

Main Street Accelerator

Program Overview

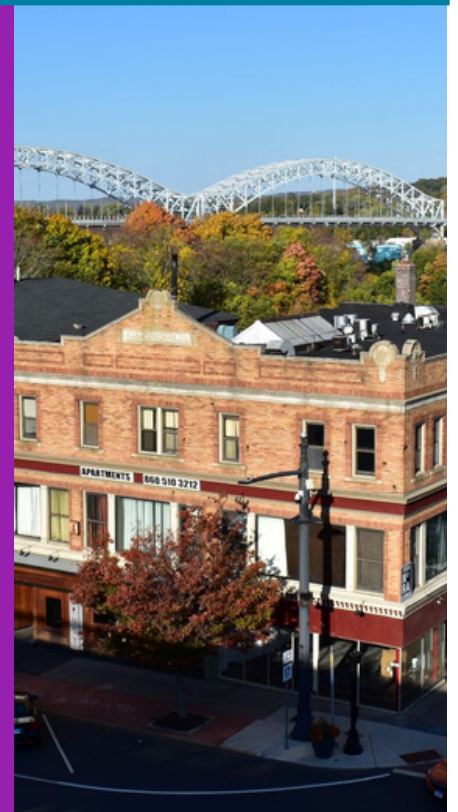


Main Street Accelerator is an action-oriented leadership development program focused on helping communities better their downtown by implementing a specific project, such as launching a new initiative or addressing a challenge.

Main Street Accelerator is a perfect fit for a community that has a challenge or opportunity that has been identified and has public support, but needs organization, guidance, and extra attention.

During the virtual, 6-month Accelerator program, participants will learn and practice the nationally proven Four Point Main Street Approach; sustainable and inclusive development practices; project management; and community engagement.

By the end of the Accelerator program, each community will have a completed project plan and the opportunity to receive grant funding to execute the project.



Eligibility

- **The Accelerator program is open to all Connecticut communities with a Main Street**, downtown, village center, or commercial corridor.
- **The program is limited to 10 communities through an application process.** Preference will be given to existing CMSC members; however, non-CMSC members are encouraged to apply and, if accepted, will receive a one-year CMSC membership.



- Main Street management is collaborative in nature. **Each accepted community must have 3-5 stakeholders in the program** to ensure the project's success. The participant group should be made up of:
 - At least one individual who is a paid professional and has decision-making power/authority in their downtown, for example, Main Street/downtown manager, economic development director, etc.

Types of Projects

Participating communities will bring a defined challenge and a project idea that addresses the problem. Types of challenges may include, but are not limited to, negative perception, too many vacancies, lack of foot traffic, etc.

Communities with a defined project scope will have the opportunity to brainstorm various solutions, troubleshooting different scenarios and aspects of the initiative(s) to develop a plan that ensures success. Examples of problem-solving initiatives include programming vacant lot(s) or storefronts, historic or community preservation efforts, supporting small businesses, launching or improving a market or festival, creating or improving a public space, launching a sustainability initiative, increasing arts and culture programming, etc. *It should be noted that challenges or initiatives exclusively focused on infrastructure are not a good fit for the Accelerator program.*

Benefits

- **6-month curriculum**, including a dynamic mix of self-paced content and live virtual big group gatherings with subject-matter experts
- **One year, 24/7 access to Main Street Accelerator Community platform** for all program lessons, materials, and resources
- **In-person kick-off and celebration events**



- **A project plan template designed for Main Street** with suggested deadlines to hold the community accountable
- **3 community-group coaching calls** to get specific guidance on your project
- **Limited grant funding for the execution of the project** for communities that complete their project plan by the announced deadline. (Other requirements may apply.)

How It Works

Every participant will get log-in access to the Main Street Accelerator Community platform. Each month, content will be released via the platform that includes articles, videos, resources, and individual and group assignments. There is a virtual class gathering every month to go into further detail on that month's topic and to hear from a guest speaker. Each community will have 3 group coaching calls throughout the program to get specific, tailored advice on their project.

Additional Information

Deadline to apply
November 3, 2023

Scan the QR code to go to the application.



For More Information

Please contact Kristen Lopez, Education & Training Director, or visit our website.

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- www.ctmainstreet.org

