



State of California

BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES AND HOUSING AGENCY

Gavin Newsom, Governor
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2021

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Outsmart Disaster to Receive More than \$782,000 in CARES Act Recovery Assistance Grant from U.S. Department of Commerce

Part of a \$6.7 Million Investment in California Pandemic Response and Resiliency Efforts

SACRAMENTO – The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) has awarded California’s [Outsmart Disaster](#) resiliency program a grant of \$782,788 to expand its statewide education and training campaign to help businesses prepare for and recover from disasters.

With the new funding, approximately 1,600 small businesses will be added to the Outsmart Disaster Network of businesses that have accessed resiliency training, completed the business resiliency training, and downloaded toolkits and information to help them prepare to recover from disasters.

“These new resources come to the state at a crucial time, as we accelerate our efforts to help California’s small businesses impacted by the economic damage of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency Secretary Lourdes Castro Ramírez. “We will be able to provide more businesses with the tools they need to get back in business faster the next time a disaster strikes, whether it be a fire, a flood, an earthquake or a pandemic.”

The funding comes from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and will go to the California Academy for Economic Development, which is administering Outsmart Disaster on behalf of the state. It is part of the latest announcement of \$6.7 million that will go to California organizations to help communities and businesses respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be matched

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with more than \$195,000 from a philanthropic donation by JPMorgan Chase & Co., furthering the reach of the program.

“We strongly believe that being prepared for the next interruption, whatever the cause, will help California’s businesses minimize the impact of such breaks and bounce back quicker,” said Gurbax Sahota, who serves as Executive Director of The Academy and President and CEO of the California Association for Local Economic Development. “The Academy is honored to partner with the state and EDA to expand the availability of such a meaningful economic development resource.”

In addition to adding new small businesses to the Outsmart Disaster Network, the federal dollars will enable regional outreach across all 58 California counties, while targeting six Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy areas, including Humboldt, Madera, Imperial and Santa Cruz counties, the San Francisco Bay Area and the Sierra Economic Development District.

“Small businesses and entrepreneurs are the backbone of our state's diverse economy,” said Dee Dee Myers, senior advisor to Governor Newsom and director of the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). “Throughout this pandemic, they have worked tirelessly to learn best practices and connect to new tools as they pivot and adapt to the realities of an ever-changing marketplace. This new resource provides yet another opportunity for our small businesses to be as prepared as possible to survive and recover should a disaster strike.”

Outsmart Disaster offers businesses live and pre-recorded trainings as well as a resiliency toolkit to provide them with resources to help make them more resilient. It also has a [Resilient Business Challenge](#) which walks businesses through the key steps they will need to Outsmart Disaster. The Challenge is a virtual, self-guided process that includes information on identifying risks, documenting business functions and identifying impacts of potential disruption; strengthening facilities and safeguarding data; ways to maintain relationships with vendors, partners and employees during business interruptions; understanding insurance and finances; and documenting contingency options.

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