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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REDF Receives \$1.4M Public Grant to Deliver Technical Assistance to California Employment Social Enterprises

Customized capacity building will support Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grantees in unlocking opportunity and economic mobility for Californians overcoming barriers to employment.

SACRAMENTO, CA (August 7, 2023) – California’s Employment Development Department (EDD), in coordination with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, has awarded REDF \$1.4 million in grant funds to develop a technical assistance program for employment social enterprises and accelerate economic inclusion across the state.

Employment social enterprises (ESEs) are businesses achieving transformative social impact – providing employment, training, and support to talented Californians overcoming barriers to employment, including incarceration and homelessness.

“ESE organizations are businesses that focus on addressing challenges for people who face extreme barriers to employment,” EDD Director Nancy Farias said. “By providing employment, training and support services, these organizations provide a bridge into the workforce for those getting back on their feet after experiencing issues like incarceration or homelessness. California is proud to support ESE organizations with this new grant funding.”

This grant will fund REDF’s creation of a technical assistance program supporting the work of [seven ESEs that have been awarded grants from EDD to expand employment opportunities](#). REDF will work with each grantee to complete customized capacity building projects and foster peer-learning opportunities that deepen the supportive services these businesses provide their employees – and, ultimately, increase employee retention and success.

The program will support the work of the following employment social enterprises:

- [Able-Disabled Advocacy, Inc.](#) (San Diego)
- [Chrysalis](#) (Los Angeles)
- [Coalition for Responsible Community Development](#) (Los Angeles)
- [Downtown Streets Team](#) (San Francisco, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Santa Clara, Alameda, San Mateo)
- [Goodwill of Southern California](#) (Los Angeles, San Bernardino)



- [MAKE Projects](#) (San Diego)
- [New Earth](#) (Los Angeles)

“Too many Californians are boxed out of our economy because they face steep barriers to employment, including experiences of incarceration and homelessness. Employment social enterprises have a proven track record of unlocking opportunity and supporting our neighbors in entering and succeeding in the workforce,” Greg Ericksen, REDF Director of Government Partnerships & Policy, said. “We look forward to working with these employment social enterprise grantees to strengthen their businesses and support their vital work of building a more inclusive California.”

Together, California’s 200 employment social enterprises employ roughly 10,000 people each year—and growing. [Independent research](#) verifies that the on-the-job experience and support that ESEs provide their employees more than doubles job retention and significantly increases wages and total income for people who are otherwise largely excluded from the workforce. In turn, these gains support economic security and asset-building, particularly for communities of color, and reduced rates of homelessness, recidivism, and incarceration.

Grant funding for this program is provided through discretionary funds made available to Governor Newsom through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and administered by the EDD and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

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ABOUT REDF

REDF invests in employment social enterprises (ESEs) – businesses that provide jobs, training, and support to people breaking through barriers to employment. REDF partners with these businesses and the entrepreneurs who lead them – providing capital, capacity, and community – to amplify their transformative impact. Since 1997, REDF has invested in more than 280 ESEs in 38 states and DC. Collectively these partnerships have helped 100,000 people enter the workforce and generate more than \$2 billion in revenue that is reinvested in employee success—creating a ripple effect that strengthens families and communities and helps build an economy that works. For everyone.

For more information, visit www.redf.org.