



U.S. Treasury Approves up to \$57 Million in State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) 2.0 Program funds for American Samoa

The U.S. Treasury has officially approved the American Samoa State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) 2.0 program, empowering the territory with up to \$57.0 million in funding to fuel the growth and resilience of local small businesses. This approval marks a significant milestone in fostering economic development, economic diversification and job creation in American Samoa.

The American Samoa SSBCI program is designed to address the unique needs of the territory's small business community, with a diverse set of initiatives aimed at providing financial support and encouraging entrepreneurship. The approved programs include a Loan Guarantee Program (LGP), a Collateral Support Program (CSP), a Loan Participation Program (LPP), and an Equity/Venture Capital Program.

Key Highlights of the American Samoa SSBCI2.0 Program:

1. *Loan Guarantee Program (LGP):*
 - Allocation: \$32.5 million
 - Purpose: Providing a partial guarantee to support surety bonds and lines of credit, helping local businesses meet requirements needed to participate in large projects and access the necessary capital for expansion and operational needs.
2. *Collateral Support Program (CSP):*
 - Allocation: \$5.7 million
 - Purpose: Increasing access to commercial credit for small businesses by providing additional security for loans or credit facilities.
3. *Loan Participation Program (LPP):*
 - Allocation: \$8.6 million
 - Purpose: Providing risk diversification for lenders and increasing access to commercial credit for small businesses by participating in lending transactions.
4. *Equity/Venture Capital Program:*
 - Allocation: \$10.3 million
 - Purpose: Making direct investments in local small businesses and projects, fostering innovation, and supporting the development of a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in American Samoa.

Local leaders and stakeholders have welcomed this news, anticipating the positive impact these programs will have on the American Samoa business climate landscape. “We are happy to hear that the U.S. Treasury has approved our SSBCI2.0 program,” stated Governor Lemanu Palepoi Sialega Mauga. He continued, “Director Petti Matila and her Department of Commerce team have been working very hard since the announcement of the program’s reauthorization via the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in designing a program that would work for American Samoa. The combination of loan guarantees, collateral support, loan participation, and direct investments is expected to create a dynamic environment for entrepreneurship, job creation, and sustainable economic development.”

With the U.S. Treasury approval now in place, the American Samoa Government Department of Commerce is required to formally launch the program no later than June 1, 2024.

For more information about the American Samoa SSBCI program and its initiatives, please contact:

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About the U.S. Treasury State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI)

The State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) is a federal program administered by the U.S. Treasury, providing funding to states and territories to support small businesses and promote economic development. The program aims to enhance access to capital, encourage job creation, and stimulate local economies.

About ASG Department of Commerce

The Department of Commerce is dedicated to improving the quality of life of the people of American Samoa through economic development and sustainable resource management. This is accomplished through the various divisions that make up DOC and the hard-working people who make it all happen.

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