

**Woodstock Economic Development Commission  
Application for Community Project Grant 2019**

**Name of Project:** Vermont Kitchen

**Brief Description** (50 words): Vermont Kitchen is a shared commercial kitchen where food entrepreneurs prepare their food items for wholesale to retailers / for direct sale to consumers. Guidance is provided to all start-ups by Caroline Olsen, founder of nutty life. The goal is to bring more food start-ups (and people) to Woodstock and to create more jobs within the community by hiring locals to help run the business as it grows.

**Grant Request:** \$30,000                      **Total Project Budget:** \$133,059.57

**Applicant Information**

Name of Applicant/Organization/Business: Caroline Olsen / Vermont Kitchen LLC

Mailing Address: 2033 South Road, Woodstock, VT 05091

Name of Project Coordinator: Caroline Olsen

Contact's Email Address: vermontsharedkitchen@gmail.com                      Telephone: 802.478.4087

Organization's Website URL: www.vermont-kitchen.com                      EIN: 83-2276731

Applicant/Organizational Description: Briefly describe your organization or group and its mission. (150 words)

Vermont Kitchen is a space where food entrepreneurs can not only make their products but can also prosper and grow. We will give our start-ups the tools and connections they need to flourish. Our mission is to bring more start-ups to Woodstock & help them grow sustainable and profitable businesses while creating more jobs in the Woodstock community.

Applicant/Organizational Budget: What is your total organizational budget (or total project expenses) for the current fiscal year?

Total expenses will be \$124,867 - including purchase of the space & buildout.

Organizational Budget (Required for businesses and organizations): Attach a copy of your Budget to Actual comparison or Profit Loss (P/L) statement for the most recently completed fiscal year.

The business does not have a profit yet - permits were just granted. We are hoping to add food start-ups asap. We have 1 definite renter, 2 likely renters, and 2 businesses hoping to host cooking classes at Vermont Kitchen.

**Project Information:**

Project Goals: Explain the goal(s) of the project. Describe the work you will do and what that will accomplish, in other words - what you are doing and why. Please be specific. (300 words)

Caroline, also the founder of nutty life, has extensive experience in growing a food business. While she doesn't have everything figured out, she does have a lot of useful knowledge and connections to pass along to other food start-ups. nutty life is a zero food waste business that aims to use local ingredients whenever possible. Caroline will use the skills she has to help guide other food start-ups towards sustainable and financial success. Vermont Kitchen will also serve as the kitchen space for these food entrepreneurs. In-house equipment includes a large commercial floor blender, an oven (to be installed), a large walk-in refrigerator, and a bottling line. The hope is to bring more businesses and more jobs to Woodstock.

**Project Timeline:** Please explain the overall timeline for your project as well as the specific steps required to achieve your goals. Please list specific dates if they've been identified. (150 words)

The project is almost complete. We should be fully ready with all renovations in place by mid to late June.

**Project Champion:** Who is championing this project, what is their role in the community, and why are they leading this work? (100 words)

Caroline Olsen is running this project. She is the founder of nutty life & has also started 2 successful shared kitchens in the Boston area - 1 was sold to help fund Vermont Kitchen & she is in the process of selling the other to put more funds towards Vermont Kitchen. She moved to Woodstock about 1 year ago & just moved her business nutty life up here as well. She wants to create a food start-up community in Woodstock because that is what she knows and loves. This type of community is not just lacking in Woodstock but it is lacking in all of Vermont.

**What will success look like?** Please explain how you will know that you've achieved your goals. (250 words)

Success will be getting multiple food start-ups in the door & helping them grow to the point where they need to hire part-time and full-time staff. And having Vermont Kitchen grow to the point where we need part-time and full-time staff. We hope to make Woodstock a food start-up hub in Vermont.

**Project Budget Narrative:** What will the grant funds be spent on? (200 words)

The grant funds will be used to pay outstanding buildout bills.

SEE ATTACHED

**Project Budget – Itemized.** Please break-down/categorize the total project costs:

Income Category	Total	Applicant	EDC	Other	In-Kind
<b>Total Income</b>					
Expense Category	Total	Applicant	EDC	Other	In-Kind
<b>Total Expenses</b>					

Additional lines may be added or you may attach an itemized project budget. Please include both expenses and revenue, including pending and secured support. Material and labor in-kind support should be identified but might not be considered as matching funds.

**Community Value**

Your answers to the following questions will help the EDC evaluate your grant application according to the published funding rubric.

Tell us how your project enhances the beauty or improves the quality of life for Woodstock residents and visitors? (200 words)

Vermont Kitchen improves the quality of life for Woodstock residents by providing a space for locals to start a food business, by creating local jobs, and by bringing more yummy food to the community! We also plan to host classes to help people get their food venture up and running. It improves the quality of life for Woodstock visitors by bringing them more yummy food! It also shows visitors that Woodstock is a place where you can actually live & not just a place to visit.

In what way will the proposed project contribute to the Woodstock’s economic vitality? (150 words)

We will have more people coming to Woodstock and spending money in local stores and restaurants. Even if members of the kitchen do not live locally, they will spend locally. Same with those who attend our start-up classes!

Vermont cottage law limits a home-based food processing license to under \$10,000 annually. These small home-based businesses cannot legally grow their business to exceed \$10,000 in annual sales! Vermont Kitchen is here to enable this growth!

Will the proposed project attract new residents to Woodstock? If yes, explain how. (150 words)

Yes! If a kitchen member is traveling a long distance to get to Vermont Kitchen, then they will likely look into moving closer to cut down on travel time and expense. When you have a food business, it is nice to live close to where you operate so you can easily fulfill orders and come in for on-demand requests. We currently have two potential renters interested in relocating from Massachusetts!

Tell us about existing community support for this project. How have community members been engaged in decision-making regarding this idea or project? (150 words) You may attach a Letter of Support in addition to or in lieu of this question.

Local support has been awesome! We have multiple local businesses looking to expand their offerings but need a commercial kitchen to do so. Vermont Kitchen will enable existing businesses to grow and new businesses to blossom! Many residents and business owners have said "The upper valley has always needed a commercial kitchen!"


Does the project have adequate funding for now and future years? (150 words)

With the grant money, the kitchen will have adequate funding. The kitchen will be able to fund itself once renters start coming on board and startup costs/ bills are paid.

Please attach any supporting information, including letters of reference or other relevant information.

Signature indicates that you have read and agreed to the EDC Community Grant Guidelines 2019.

Submitted by: (First and Last Name) Caroline Olsen

Signature: 

Date: May 24, 2019

<u>Expense Category</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>EDC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>In-Kind</u>
Building Purchase Price	\$ 63,000.00	\$ 63,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Electrical Upgrade	\$ 10,250.00	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ -	\$ -
Plumbing	\$ 9,800.00	\$ 2,094.57	\$ 7,705.43	\$ -	\$ -
Sprinklers	\$ 2,177.35	\$ -	\$ 2,177.35	\$ -	\$ -
Floors	\$ 5,850.00	\$ -	\$ 5,850.00	\$ -	\$ -
Painting	\$ 2,100.00	\$ -	\$ 2,100.00	\$ -	\$ -
Webstaurant Kitchen Equipment (including Walk- In Refrigerator)	\$ 10,417.22	\$ -	\$ 10,417.22	\$ -	\$ -
Bottling Line	\$ 24,100.00	\$ 24,100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Air Compressor	\$ 3,650.00	\$ 3,650.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Mixer	\$ 650.00	\$ 650.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Permits	\$ 1,065.00	\$ 1,065.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL	\$ 133,059.57	\$ 103,059.57	\$ 30,000.00	\$ -	\$ -

## **SIT STAY BEG COOKIE COMPANY**

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Danielle Blanchette - Owner

Wakefield, MA

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www.sitstaybeg.com

www.facebook.com/sitstaybeg

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To whom it may concern:

In March 2017 I enrolled in Starting a Food Business Series run by Caroline Olsen, founder of Nutty Life. I can't say enough good things about the class as a whole and for Caroline as a person. Caroline's professionalism and knowledge of business have been extremely helpful in getting my own business started. The class broke down the basics of starting a food business, the ups and downs of a new business, promoting, marketing, social media, sales and so much more. She shared her own personal story and her journey with Nutty Life. Caroline has been an inspiration, her drive and dedication is something I strive for. Even to this day Caroline is always available to answer questions and give advice. Taking the Food Business Series has made a big difference in my own business.

Sincerely,

Danielle Blachette



**Subject:** Recommendation for grant!

**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2019 at 7:55:13 AM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** Michelle Wax

**To:** Caroline Olsen

Caroline is an incredible business partner that truly cares about the community she is creating, and will help anyone and everyone that she can. We worked together to open The Local Fare, Arlington's first kitchen incubator, in 2016 and developed a streamlined process with the Board of Health in order to help small food businesses in the Boston area start and grow their businesses. Along with operating The Local Fare, we also worked together to host multiple 'Starting Your Own Food Business' classes, in which we took potential business owners through idea validation, getting past self doubt, marketing, sales, permitting, operations, and really everything you needed to start and grow a successful food business. Caroline has always been the first one to offer help when a member of our community had a question or was struggling. She is an extremely hard worker and has developed a reputation of dedication, kindness, and persistence throughout the entire 4 years I have known her.

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Michelle Wax  
508.654.2546

Follow along the [American Happiness](#) journey on [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#)!

To whom it may concern,

I would like to recommend Caroline Olsen for a grant to fund and grow her shared kitchen space in Woodstock. As a food business owner who has seen Caroline build out, launch and grow three different commercial kitchens in the last few years and as a tenant of one of them, I can attest firsthand to how attentive, helpful and motivating she is. I began working with Caroline when she was running and operating her first shared kitchen venture in Arlington, MA. I signed up for a class she was running on how to start a food business and came into the class with nothing more than an idea. Caroline and her partner structured the class to focus on different key issues and milestones that a new food business will encounter when starting up. I found it very helpful to learn the steps to take to incorporate and license a new company, and also to hear the stories that Caroline shared about bumps and roadblocks she had encountered so that I could learn from and avoid those things. While she did not try to make things sound perfect or easy, she did a phenomenal job of making her business journey relatable and attainable. Throughout the whole course, Caroline made herself a resource to the students in and out of our classes, and always made me feel like she had the time and enthusiasm to discuss my ideas with me even while I knew she was working tirelessly on growing Nutty Life.

When I decided to officially launch my business, I began working out of Caroline's second shared kitchen venture in Stoneham, MA. Caroline made the process for booking hours, going through production and general operations in the kitchen seamless and was always flexible and understanding if I ran into an issue or schedule change. She was able to identify, attract and secure great businesses to sign on to work there and fostered a very welcoming and collaborative atmosphere between all of her tenants. She was also a constant source of knowledge and help to me from the beginning, talking with me about my ideas for product packaging, branding, social media strategies, stores she thought I would be a good fit for and ways to continue to innovate my products. I can attribute my success in multiple wholesale accounts and event opportunities to her suggestions and help in connecting me with the right people. A lot of this help happened during informal run-ins with her at the kitchen; another example of how she always makes time to listen to and help her fellow business owners.

I would also like to speak about the ways in which I have seen Caroline run her cashew milks business and how her ability to be efficient, clean and safe in the kitchen sets a wonderful example for her tenants. I worked on the Nutty Life production team while launching my own business to learn from her in a more direct way and watch how a more established business owner works. My biggest takeaway from watching her run her business is that Caroline does not just settle for processes that are pretty good, she is relentless in her search for innovative and more efficient ways of doing things. I can see how she has taken those ideas and implemented them to make each of her shared kitchen ventures better than the last.

I am thrilled that I decided to work out of Caroline's production space when I launched my company and would highly recommend working out of her kitchen to anyone in a similar position to me. I know that the place my company is in now, nearly two years later, is in large part thanks to her guidance. She develops personal relationships with her tenants and is always there to lend a hand, lend an ear and be a source of encouragement.

Sincerely,  
Talia Hirsch