

# START HERE Revolving Loan Fund

## Business Plan Questionnaire

**Business Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact person/owner:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire is intended to guide you through the process of preparing a business plan. Please provide thorough and detailed answers to the following questions. You may use the space provided, attaching additional paper as necessary of submit a business plan that addresses the following in questions.

1. What products does your business sell or what services does your business provide? (List each of your business' products or services in order of importance.)

---

---

---

---

2. Is there anything unique about the products your business sells or the services your business provides? (For example: Is the primary product your business sells less expensive than any other comparable product being sold in the area? Is the service your business provides the best service of its kind in the area, etc....?)

---

---

---

---

3. Why do people purchase the products or services your business sells? What is a customer's primary motivation or reason for buying you products or services? What do your customers do with the products your business sells? Why do people purchase your business' services? Is the product you sell or the service you provide a "needed" or a "luxury" item?

---

---

---

---

4. What is your business' "competitive edge"? What makes the products you sell or the services you provide different from your competition? Why should prospective customers buy the product you sell or the service you provide instead of or service of your competitors?

---

---

---

5. Do you manufacture (construct or build) the products that your business sells? If so, describe how the products you sell are made. (Note: If your business provides a service rather than selling the product, this question is not applicable to you.)

---

---

---

6. What products does your business buy? (For example: If your business is a restaurant, you probably buy milk, eggs, cheese, meat, etc. from a grocer.) Who do you buy these products from? What payment arrangements, if any, have you made with the companies you buy products from?

---

---

---

7. Who buys the products you sell or uses the services you provide? Who is your "targeted market"? Are they male/female, low income/high income, city-dwellers or rural, 20-30 years old or 55+, etc.? Describe your current or prospective customers. Provide as much information about the people who buy your products or consume your services.

---

---

---

8. What outside circumstances or situations (such as economic or social factors) influence your current or prospective customers to buy your products or use your services?

---

---

---

9. If your business is already in existence: What do your customers think about the products you sell or the services you provide? If possible, provide a list of your primary/regular customers.

---

---

---

---

10. If your business is not yet in operation: How do you think prospective customers will respond to your proposed product or service? Have you received any reaction or feedback from possible customers regarding whether or not they would buy your product or use the services you provide?

---

---

---

---

11. Who are you competing with in selling your product or providing your service? List the name, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses, etc. of your primary competitors. Compare and contrast the price, quality, and other characteristics of the products your competitors sell or the services they provide with those of your business. How do your competitors distribute their products or services? What are your competitors' overall strengths and weaknesses? How do they advertise their products or services? Who do you competitors sell their products or services to?

---

---

---

---

12. How did you determine the price of the products you sell or the services you provide? Are your prices based of your competitors' prices, how much it costs you to provide the service or buy the product you sell, or the value of the service of product to the customer, etc.?

---

---

---

---

13. Do you offer any discounts on any of the services you provide or the products you sell? If so, please describe these discounts. (Example: Customers who pay their invoices within 10 days of receipt are given a 10% discount, etc.)

---

---

---

---

14. Do you offer credit to any of your customers? If so, please describe the credit plans you offer your customers. (Example: Cash only, 50% up front, pay upon receipt of invoice within 15 days, etc.)

---

---

---

---

15. What procedures do you follow if a customer does not pay his/her bill on time or his/her check bounces? Do you charge a late fee? Is that fee a flat-fee or a percentage? What do you do to collect the money you are owed?

---

---

---

---

16. How do you advertise and promote your product or service? (Example: Do you rely on word-of-mouth, yellow page advertisements, TV and/or radio advertisements, telemarketing, distributing flyers, etc.?)

---

---

---

---

17. How do you sell your product or service? What actual steps do you take to sell your product or service? (Example: Do you sell door-to-door? Do you wait for customers to contact you? Is your product displayed in stores? How often and for how long is your product displayed in stores? Do you telephone prospective customers? How often do you telephone prospective customers and how many prospective customers do you telephone?)

---

---

---

---

18. How do you distribute your products or services? (Example: Do you sell your products or provide your services directly to the customer or do you go through "middlemen"? A store that sells your products or markets your services for you is a "middleman".)

---

---

---

---

19. What do you, as the business owner, bring to this business in terms of cash, assets, talent, experience, skills, etc.? (Note: Please provide START HERE with the business owner's resume

and job description within this business. START HERE will also need resumes and job descriptions of all key personnel involved in your business.

---

---

---

---

20. What are your goals for this business within the next 3-5 years after receiving this loan? (Example: Will any new jobs be created? Will you expand from 1 site to 2 or 3 sites, etc.? Do you intend to introduce new products or services?)

---

---

---

---

21. Does or will your business have a board of directors or an advisory council? If so, who does or will serve on this board or council? Also, please describe the purpose and function of this board of directors or advisory council. Please provide START HERE with the names, position titles, addresses, phone numbers, etc. for each member of your business' board or council.

---

---

---

---

22. Describe the organization's structure including relevant personnel.

---

---

---

---

23. Please provide START HERE with a list of key resource people who will help you with you business such as a lawyer, a CPA, a tax preparer, a bookkeeper, a marketing advisor, etc. Please provide the full name, title/position, address, telephone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses, etc. for each of these resource people.

---

---

---

---