



Roadmap to Starting a Small Business



1 Determine Business Concept & Draft Business Plan

The Tulsa City-County Library's Research Center provides FREE information and assistance with the process of starting or running a business.

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT
Meet with a research librarian to research business concepts, refine your plan, find industry-specific business information, develop a marketing plan and more. The library is here to help you start and stay in business!



RCAskUs@Tulsalibrary.org



918-549-7323

2 Select Business Structure

Before you register your business, you must determine your:

LEGAL OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE.



SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP

- Most common structure.
- One individual or married couple.



PARTNERSHIP

- Two or more persons.
- Personal liability for debts.



LIMITED LIABILITY CORP. (LLC)

- One or more members.
- Limited liability of debts.
- Not eligible for banking and insurance businesses.
- Must register with Oklahoma Secretary of State.



CORPORATION

- Complex structure that includes shareholders.
- Tax and financial benefits.
- More permits and licensing fees required.
- Must register with Oklahoma Secretary of State.

3 Register Business

To register your business with the State of Oklahoma:

- Perform an entity name search on [Oklahoma Secretary of State Website](https://www.sos.ok.gov/corp/corpinquiryFind.aspx) <https://www.sos.ok.gov/corp/corpinquiryFind.aspx>
- Register your business with SOS using the form that corresponds to your business's structure: [Downloadable Business Forms](https://www.sos.ok.gov/business/forms.aspx) <https://www.sos.ok.gov/business/forms.aspx>
- Register your business with [Oklahoma Tax Commission](https://oktap.tax.ok.gov/OkTAP/Web/_/#13) https://oktap.tax.ok.gov/OkTAP/Web/_/#13

4 Licenses, Permits & Certifications

It is likely your business requires a business license or other documentation to operate legally. Find out what you need by following the helpful links below.

- [Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce](https://www.okcommerce.gov/doing-business/startups-entrepreneurs/business-licensing-operating-requirements/) <https://www.okcommerce.gov/doing-business/startups-entrepreneurs/business-licensing-operating-requirements/>
- [Oklahoma Tax Commission](https://www.ok.gov/tax/Online_Services/Online_Business_Registration.html) https://www.ok.gov/tax/Online_Services/Online_Business_Registration.html
- [Business Sales Tax Permit](https://www.ok.gov/tax/Businesses/Tax_Types/Business_Sales_Tax/) https://www.ok.gov/tax/Businesses/Tax_Types/Business_Sales_Tax/

5 Obtain EIN

An EIN ([Employer Identification Number](#)) is obtained from the IRS.

USES: Business bank accounts, hiring employees and tax reporting.

Do you need one? Visit this link to find out: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/do-you-need-a-new-ein>.

How do you obtain one? Learn more here: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>

6 Contact Regulatory Agencies

Zoning Questions? Visit: <http://tulsaplanning.org/resources/property-information>

Environmental (pollution, water discharge, waste, etc.) Concerns? Visit: <https://www.deq.ok.gov/>

Opening a restaurant or bar? Visit: <https://www.tulsa-health.org/food-safety/food-service-industry/how-open-restaurant>

For safety inspections and licensing, visit: https://www.ok.gov/odol/Safety_Inspections_&_Licensing/index.html



How Do I Write My Business Plan?

Lenders, potential investors, and other business professionals will want to see your business plan. Even if you are not seeking financing, a business plan is your [blueprint to success!](#)



HOW CAN THE LIBRARY HELP?



Individual Consultations

Schedule an appointment with one of our Research Librarians and learn how to write a business plan.



Online Resources

You can find much of the content needed for your business plan and more by logging into the Business Center with your TCCL card: <https://www.tulsalibrary.org/research/business-center>



Print Collection

Check out books from our circulating business collection at Central Library.



What Are My Funding Options?

Oklahoma Business Funding

<https://www.usa.gov/state-business/oklahoma>
Find information on various Oklahoma loan and grant programs at the link above.

SBA

Through local lending institutions the SBA provides government-backed guaranteed loans. See TEDC (<https://tedcnet.com/>) and SBDC (<https://www.oksbdc.org/>) for assistance with SBA loans.

Banks

Local banks can work with you to secure a commercial or SBA loan.

Bootstrapping and Crowd Sourcing

Use savings, credit cards, home equity and personal loans. In Tulsa, see Kiva Tulsa Lending Team for business crowdsourcing. Learn more at https://www.kiva.org/team/tulsa_lending_team



How Do I Protect My Intellectual Property?



Patents

Patents protect the inventor by conferring the right to “exclude others from making, using, offering for sale or selling” the registered invention within the U.S. Learn more at www.uspto.gov



Trademark

A trademark is the use of any word, name, symbol, device or combination thereof to identify and distinguish the goods of one manufacturer to another. Learn more at: www.uspto.gov



Copyright

Copyright protects original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression, such as writing, music, photos, and more. For more info, visit www.copyright.gov



Does My Business Need Insurance?

Business insurance can help protect against property damage, liability, and more. Each business is unique, so it is important to [investigate specialty insurance policies for your particular business.](#)

WHERE SHOULD I START?

Contact the Oklahoma Insurance Department: <https://www.oid.ok.gov/consumers/>



Where Can I Find Local Business Resources

The following resources provide FREE assistance

- Tulsa Score <https://tulsa.score.org/>
- Workforce Tulsa <https://workforcetulsa.com/>
- Tulsa Regional Chamber <https://tulsachamber.com/>
- Oklahoma Small Business
- Development Center <https://www.oksbdc.org/>