

The Pathfinder



Nov 20, 2025

FROM THE SECRETARY



As we enter a season of reflection and gratitude, we're thankful for the breadth and bounty of wins that continue to strengthen New Mexico's economy.

One of the biggest: Castelion has chosen New Mexico for Project Ranger, a 1,000-acre hypersonic manufacturing campus in Sandoval County. The project will create 300 jobs for our families and strengthen New Mexico's long-standing role in supporting America's aerospace and national security missions.

We're also seeing growth take root through programs like [Capital Connect](#), our technical assistance program, now accepting applications through November 24. Capital Connect helped Jessica Lucero of *In The Middle: Thrift Reimagined* secure the capital she needed to move her business forward. You can read more about her story in the *Albuquerque Journal*, featured in the story below.

In October, JTIP funding jumped higher than the last three months combined. That means more businesses are hiring, more jobs are being created, and more New Mexicans are getting higher-paying opportunities, especially in science and innovation.

There's a lot to be grateful for — and even more to look forward to — as we keep building New Mexico's economy together.

Rob Black
Cabinet Secretary, NM Economic Development Department

NEWS



Castelion chooses NM for Project Ranger, bringing 300+ high-paying jobs

New Mexico is the new home for Project Ranger, Castelion's 1,000-acre hypersonic manufacturing campus in Sandoval County. The project is expected to create more than 300 high-paying jobs and generate over \$650 million in economic output over the next decade, with an initial \$100 million investment planned for the first four years.

Project Ranger will produce advanced long-range systems at scale, reinforcing New Mexico's role as a hub for defense innovation. "After a highly competitive nationwide search, we chose New Mexico for its technical talent, infrastructure, and

history of scientific achievement,” said Castelion Co-Founder Andrew Kreitz.

In the news: [Castelion picks Sandoval County for rocket facility, bringing hundreds of jobs](#)

[Read the press release](#)



Capital Connect helps small businesses access the capital they need

EDD is now accepting applications for [Capital Connect](#), a bilingual program designed to help small businesses overcome barriers to accessing capital. The free, three-month program provides hands-on financial guidance, workshops, 1:1 technical assistance, and \$4,000 in consulting support to help businesses become “capital ready.”

The program targets very small, minority-owned, and rural businesses across New Mexico. Entrepreneurs like Jessica Lucero, owner of *In The Middle: Thrift Reimagined*, received support through Capital Connect to secure a loan for her store.

Applications for the next cohort are open through November 24.

In the news: [New Mexico rolls out bilingual program to help small businesses access capital](#) (ABQ Journal)

More news: [State launches new bilingual program to help small businesses open in New Mexico](#) (KRQE)

[Visit the website to learn more](#)



Boeing CV-22 at Cannon AFB.

JTIP funding surges, supporting up to 252 New Mexico jobs

New Mexico’s Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) saw a major jump in October, approving \$4.6 million to help 12 companies train up to 252 workers. This marks the biggest month in recent memory, with funding surpassing the last three months combined.

Companies like Boeing are using JTIP to hire more people and offer higher wages, especially in science and innovation. While the statewide average wage for FY26 is \$26.61 an hour, this month’s JTIP-supported jobs average \$35.51 an hour, with positions ranging from \$19 to \$61 an hour.

In the news: [Wiegel Broadcasting interviews JTIP Manager Patrick Gannon](#)

[Read the October JTIP press release](#)

EDD OPPORTUNITIES

PROGRAMS

Capital Connect

Free, bilingual 3-month cohort, built to help small business owners strengthen their financial systems and confidently prepare for loans, grants, and investment opportunities.

- Deadline for current cohort:
EXTENDED to Nov 24.
- Info: edd.newmexico.gov/capital-connect

GRANTS

Business Development & Expansion Grant

Creative for-profit businesses are invited to apply. Funding may be used for inventory, equipment, marketing, infrastructure, technology, and more.

- Deadlines: Cycle 1 - Dec 26 (6pm MT); Cycle 2 Feb 27 (6pm MT)
- Learn more: edd.newmexico.gov/business-development/cid-grants

Intro to AI Visuals

The Creative Industries Division is offering [free registration](#) to 100 creative entrepreneurs for the [Mastering AI Visuals](#) course from Jamination.

Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant

Invests in conservation-minded shovel-ready projects like trail design and construction, signage, river access, outdoor classroom infrastructure, trailhead improvements, picnic shelters, skate and bike parks. Projects must be open for public use.

- Deadline: Jan 31, 2026
- Webinar: Dec 10
- Info: nmoutside.com/grants/trails-plus

Outdoor Equity Fund

Open to public and private nonprofit entities that support equitable transformative outdoor experiences for New Mexico's youth.

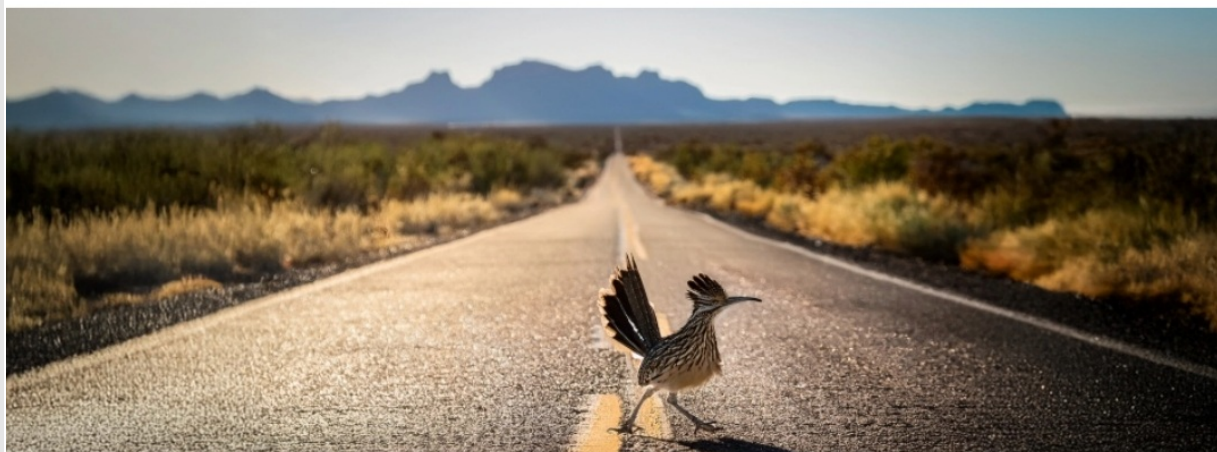
- Next round opens Jan 6, 2026
- Informational webinars: December 17: bit.ly/fy26r2oef1 and January 6: bit.ly/fy26r2oef2

EDD JOBS

- General Counsel (Albuquerque or Santa Fe)
- Economic Development Infrastructure Program Manager (Albuquerque) - Job ID 159103. Deadline to apply: Dec 3.

Learn more at edd.newmexico.gov/careers

RESOURCE WRAP-UP



Resource Highlight:

[Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund](#)

Want to reduce your utility bills/expenses for buildings you own or operate? Improve your building's performance? Reduce your building's emissions and operating expenses? Help your community become more resilient?

NMFA is offering low-cost loans to eligible commercial entities for energy efficiency upgrades.

Who is eligible? Loans are available to private nonprofit and for-profit entities with buildings used for a public or community benefit, such as, healthcare, education, recreation, or cultural facilities that benefit the local community.

The commercial entity must:

- do a majority of its business in New Mexico; AND
- own or operate one or more commercial buildings; OR
- own or operate commercial space in a building that serves multiple functions

For Businesses

[Amber Grants](#)

\$10,000 monthly grants for women-owned businesses in several categories and an annual \$50,000 grant to one of the monthly recipients.

[Economic Development Retention and Revitalization Grant 2025](#)

Supports private businesses, projects, and organizations that make or will make a measurable difference in achieving economic growth and development within Doña Ana, Luna, and Otero Counties, with the possibility of expanding throughout NM.

[Native American Business Roundtables \(City of Santa Fe\)](#)

Monthly gatherings create space for Native American entrepreneurs, artists, and business owners to connect, share resources, and build pathways to success. Upcoming meeting on Dec 9 and Jan 13.

[Leadership Coaching Office Hours for Entrepreneurs](#)

Reserve your virtual or in-person (Albuquerque) 1:1 coaching with Scott Tafoya on Dec 15.

For Communities & Nonprofits

[National Grassroots Organizing Grant Program](#)

Provides support to community-based, grassroots organizations confronting social and environmental injustice with 2-year unrestricted, general operating support grants of up to \$30,000/year (average grant size \$20,000/year). Rolling deadline.

[Community Connect Program](#)

Grants for the roll-out or expansion of Public Wi-Fi in New Mexico Communities. All requests for reimbursement must be completed by June 30, 2026.

[Farm to School Grant](#)

\$100,000-\$500,000 grants to increase the availability of local foods in Child Nutrition Program operations and connect students to the sources of their food through education, taste tests, school gardens, field trips, and local food

Community Resources Continued...

[Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative](#)

Nonprofit or tax-exempt groups, public riding areas, outdoor enthusiast and land conservation associations, and communities with an interest in protecting, improving, expanding, and/or maintaining access for safe, responsible and sustainable use by motorized off-road vehicles may apply. Deadline: Dec 15.

[Farmers Advocating for Organics Grant](#)

\$5,000-\$50,000 grants support research, education, and advocacy projects that advance the organic industry and the livelihoods of organic farmers. Deadline: Dec 15.

[Behavioral Health Early Access Regional Funding](#)

Regional behavioral health entities designated in each region by the state may apply. Deadline: Dec 19.

[USDA Technical Assistance and Training Grant](#)

Funds may be used to for technical assistance and/or training to identify and evaluate solutions to water problems. Deadline: Dec 31.

[Walmart Spark Good Local Grants](#)

Cash grants ranging from \$250 to \$5,000 to support local organizations that meet the unique needs of the communities in which they operate, build pride among associates, and deepen relationships with customers. Deadline: Dec 31.

[Water and Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program](#)

Qualified private nonprofit organizations will receive funds to identify and evaluate solutions to water and waste disposal problems in rural areas, assist applicants in preparing applications for water and waste grants made at the State level offices, and improve operation and maintenance of existing water and waste disposal facilities in rural areas. Deadline: Dec 31.

[Continuum of Care Competition and Youth Homeless Demonstration Program Grants](#)

Supports communitywide efforts to end homelessness, quickly rehouse individuals and families, strengthen access to mainstream services, and improve long-term stability. Deadline: Jan 14.

sourcing.. Deadline: Dec 5

[Opportunity Enterprise Loans](#)

Low-interest loans for developers for the development of commercial facilities, workforce housing, and infrastructure for affordable housing. Deadline: Dec 12.

[Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund](#)

Targets federally recognized Tribes and tribal governments to reduce fatal and serious traffic injuries and crashes on Tribal public road systems. Deadline: Jan. 15.

Upcoming Events

Dec 2 | [Packaging and Pricing Your Services](#) (Santa Fe)

Dec 3 | [Beyond Survival: Building a Sustainable Nonprofit Model](#)

Dec 9 | [Maker's Marketplace: Practical Strategies for Selling Your Work](#) (Santa Fe)

Dec 10 | [Investing in Resilience: How Funders and Leaders Can Plan Ahead & Support Small Businesses in Disasters](#)

Dec 11 | [Workforce Summit](#) (Santa Fe)

Jan 29 | [Affordable housing](#)

For ongoing and on-demand events, or to search for other events in your area, visit us at edd.newmexico.gov/events

Visit our YouTube channel to view previously recorded EDD webinars:
www.youtube.com/@newmexicoeconomicdevelopment

We love to hear from you!

- Submit resources for the Pathfinder newsletter to Pathfinder@edd.nm.gov
- List a business or community resource on our Resource Map at edd.newmexico.gov/resource-map
- Add an event to our calendar at edd.newmexico.gov/events



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