



WREN
2011 Main Street
Bethlehem, NH 03574

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WREN Receives Over \$65,000 in Grant Funding from Northern Borders Regional Commission

The Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) excitedly accepted over \$65,000 in grant funding from the Northern Borders Regional Commission Catalyst Program for improvements to WREN's building which will increase accessibility and WREN's capacity to serve the community.

The NBRC received 187 applications for the 2023 Catalyst grant cycle, requesting over \$150 million in total funding. Across the four states only 66 applications were selected. Out of 46 applications in New Hampshire, only 25 were selected. The Catalyst Program is designed to stimulate economic growth and inspire partnerships that improve rural economic vitality across the four-state NBRC region. WREN applied for and received \$65,079.60 from NBRC, which WREN will match for a project total of \$128,883.13.

"As WREN's 30th anniversary approaches in 2024," said WREN executive director Pam Sullivan, "we're thinking hard about the most important projects to ensure WREN's continued success for the next 30 years, but also to continue to serve our community to the best of our ability. Thanks to this amazing funding opportunity, we will be able to update WREN's gallery, enhance our outdoor park, and renovate the lower level to establish the WREN Learning Center and Media Studio. These projects will make our space more usable, efficient, accessible, and attractive, and position WREN to continue to encourage economic innovation in the North Country."

Located in downtown Bethlehem, NH, WREN is a women-led organization inclusive to all, with over 350 members. WREN members, the community, and visitors to the North Country look to WREN for learning, earning, and cultural opportunities. The Store and Gallery at WREN provide market access for over 120 local artists and makers, and provide a hub for those looking to shop small and support local entrepreneurs. Behind the scenes, WREN supports those looking to grow or launch their small businesses through business development classes, workshops, and mentoring.



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“We’re so grateful to receive this funding,” said WREN assistant director Scarlett Moberly. “The updates to our park next to the building will make WREN and our little corner of the world more resilient to the changing climate and extreme weather. We’re going to make the Store and Gallery all one level, so anyone can enter the gallery space easily and experience our incredible exhibitions of local art.”

Transitioning the lower level to the Learning Center will expand WREN’s learning opportunities by providing a dedicated space for workshops, enabling more in-person classes. A key element of the Learning Center will be the WREN Media Studio, which will have space and equipment for photography, videography, and audio recording. “Nothing like our future media studio exists in the North Country,” continued Moberly. “This will be an important resource for the entire community. A dedicated space to create professional digital content will be a game-changer for WREN, our members, and the North Country at large.”

Founded in 1994 as an 8-month training and support program to assist 12 very low-income rural women achieve business ownership, WREN’s mission is to support better lives and livelihoods through education, economic development, and community engagement in the North Country.

“It is an honor to bring this organization, which has impacted thousands of lives, into the next phase,” said Sullivan. “But WREN would not exist without the amazing, dedicated support of our community, and we’re going to continue to need that support to make these projects a reality. So please, if you’re interested in helping, reach out! Stop in to WREN, or give us a call at 603-869-9736.”

Learn more about WREN, its mission, programs, and goals at www.wrenworks.org.

About WREN

The Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization in Bethlehem, NH. In addition to the Store and Gallery, WREN provides classes, workshops, community workspace, networking and events to support better lives and livelihoods through education, economic development, and community engagement in the North Country. WREN’s programs are funded in part by grants from the Mascoma Bank Foundation, NHCDFR CDBG Program, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, Granite State United Way, the NH Women’s Foundation, and the NH State Council on the Arts Public Value Partnership Grant.