



Cultivate Small Business

An innovative program from Santander designed for food entrepreneurs.

Santander's Cultivate Small Business program is designed to support the growth of early-stage woman-, BIPOC-, and immigrant-owned food businesses in emerging neighborhoods. The 12-week, fully virtual program is completely free to entrepreneurs, and provides you with industry specific education and networking, along with capital grants for your business. The Spring 2025 cohort support entrepreneurs in the Greater Boston, Rhode Island and New York City areas.

Our Partners



Applicant Criteria

Cultivate Small Business aims to strengthen minority entrepreneurs (including women and people of color) in food-related industries and their businesses with the building blocks to be successful business owners.

Program participants should represent a business that meets the following criteria:

- Participants should reside in or represent a business located in a low-to-moderate income, urban area in the Greater Boston, Rhode Island, Bristol County MA and New York City areas.
- Gross/net revenues of \$25,000 to \$1,000,000 in the most recent full calendar year.
- Minimum of 1 year in operation as of January 1, 2025
- Between 1 and 10 full-time equivalent employees
- Food-related industries, including processing, technology, manufacturing, and food services

Questions about the program?

Greater Boston Area: CultivateSmallBusiness@Santander.us

Greater Rhode Island and Bristol County, MA Areas: Mike at mike@HopeAndMain.org

Greater New York City Area: CultivateSmallBusiness@HotBreadKitchen.org

"Cultivate Small Business was a game-changer for our business! I met (and learned from) a ton of remarkable, engaged, small business owners in both my industry and my area - often both - as well as the amazing teams at Babson and Santander. A year later, I still find myself using the tools, strategies, and advice they offered, as well as the action plan and projections I generated. A lot of programs take up a lot of time without going too deep; **Cultivate Small Business is different**. Expect to get as much out of the program as the effort you put in."

— Nima Etemadi, Co-Founder and CEO, Cake Life Bake Shop (Philadelphia) and Cohort 6 Alumnus

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CURRICULUM

These sessions will be taught virtually by current Babson College professors.

NETWORKING

Program participants spend time with industry experts who share valuable knowledge and help address challenges participants are facing. These subject matter experts cover a diverse array of topics and come from all three markets included in each cohort.

CAPITAL GRANTS

All participants who successfully complete the program (attend classes, present a business pitch and submit a final action plan) are eligible for a grant of \$2,500. Nine exemplary graduates will be awarded grants of up to \$13,000.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Program duration: Classes run from late March through the end of June 2025.

HOW TO APPLY

Click [here](#) to apply.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

Attend one of our official info sessions.

[Register here](#) or click through the QR code

