



Make Friends with your City Government!

A brief guide from the Wise Economy Workshop

Your city government and economic development might seem confusing, frustrating, or not helpful - but they can be. And you can help.

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Who Is It For?

You have a startup/entrepreneurship community, and you realize that your impact is being limited because you need something. Your city or economic development agency might be able to help, but they seem scary/don't seem to know what to do with you/you don't know them. Or your first attempts to get their support went badly.

What Do I Need?

1. A little patience
2. A little understanding
3. A consistent effort to build bridges
4. Invitations
5. Some concrete requests based on your experience
6. Collaboration
7. The ability to blow your (and their) horn

What Are the Steps to Implement It?

1. Recognize what frames them: responsibility, protection, scrutiny, caution. And that this is different from you.
2. Get to know the people, as people
3. Let them inside your world. They need a guide
4. Identify concretely what you really need.
5. Work *with* them to find solutions.
6. Focus on the small.

7. (Try to) be patient.
8. Celebrate (and publicize) small wins.

How *Might* they Help?

1. Training/facts/How-to information
 - General
 - Specific local advice, like how to get a license
2. Peer networks - advising and support
 - Can they reach more people than you?
 - Can they reach different people than you?
3. Coaching/Mentoring
 - What other organizations are out there?
 - How can you help each other?
4. (The right) space
 - Makers?
 - CoWorking?
 - Collisions?
 - Pop ups?
 - What else?
5. (The right) money/resources
 - Their usual scale vs. yours
 - Small is beautiful
 - Small is accessible
 - Where are their rewards?
6. Fair and clear permit process
 - When you're too close to the situation
 - Design skills vs. process skills
 - How does it work?
 - How can it work better?

8. Promotion

- Maybe yes, maybe no.
- Districts and clusters
- Not your father's place marketing

9. What else?

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