient, and scalable businesses.

Delivered by renowned business leaders and covering three critical management areas for capacity-building including finance, operations, and sales & marketing; the curriculum is designed to meet American business owners' most pressing needs, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

CGE has a proven track record of designing innovative, collaborative, and highly engaging applied learning programs. Participants are matched with program mentors and peer groups, enabling them to gain valuable network connections and practical insights.

The program's blended-learning model delivers high-impact through the following core program activities:

- Online interactive webinars led by global business experts and thought leaders
- One-on-one mentoring from senior business professionals
- Individual applied learning activities
- Online and offline peer networking and feedback

The USAWEC pilot program is inspired by the success of the African Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative (AWEC), a 12-month, high-touch leadership and management learning program that empowers women from across African continent with the skills and networks needed to build resilient, sustainable and scalable businesses.

In the past three years, AWEC has directly impacted more than 600 women businesses owners from 52 African countries, enabling them to increase their revenue, hire new employees, raise capital, and strengthen critical business management skills, despite the challenges of a global pandemic.



## WHO CAN APPLY ?

Women who are

- Founders of businesses in the United States of America and its territories that have businesses in operation for at least two years in any industry, and have at least one employee (either full time or part-time)

**OR**

- Past business owners in the United States of America and its territories that had businesses in operation for at least two years in any industry, with at least one employee (either full time or part-time) and currently shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Note: Founders of NGOs or nonprofit organizations are not eligible to apply for this pilot program.**

- Individuals who are willing and able to work remotely, embrace teamwork and collaboration, and are comfortable using digital tools (Zoom, Slack, WhatsApp, etc.)
- Proficient in verbal and written English
- Able to regularly (weekly) access the Internet through a computer or tablet
- USAWEC admissions do not discriminate based on race, religion, age, disability, marital status, education, business revenue, or geographic location.

## WHAT WE LOOK FOR?

USAWEC seeks to build a diverse cohort in which participants share some consistent characteristics:

- Vision, passion, empathy, and resilience
- Business clarity and commitment
- Desire to scale their business



## WHAT TO EXPECT?

Participants should expect to:

- Spend an average of 4-6 hours per week participating in USAWEC activities, primarily in a remote format
- Be matched with a mentor and to take ownership of their mentor/mentee relationship
- Be introduced to a peer group, and actively contribute to group discussions and activities
- Participate in at least one USAWEC activity per week throughout the program, including zoom-enabled meetings
- Be challenged, stretched, and inspired as they acquire new knowledge
- Develop skills, build their peer network, and transform their businesses
- Gain access to a program advisor from whom they can seek support when needed
- Respond to periodic program surveys

## HOW YOU WILL BENEFIT?

Upon successful completion of the 3-month program, participants will:

- Form connections with a diverse network of American women entrepreneurs and business leaders
- Establish a relationship with a senior business mentor
- Strengthen strategy, leadership and business management skills
- Gain practical skills in finance, operations, and sales and marketing needed to grow and scale their enterprise
- Develop a toolkit of soft skills, including self-confidence, resilience and collaboration

## IMPORTANT DATES

- The USAWEC application window will be open from June 9-June 23, 2021
- The inaugural Cohort will run from August 1, 2021 to October 30, 2021 including a five day online orientation period during the last week of July 2021.
- Monthly activities include: a live speaker session, assignment, peer session, peer feedback and 1:1 mentoring session.
- Welcome session will be held on August 3, 11:00 AM-12:00 PM ET
- Live sessions will be held on August 5, September 9 & October 7 from 11:00 AM-12:30 PM ET
- Mid-program keynote session will be held on September 23, 10:00-11:00 ET
- General assembly for qualified participants will be held on November 3-4 in Nashville, which will provide an opportunity for networking and in-person learning (following appropriate vaccination, distancing protocols, and safety protocols).