



Ann Arbor SPARK

Semi-Annual Report
City of Ann Arbor
Jan 1, 2020 – Jun 30, 2020

ANN ARBOR
SPARK

Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture.

<https://annarborusa.org/>

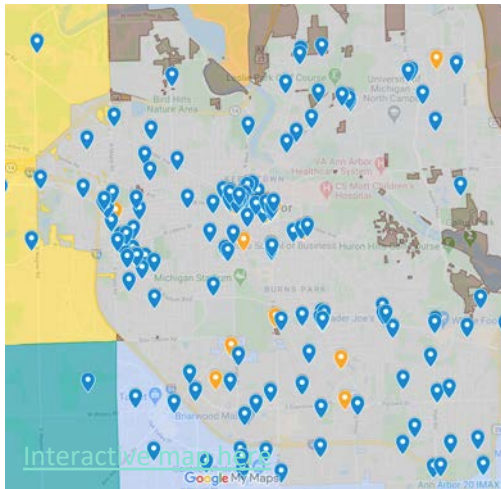
2020 At-a-Glance | Mid-Year Overview

2020 MID-YEAR SPOTLIGHT - COVID-19 RESPONSE

At this time, Ann Arbor SPARK is diligently working on efforts where we can be the most effective and helpful.

- We worked with county funding to stand up the [Washtenaw Small Business Emergency Relief Fund](#); recapitalizing it with private dollars. (See pages 12-13)
- Established and disbursed funds for the [Michigan Small Business Relief Program](#). (See page 14)
- Providing COVID-19 [resources](#) and referrals. (See pages 11, 15-17)
- **Looking ahead:** Michigan Restart Grant Program - looking to administer \$3.2 million in grants to small businesses in Washtenaw County.

Small Business Grants – State and Local



Ann Arbor SPARK was the fiduciary for the **Washtenaw Small Business Emergency Relief Fund** and the **Michigan Small Business Relief Program**.

167 companies in the City of Ann Arbor were issued grants under those two programs, totaling \$544,500 in funds.

More details available on pages 14-15



40
GROWTH CALLS

2020 mid-year

of full-time staff at these companies:

3,365

3 Project Success

Seoul Robotics USA: Advanced 3D computer vision for 3D sensors, Korean company established first US office in Ann Arbor.

Fifth Eye Inc.: Digital health predictive analytics. Company expanded to a new office in downtown Ann Arbor.

Human Element: eCommerce development, strategy & consulting, experience design, and digital marketing company expanding their footprint in Ann Arbor.

68 Projects in the Pipeline

Influence of COVID-19:

Fewer projects were added to the pipeline since COVID-19 hit the U.S., but few projects have yet come off. This may change.



43 NEW JOBS



36 RETAINED JOBS

TOTAL INVESTMENT

2020 mid-year



11.8 M

Main Source: Human Element expansion



Ann Arbor SPARK Business Development Mission

Maximize job creation and capital investment by growing the region's GDP through the retention and expansion of established driving industry companies that sell goods and services outside the Ann Arbor region, and through the targeted attraction domestically and internationally of similar companies that could succeed in our region.



City of Ann Arbor Metrics

| Companies Assisted | | Q1-Q2 2020 |
|--|--|--------------|
| Number of growth visits | | 40 |
| Number of attraction prospect site visits ¹ | | 0* |
| Number of responses to attraction prospect or site consultant requests for proposals ² | | 0 |
| Jobs – 2020 Projects | | |
| Projected to be created (over the next 3 years) ³ | | 43 |
| Jobs projected to be retained | | 36 |
| Investment | | |
| Taxable value of new private investment | | \$5,901,080 |
| Total value of private investment | | \$11,802,160 |
| Miscellaneous | | |
| Number and value of investments leveraged through and including federal and state grants and incentives, foundations and other sources that assisted businesses or organizations | 1 MEDC BDP incentive of \$260,000 awarded in Q2. | |

¹Number of discreet projects that were physically toured around sites in Washtenaw County.

²Number of requests to which SPARK electronically submitted properties located in Washtenaw County.

³These jobs are projected to be added over the next three years, we will update the numbers as we interact with the companies and determine progress.

*The COVID-19 crisis limited our ability to physically tour space so far in 2020.



SPARK celebrates all projects that may have an impact on our region. We do not count jobs and investments where SPARK was not directly involved.

Ann Arbor SPARK

Metrics - JOBS

SPARK acts as project manager for both the communities it supports and the companies it serves. Our project management efforts can be fairly simple, such as conducting data analysis that a company may use in its business planning, or as complex as full project management for significant company expansions.

This would include everything from:

- Connecting them to proper resources
- Working with the site selection community to help determine a location for a project
- Fully managing the tax incentive paperwork and the process it may require
- Creating communication plans
- Traveling to company locations outside of the state
- Making presentations to key public and private decision makers
- Talent recruitment efforts



When companies apply for local or state incentives, they fill out applications that require both job creation and investment estimates. SPARK considers these projects a success after they are publicly announced, or when the proper approval process has taken place for the incentive sought by the company. SPARK's jobs and investments numbers are based on these project announcements provided by the companies. SPARK monitors actual job creation and those results are shown in this report. SPARK supports a company directly or it supports the consultants the company utilizes during its expansion. Whatever role SPARK might play, we capture jobs and investments for projects where we have played an active role in helping a company decide to move forward.

SPARK celebrates all projects that may have an impact on our region. We do not count jobs and investments where SPARK was not directly involved.

Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2020

COMPANIES VISITED

Growth calls are a core economic development strategy that involve proactively outreaching and engaging with the existing employer base in our region to determine where they face opportunities and challenges. Growth calls recognize that businesses are dynamic entities that involve constant change. These calls allow SPARK to:

- gather information about local businesses that can be aggregated to reveal trends,
- determine valuable resources that could assist in the company's development,
- identify growth projects that require assistance, and
- serve as an ombudsman between businesses and government.

SPARK conducts hundreds of targeted growth calls each year that result in numerous referrals to resources, services and opportunities of which companies are often unaware. The most common referrals involve accessing talent, access to capital or business development/sales opportunities. Proactive outreach helps companies address challenges before they become problems, supports their continued growth and helps them see that this region is invested in their success.

SPARK HELD GROWTH VISITS WITH


40 COMPANIES

IN THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR

These companies ranged from 1 to 700 employees and encompassed a wide range of industries including Information Technology, Life Sciences, Education, Defense, Aerospace, Automotive, and Manufacturing.

Together, they represent 3,365 full-time employees.

Companies Visited Jan-Jun 2020

| Company Name | Current FTE (as of growth visit) |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ann Arbor T-shirt Company | 100 |
| Autaza Technology Inc. | 1 |
| Backyard Brains Incorporated | 10 |
| Barracuda Networks, Inc. | 225 |
| Black & Veatch Corp. | 248 |
| Comerica Bank | 25 |
| Criteo | 75 |
| DaySmart Software | 87 |
| DERQ USA, INC. | 2 |
| Engage | 1 |
| Expedia | 0 |
| FordLabs | 75 |
| Human Element, Inc. | 38 |
| IBM Watson Health | 700 |
| Jottful, LLC | 3 |
| KLA Corporation | 120 |
| Lakeside Software R&D | 37 |
| Lear Corporation | 8 |
| LiveRoad Analytics Inc | 3 |
| LLamasoft | 300 |
| LYONSCG | 39 |
| Millendo Therapeutics, Inc. | 25 |
| NETSCOUT | 160 |
| NetWorks Group | 22 |
| Omnex/AQSR, Inc. | 40 |
| ONL Therapeutics, Inc. | 5 |
| Otava | 40 |

Companies Visited Jan-Jun 2020

| Company Name | Current FTE (as of growth visit) |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Phire Advertising and Design, LLC | 25 |
| ProQuest | 600 |
| R2 Space | 12 |
| Rydberg Technologies Inc. | 7 |
| SBD North America | 20 |
| SkySpecs, Inc. | 75 |
| Smart Eye | 3 |
| Synecdoche Design | 9 |
| TD Ameritrade | 175 |
| Treetown Tech LLC | 15 |
| Vayu (U.S.), Inc. | 10 |
| Voxel51, Inc. | 10 |
| Workit Health, Inc. | 15 |
| Total FTE at all visited companies | 3,365 |

COMPANY TESTIMONIALS

1/6/2020

"Jennifer Olmstead provided the perfect balance of ideas, follow-up, and independence for us to make the best decision for our team. We would not have found our unique office space solution if not for Jennifer's suggestion. Thank you."

7/13/2020

"Starting a new company is a very challenging endeavor, but having the assistance from SPARK has made a significant difference for Interplai that greatly improves our chances for success during this initial period. I'm tremendously excited about our business and I was blown away with all of the resources that SPARK has provided that enables us to focus on our vision and get to work building our company."

Commercial Real Estate Trends Symposium

January 8, 2020

U-M Golf Course Clubhouse

The event was held at the University of Michigan Golf Course Club House and welcomed 200 area professionals spanning the fields of real estate, banking, and real estate development.

The Swisher report includes breakdowns of vacancy rates by sub-market and charts vacancy trends over the last 25 years. The goal of the report is to help industry professionals better understand the current market and assist in planning real estate decisions. The event paired the report's release with a presentation on the area's economic forecast from Don Grimes, regional economic specialist for the University of Michigan's Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics.



2020 Washtenaw County Economic Outlook: Highlights and Key Takeaways

Gabriel M. Ehrlich and Donald R. Grimes from the [Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics](#) (RSQE) at the University of Michigan presented the Washtenaw County economic forecast during an online webinar organized by the Washtenaw Economic Club — an event that Ann Arbor SPARK is proud to sponsor. The webinar occurred on May 29, 2020.

This year's forecast came during the COVID-19 global pandemic, one that has significantly impacted Michigan's residents and will have a far-reaching economic impact. Ann Arbor SPARK's Director of Research Alex West, who moderated the webinar, provided this high-level summary of the Washtenaw County Forecast.

[Read the full report](#)

[View the presentation](#)

Below is an excerpt of the blog post summarizing the outlook presentation. [Read the full blog here.](#)

THE PATH TO RECOVERY WILL BE GRADUAL, AND CONDITIONAL.

The forecast was made with a few key assumptions: University of Michigan students returning in the fall, the prevention of a second wave of the outbreak, and federal funding for states and local governments. Even with these conditions, most economic indicators will see a sharp decline this year and a gradual recovery for the next two years, barely reaching 2019 levels by 2022.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN REMAINS A CONSTANT SOURCE OF STABILITY.

Washtenaw County has held up better than other communities throughout Michigan as well as compared to the state as a whole. This is largely due to the University of Michigan acting as a regional stabilizer, even amid wage freezes and layoffs. The institution itself remains, which significantly impacts present and future economic indicators.

WASHTENAW COUNTY INDUSTRIES WILL NOT ALL FARE EQUALLY.

Based on a myriad of factors — some existing before the pandemic — certain industries in the county may not recover from this recession. On the other hand, some industries will experience a minimal impact while others may grow. However, the recovery will not keep up with the growth in the labor force. As a result, Ehrlich and Grimes forecast an increase of the unemployment rate from 2.9 percent in 2019 to 5.4 percent in 2022.

CAVEATS REMAIN, THE OVERALL OUTLOOK IS HOPEFUL.

While Washtenaw County has not escaped the impact of the COVID-19 Recession, this region will fare relatively better than the state and nation as a whole. Overall (and given significant assumptions), RSQE forecasts that Washtenaw County will experience a two-year economic setback, with unemployment numbers lagging behind other key indicators. The University of Michigan's presence anchors the region, providing jobs and an influx of the student population which bolsters the local economy.

eBook: Ann Arbor's Startup Ecosystem 101

Ann Arbor is home to some of the fastest-growing companies in the Midwest, ranging from tech to healthcare to mobility – and people are starting to take notice. In 2019, Bloomberg identified Ann Arbor as a [Top New U.S. Tech Hub](#)

Supporting the hundreds of Ann Arbor-based entrepreneurs is a robust **startup ecosystem** comprised of the companies, people, and organizations helping startups succeed. This new eBook from Ann Arbor SPARK provides a quick introduction to the innovation-focused community thriving in Ann Arbor.

Check out our [Ann Arbor Startup Ecosystem 101](#) ebook for an overview of what's happening and how you can get involved.

The eBook has info on:

- Notable startup “exits”
- Lists of startups in mobility, life science, and technology
- Startups origin stories
- Fast-growing company profiles
- Startup ecosystem partners and resources
- Case studies



Ann Arbor SPARK – Clean Energy Focus

A2ZERO

Ann Arbor SPARK is one of 60 partners working with the City of Ann Arbor to achieve a just transition to carbon neutrality, community-wide, by the year 2030. Through this initiative, a Carbon Neutrality Plan has been adopted by city council and the partnership has transitioned to a working group that is not only refining the plan, but finding ways to implement its strategic direction.



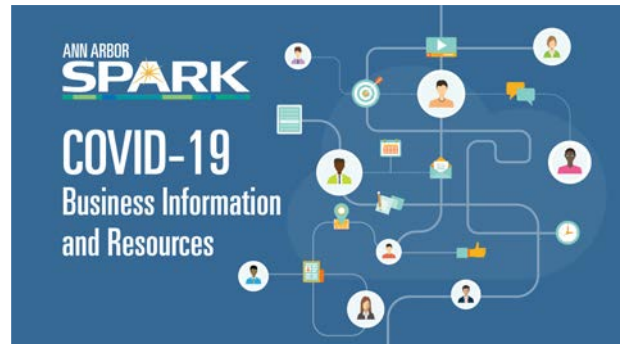
IN² Channel Partner

In June 2020, Ann Arbor SPARK became a Channel Partner to the IN² technology incubator. The incubator is funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation in partnership with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), designed to speed the path to market for early-stage, clean-technology entrepreneurs. Launched in 2014 with an initial focus on supporting scalable solutions to reduce the energy impact of commercial buildings, IN² has since expanded its focus to advance technologies that address the sustainable production of agriculture and affordable housing. Companies selected for participation in the program receive up to \$250,000 in non-dilutive funding from Wells Fargo, technical support and validation from experts at NREL and the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, and ongoing connections to organizations across value chains. IN² is an invitation-only program that works with its Channel Partners, consisting of incubators and accelerators, to refer companies to the program, and grant support does not require location change.

Early collaboration included participation in a white paper focused the landscape of the cleantech startup ecosystem and the true “health of the pipeline,” especially in geographies not traditionally associated with clean tech (like the Midwest). Going forward, SPARK will refer companies to the program, apply for grant dollars for local projects, and participate in national events to bring awareness and funds to the region.

COVID-19 Response

Since March 16, the Ann Arbor Region (along with the rest of the world) has experienced an unprecedented shift in our economy due to COVID-19 and the orders to restrict activity due to this pandemic. Ann Arbor SPARK has shifted its activity and focus in the short-term to address the economic effects of this pandemic.



The response in the past few months has involved:

- SPARK published a [COVID-19 resource page](#) as an initial response to provide businesses with access to available resources.
- In May, SPARK launched the [Business Recovery Center](#) as a more long-term solution. The Business Recovery Center serves as a single destination for organizations looking for expert advice and information on how to adapt to today's business climate and allows site visitors to view a full range of resources, register for upcoming online events, view pre-recorded webinars and read profiles about regional businesses withstanding the pandemic.
- [Washtenaw Small Business Emergency Relief Fund](#) – The WSBERF was created to address the financial hardship due to the COVID-19 crisis. The fund provides working capital grants of up to \$5,000 to qualifying small businesses, made possible by a \$1 million gift from The Song Foundation and additional contributions from: Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Washtenaw County, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Bank of Ann Arbor, Pittsfield Charter Township, Chemical Bank, New Economy Initiative, and a GoFundMe Campaign. Ann Arbor SPARK, in partnership with Office of Community & Economic Development of Washtenaw County, Entrepreneurship Center at Washtenaw Community College and the Song Foundation quickly set up a review process and over a 10-day period reviewed over 1,500 grant submissions and dispersed over \$1.3 million in 500+ grants.
- [Michigan Small Business Relief Program](#) – Ann Arbor SPARK led a regional effort to receive and disburse \$900,000 for the six-county Greater Ann Arbor Region from the State of Michigan. The state provided \$327,000 for companies in Washtenaw County and \$168,000 for companies in Livingston County. SPARK convened a review committee of SPARK staff, representatives from WCC's Entrepreneurship Center, staff from the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, and advisory review from the Small Business Development Center to ensure eligibility and availability of funds. In total, the state funds provided 66 grants to businesses in Washtenaw County.
- SPARK will continue to monitor federal, state, local, nonprofit, and private resources and communicate opportunities to the community, including those through the [Federal Economic Development Administration](#), foundations and other partnership opportunities.
- **Pipeline of Resilience** – the SPARK business development team is actively working on over 65 projects, more than 12 of which were identified after the start of the pandemic.

We appreciate our partnership with the City of Ann Arbor during this time.

Washtenaw Small Business Emergency Relief Fund – Overview and City of Ann Arbor Focus

City of Ann Arbor

County Grants Awarded **148**



The WSBERF was created to address the financial hardship due to the COVID-19 crisis. The fund provides working capital grants of up to \$5,000 to qualifying small businesses in Washtenaw County.

24th Cheesecakeerie, 306X LLC, A2 Aviary LLC, A2 Phone Repair, Abduls Deli LLC, Academy of Russian Classical Ballet, Alley Bar, Ann Arbor Birth and Family, Inc, Ann Arbor Guesthouses, Ann Arbor Rent-ALL, LLC dba A-1 Rental, Arbor Law PLLC, Arborsense, Inc., Ascott Corporation, Ashley's Restaurants Ltd., Authentic Art Tattoo Studio, Ayse's Café, Inc., Bandito's Inc., BEEQ SALON & SPA, Bellanina Day Spa & Gift Boutique, Benz Oil Change, Betty Brigade, Big Ten Party Store, Inc (dba Morgan & York/York Food & Drink), Blank Slate Creamery, Blom Meadworks, Blue Nile, Body Conscious LLC, Brittany Bennion Photography, BTB Burrito, Campus Eats LLC, Chrysanthemum's Garden, Cj's Taco Cart, Coval Fitness, Cross Street Group, Cuddle Creek, Dance Revolution LLC, Dascola Barbers, Debora Collins MA LLC, Dianna Quinn ND LLC, DIY Collect LLC, East U Provisions LLC, Educated Tutoring, El Harissa Market Café, Embrace Orthodontics, ENCORE RECORDS, Essential Healing Arts PLLC, Everyday Fitness, Forged Barbell, FreightRoll Inc., Frita Ann Arbor LLC (DBA - Frita Batidos), Full Count Sports A2 LLC, Gaudium, Inc., Grapa LLC Db a Vinology, Graphikitchen, LLC, Groom N Go, Guru Ventures, Happy House Gift Shop/ FREY, Inc., Healing River Therapy, Hearth in the Hills, Hungry Howies, Huron Net Works Inc., In Touch Therapeutic Massage LLC, Independent Clinician, InheRET, Inc., Intergrative Fitness Concepts, Ivey Salon, J. Keller Properties, Jade Hair and Nail Boutigue, Janet Denson Designs, Japanese Martial Arts Center, JD Janitorial LLC, Jennifer L Curtis, Joy Family Center, Karma Hair, Katy Vore Hair Studio LLC, Kinetic Energy, Inc (dba Vie Fitness & Spa), Knix Studio, La Taqueria Ann Arbor LLC, Level X Talent, LLC, Lewan Boxing - Ann Arbor, LLC dba TITLE Boxing Club of Ann Arbor, Lighthouse Wealth Management, Lit Unlimited, LLC, Lorde Home and Commercial Cleaning Services, LLC, Lucky Kitchen, Lucky Monkey Tattoo, Lynn Olson, Main Street Area Association, Inc., Marie Krull's Sew What, May's Chinese Preschool LLC, MBD Food Corp (maize and blue delicatessen), Metagrate, Metamorphosis salon, Mighty Good Coffee, Mike Green and Associates, Inc., MiTechNews, My Urban Toddler at Arbor Hills, LLC, Neopapalis, Nicole Pangas Ceramics, Nightcap, Ocean Blue Jewelers LLC, Ojens State Street Alterations, One Bowl Asian Cuisine, Oz's Music Environment, Pathware, Inc, Peaceable Pets Animal Care, LLC, Phimation Ventures, Inc, PinkCastle Fabrics LLC, Pizza Bob's, Qure, LLC, RelaxStation Massage Therapy, RockPaperScissors Shop Ann Arbor LLC, RWB Group LLC/Taste kitchen, Saica Restaurant, Saloni's Beauty Solutions, LLC, Seva Inc dba Seva Restaurant, Songbird Baking Company, South Eastern Maintenance and Repair, Star's Café, State Street Quick Lube, Sujata Bhakta DDS PLC, Susan Lo L.M.T, Sweetwaters Café Inc., Taco king, Ten Fine Jewelry, The Circ Bar, The Discovery Center of Ann Arbor, Inc., The GetUp LLC, The Grotto, The Last Word Ann Arbor, The Songbird Café, The Wolverine State Brewing Company LLC, Thrive Juicery, LLC, Top Drawer Consignment, Top Nails, TRANSITION SERVICES, UMI Trading Inc., Up and Up Construction LLC, Vertex Coffee LLC, vicki's wash & wear haircuts, Victory Lane Quick Oil Change, Vin Vin Vin, Warmilu, LLC, Washtenaw Dairy, West Side Furniture Consignments, Workantile, XL Unlimited, LLC/Dancesport and Fitness, Your Personal Pack Sitter LLC, Yourist Studio Gallery

500+

Total Grants Awarded in County

Grants ranged between

\$1,000 - \$5,000

TOTAL FUNDING DISBURSED



1.3+ million

The WSBERF grants were made possible by the following contributors: Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Washtenaw County, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Bank of Ann Arbor, Pittsfield Charter Township, Chemical Bank, New Economy Initiative, The Song Foundation, GoFundMe Campaign

Michigan Small Business Relief Program – Overview and City of Ann Arbor Focus

66

Companies
Awarded
Washtenaw County

Companies awarded
grants of **\$5,000**

of jobs retained as a
result of funding: **844***

* Self-reported by companies at time of application.

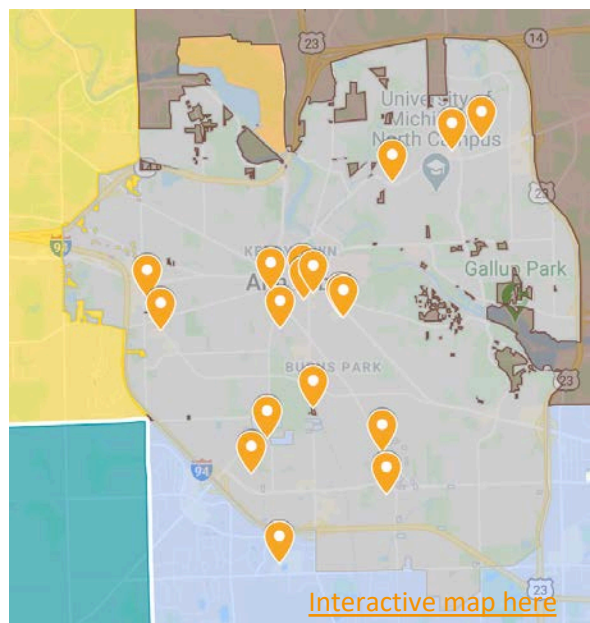
Ann Arbor SPARK led a regional effort to receive and disburse \$900,000 for the six-county Greater Ann Arbor Region from the State of Michigan. The state provided \$327,000 for companies in Washtenaw County.

City of Ann Arbor

State Grants
Awarded **19**

Funding
Disbursed **\$95,000**

Ann Arbor Community Acupuncture Project, Ann Arbor Hardwoods LLC, ATD Services, LLC, aUM Yoga LLC, Avissa Salon Inc., Barre Bee Fit of Michigan, Biercamp, Exciting Future DBASeniors Helping Seniors, Golden Pancake Chicken - Moonwinks Café, Iorio's Gelato, J.E. LLC, Biggby Coffee, KJ Crabtree DBA Dance Theatre Studio, Kosmo, Little Bands LLC, Makerworx LLC DBA Maker Works, MVMNT LLC, Orchard Hills Living LLC, VanRoth LLC DBA Blue Lion Fitness, Zoey and Joey West LLC



The demand for funding through the **Michigan Small Business Relief Program** was overwhelming. The need far exceeded the funds.

More than **960** companies in the county applied for the limited amount of funding. Nearly **\$15 million** in need was requested, but only **\$327,000** was available to disperse in Washtenaw County.

On-Demand Webinars

New Webinars Added Frequently



LEARN MORE

Meaningful Meetings: Hosting Virtual Conversations with Energy and Engagement

Learn practical tips for facilitating inclusive dialogue and effective decision-making while conducting virtual meetings.

Recorded on May 5, 2020

More -



LEARN MORE

Intro to the Lean Startup Method and Creating Your Ecosystem Map

Learn the Lean Startup methodology and build an ecosystem map to help you determine the priorities of your stakeholders.

Recorded On May 4, 2020
Password 4X@A43?y

More -



LEARN MORE

GETTING BACK TO WORK: ADDRESSING POST-COVID-19 WORKPLACE CHALLENGES

Getting Back to Work: Addressing post-COVID-19 Workplace Challenges

Bodman Law helps navigate both legal and HR COVID-19 issues as organizations plan for a return to the workplace.

Recorded on April 30, 2020

More -



LEARN MORE

15 Things You Can Do in a Crisis

Ted Dacko provides 15 pragmatic ideas for what you can do over the next 90 days that do not necessarily involve direct sales efforts.

Recorded on April 22, 2020
Password MpprsYA9

More -



LEARN MORE

Unpacking Government Resources Available to Small Businesses

Rehmann helps us understand the details of the new and updated policies passed by the federal government in response to COVID-19.

Recorded on: April 16, 2020

More -



LEARN MORE

Decision-Making in Difficult Times: Navigating the COVID Crisis

Ted Dacko provides decision-making tips & recommendations to help early stage companies face challenges prompted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Recorded on: April 15, 2020
Password: YeFsXe3p

More -

SPARK is responding to the need to have on-demand access to resources as professionals adjust their working schedules to accommodate childcare and homeschooling.

A growing library of on-demand webinars is now available, including past presentations by Bodman, Rehmann and Ted Dacko.

SPARK Resource Hub and Website

COVID-19 Business Recovery Center Campaign



PROGRAMS, GRANTS & FUNDS (6) [View All](#)

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
|  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>AA-Ypsi Local Givitas Community A platform for small, local businesses and nonprofits to ask for support, and for others in the community to give support in response.</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>New Business Accelerator Funds (BAF) Announced by Michigan SBDC SPARK is facilitating new, limited BAFs available to help tech companies involved with alleviating the COVID-19 crisis.</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>Tech Startup Stabilization Fund The MEDC announced the creation of a \$3 million Tech Startup Stabilization Fund to help stabilize early stage tech startups.</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act A summary of the major programs and initiatives available from the Small Business Administration as a result of the federal CARES act.</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>Michigan Paycheck Protection Program By keeping your small business going during COVID-19, you will be helping the Michigan economy thrive during the pandemic.</p> <p>More -</p> |
|---|--|--|---|--|

ON-DEMAND WEBINARS (5) [View All](#)

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|--|---|---|--|---|
|  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>Intro to the Lean Startup Method and Creating Your Ecosystem Map Learn the Lean Startup methodology and build an ecosystem map to help you determine the priorities of your stakeholders.</p> <p>Recorded On: May 4, 2020 Password: 4x@A437y</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>Getting Back to Work: Addressing post-COVID-19 Workplace Challenges Bodman Lee helps navigate both legal and HR COVID-19 issues as organizations plan for a return to the workplace.</p> <p>Recorded on: April 30, 2020</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>15 Things You Can Do in a Crisis Ted Dardo provides 15 pragmatic ideas for what you can do over the next 90 days that do not necessarily involve direct sales efforts.</p> <p>Recorded on: April 22, 2020 Password: MpenV48</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>Unpacking Government Resources Available to Small Businesses Rehmann helps us understand the details of the new and updated policies passed by the federal government in response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Recorded on: April 16, 2020</p> <p>More -</p> |  <p>LEARN MORE</p> <p>Decision-Making in Difficult Times: Navigating the COVID Crisis Ted Dardo provides decisionmaking tips & recommendations to help early stage companies face challenges prompted by the COVID-19 crisis.</p> <p>Recorded on: April 15, 2020 Password: YefKeehp</p> <p>More -</p> |
|--|---|---|--|---|

Overview

Since mid-March, Ann Arbor SPARK has provided numerous business resources in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, these and future resources can be found at the new [Ann Arbor SPARK Business Resource Center](#), a content hub powered by [InfoReady Corporation](#).



[Business Resources](#) | [Find Support + Assistance](#) | [Ann Arbor SPA...](#)
[Ad](#) www.annarborusa.org/resources 734-761-9317

We compiled a list of resources available to businesses during the COVID-19 outbreak. Contact our business development team for more info or to start using these resources.

Career Resources - Job Board

[Business Funding](#)
[FAQs](#)

[Entrepreneur Services](#)
[Services Offered](#)

Mid-Year 2020

City of Ann Arbor Press Releases

University of Michigan Credit Union Donates \$5,000 to the Community Action Network with Help of More Than 70 Local Businesses: Twenty local students will have the opportunity to take advantage of a six-week summer program designed to prepare teens for their potential career goals thanks to a recent donation of \$5,000 to the Community Action Network (CAN) from the University of Michigan Credit Union (UMCU). This gift was made possible with the help of 71 local businesses during UMCU's "Shop Local Give Local" campaign.

Agita Labs Wins \$25,000 as "Best of" Ann Arbor SPARK's Entrepreneur Boot Camp: At the conclusion of its latest Entrepreneur Boot Camp, Ann Arbor SPARK awarded Agita Labs its \$25,000 Best of Boot Camp prize and Culturebie its \$10,000 runner up prize. New to Entrepreneur Boot Camp is a third-place prize, awarded to Shout, which won desk space at the SPARK Central Innovation Center for three months. The winners were selected by an esteemed panel of experts, based on the business's investor pitch.

Ann Arbor's R2 Space Receives Defense Innovation Unit Award: R2 Space, Inc. that it was awarded a contract by the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU). DIU is charged with pulling in the nation's best innovative commercial technologies for use by the Department of Defense (DoD). DIU will accelerate R2 Space's cutting-edge RADAR satellite technology capable of imaging the earth during the day, at night, and through the clouds. In late 2019, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Ann Arbor SPARK worked with R2 Space to establish the company's headquarters in Ann Arbor.

Ann Arbor SPARK Launches SPARK.tech Virtual Workshop for Startups: For the first time, Ann Arbor SPARK is making its Entrepreneur Boot Camp curriculum available online. The three-part webinar series, SPARK.tech, is designed to guide innovators who have a tech-related business idea through the first stages of bringing their product or service to market. SPARK.tech is a complementary program to Ann Arbor SPARK's Entrepreneur Boot Camp, which will continue to offer critical one-on-one coaching to participating startups that are part of its business accelerator program.

Mid-Year 2020 Press Releases

[Michigan Angel Community Releases Annual Report: 1322 Angels Invested \\$73.6 Million in Startups](#)

The Michigan Angel Community recently released its 2019 annual research report. The study aimed to capture data on meaningful metrics by surveying angel groups, individual angels, as well as angel-funded companies. “Since we started publishing this report in 2017, angel activity across Michigan has steadily increased,” explained Skip Simms, Michigan Angel Fund managing director and Ann Arbor SPARK senior vice president. “Our inaugural report discovered 797 angels in Michigan, who invested \$41.9 million in startups here. This past year, that number swelled to 1,322 angels who invested \$73.6 million in Michigan companies.”

[LoanSense Shifts Platform to Provide Personalized Student Loan Advisory Services Direct to Consumers, Including Information and Opportunities within the COVID-19 Relief Bill](#)

LoanSense is a digital student loan advisor that simplifies the loan repayment process through customized plans and solutions that lead toward loan forgiveness. While that mission remains unchanged, LoanSense’s approach has taken a drastic turn over the course of the past few months—from initially collaborating with employers to offer loan assistance as an employee benefit to now working directly with individual consumers. Closely following the development and announcement of the CARES Act, LoanSense founder and CEO Catalina Kaiyoorawongs restructured the existing platform to transform it to service the individual consumer as well as continue to help employers aid their employees with student debt.

[Business expansions bring new investments to support economic growth in Michigan](#): Human Element, Inc., headquartered in Ann Arbor, provides integrated eCommerce and web-based business solutions for corporate clients throughout the United States. The company is growing due to increased demand and plans to purchase and renovate an existing building in Washtenaw County. The project is expected to generate a total private investment of nearly \$11.7 million and create 26 high-paying jobs. As a result, Human Element has been awarded a \$260,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant. The company considered sites in Colorado, Oregon, Texas, and Washington, as well as the possibility of hiring remote workers, before choosing to expand and create jobs in Michigan. Ann Arbor SPARK has worked with the company and will provide staff time and resources in support of the project

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[Statewide platform to connect Michigan employers with PPE producers, suppliers as non-essential businesses begin to re-open](#): With efforts to re-engage Michigan’s economy underway through recent executive orders signed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer, the Pure Michigan Business Connect program through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation has developed a portal specifically designed to support the personal protective equipment (PPE) needs of Michigan businesses as they start the process of re-opening. Both Michigan businesses in need of PPE, as well as businesses with goods and services that might be able to support organizations in safeguarding their employees and customers as they transition to in-person operations, are encouraged to submit information on the portal. Those businesses with supplier capabilities may be added to a supplier database that will then be made available to businesses with PPE procurement needs.

[Deerfield commits up to \\$130M to commercialize drug discovery at the University of Michigan](#): A new partnership between the University of Michigan and health care investment firm Deerfield Management Co. will create a company to commercialize therapeutic projects that hold promise in solving unmet medical needs. U-M and Deerfield on Wednesday announced the launch of Great Lakes Discoveries LLC. Deerfield has committed up to \$130 million over the next decade to invest in biomedical research at U-M with the aim of developing potentially life-saving drugs and disease treatments.

[From the Hospital to the Workplace: NavvTrack® Helps Employers with COVID-19 Social Distancing Application for Contact Detection, Contact Tracing & Social Distancing](#): Navv Systems, Inc. (NSI) is a healthcare technology company providing “wayfinding” solutions, like NavvTrack®, designed to help hospitals see the location of support staff (transport, housekeeping, couriers, etc.) and communicate with them in real time. Working with a large Detroit hospital system in one of the first and hardest hit metro regions in the U.S., NSI has had a unique view on the evolving impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As local car manufacturers were among the first in the country to undertake large-scale return-to-work planning—it became quickly apparent that the same technology helping hospitals safely care for patients could help companies safely take care of their employees. Working closely with the support of SPARK, the NSI team quickly shifted focus to the rapid roll-out of NavvTrack for COVID-19 contact detection and tracing.

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[LeaseMagnets Delivers Zero-Contact Property Tour with High-Touch Experience Uniquely Tailored to Interests of Prospective Tenants](#): LeaseMagnets is an Ann Arbor tech startup dedicated to helping property management companies deliver a more engaging leasing experience that seamlessly flows between online and in-person interactions. When the pandemic brought foot-traffic to a standstill, the LeaseMagnets team immediately acted to help customers replace the in-person site tour by recreating the experience virtually. This new solution would not only help maintain the inflow of leases, but also go beyond the relatively “new” streaming tours, which still required a live agent on the other end. Together with The George, a local Ann Arbor apartment complex, the team developed a completely virtual, “choose your own video” tour that integrated effortlessly into the existing LeaseMagnets property management platform. LeaseMagnets’ new virtual tour yields advantages that extend far beyond the current pandemic. It enables a 24-hour, seven days a week availability that was not possible with a traditional guided tour, increasing the number of tours possible at any given time.



ANN ARBOR
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Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture.