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## BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2021

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2020



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Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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## University of Northern Iowa – Economic Development – Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund

### Purpose and History

The Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund (SWJCF) appropriation to the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) began with FY 2014 and is for ongoing economic development efforts related to the Metal Casting Center, the Institute for Decision Making (IDM), the MyEntre.Net online entrepreneur resources and Advance Iowa (UNI's economic gardening program). Approximately 58.0% of the SWJCF appropriation is required to be used for support of entrepreneurs through the University's Center for Business Growth and Innovation (MyEntre.Net Program) and Advance Iowa. These programs are part of the University's Business and Community Services Division.

**Metal Casting Center (MCC):** The MCC provides foundry research, applied technology, and technical business assistance directly to the foundry industry. The MCC links University research and resources to private sector applications. The MCC has 3D printing facilities and technical resources in additive manufacturing.

**IDM:** Established in 1987, the IDM guides organizations and community-based groups in making decisions and taking organized action toward economic and community development results. The IDM serves and advises economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, convention and visitor bureaus, community planning organizations, regional workforce groups, regional entrepreneur programs, and other similar groups.

**MyEntre.Net Program:** MyEntre.Net is an entrepreneurship development system consisting of an online social network and free web resources, coupled with collaboratively delivered services for entrepreneurs in Iowa. In 2009, MyEntre.Net became a statewide interactive community offering live webinars, peer learning, and other business services. The MyEntre.Net team partners with the Iowa Economic Development Authority to offer online resources via IASourceLink.com. A component of the MyEntre.Net Program and IASourceLink is the Business Concierge service, designed to provide secondary research and on-demand business information to answer clients' business questions via email, online chat, and over the phone.

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### More Information

Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund: [www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/8.75.pdf](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/8.75.pdf)

University of Northern Iowa: [www.uni.edu](http://www.uni.edu)

Business and Community Services: [www.bcs.uni.edu](http://www.bcs.uni.edu)

Metal Casting Center (MCC): [www.mcc.uni.edu](http://www.mcc.uni.edu)

Institute for Decision Making (IDM): [www.bcs.uni.edu/idm](http://www.bcs.uni.edu/idm)

Business Concierge: [www.uni.edu/cbgi/bc](http://www.uni.edu/cbgi/bc)

Center for Business Growth and Innovation: [cbgi.uni.edu](http://cbgi.uni.edu)

Advance Iowa: [cbgi.uni.edu/advance-iowa](http://cbgi.uni.edu/advance-iowa)

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**Center for Business Growth and Innovation:** The Center serves entrepreneurs and small- and medium-sized business owners throughout the State. For the past two decades, the Center has built a network of resources and services designed to attract, connect, and accelerate small business and start-up growth with direct technical assistance, connections to capital, partner resources, and valuable connections to their peers. In 1994, the Small Business Development Center expanded traditional small business assistance and created the UNI Regional Business Center. In 2015, the Regional Business Center and MyEntre.Net brands became the UNI Center for Business Growth and Innovation.

**Advance Iowa:** In 2012, Advance Iowa began as a pilot program of the Center for Business Growth and Innovation to serve mid-size Iowa firms. Advance Iowa fills the gap between the startup stage and large companies.

The UNI is required to focus expenditures on projects that will provide economic stimulus in Iowa and emphasize providing services to Iowa-based companies.

### **Funding**

The UNI Economic Development Programs received an annual General Fund appropriation to support general operations until FY 2014. Beginning with FY 2014, the appropriation was moved to the SWJCF. These programs operate with various levels of support from other funds. All programs pursue grants and contracts, foundation support, federal funds, fees for services, and other sources of revenue.

### **Related Statutes and Administrative Rules**

Iowa Code chapter [268](#)

### **Budget Unit Number**

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