

Supporting Vermont's Builders, Makers & Doers



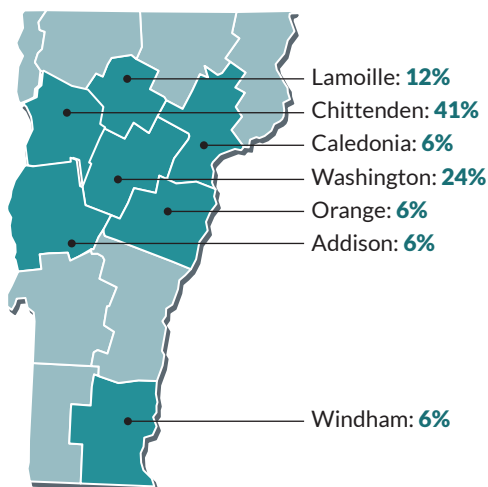
The Maker's Fund helps the smallest manufacturers in Vermont access specialized expertise to support growth, productivity, and business resilience. The fund is a partnership between Northfield Savings Bank and Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center. Since its inception in 2024, it has supported 17 projects with a total project value of \$60,000 and an average project value of \$3,544. The portfolio reached seven Vermont counties, represented six industry sectors, and addressed 10 distinct project categories. The breadth of activity demonstrates both the popularity of the fund and the diversity of needs among small manufacturers in our state.

Recipients used the funds for practical, near-term business needs:

- ✓ process flow
- ✓ strategy
- ✓ marketing
- ✓ maintenance
- ✓ quality
- ✓ compliance
- ✓ packaging
- ✓ project management
- ✓ advanced manufacturing

STATEWIDE REACH

Maker's Fund projects reached manufacturers in seven Vermont counties. The distribution shows meaningful activity across several regions and reinforces the need for accessible support beyond a single population center.



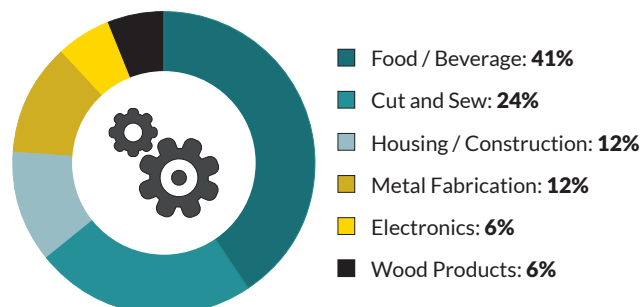
ABOUT THE MAKER'S FUND

The Maker's Fund supports Vermont manufacturers with 20 or fewer employees by reducing financial barriers to obtaining expert manufacturing and business assistance. Northfield Savings Bank serves as the founding sponsor of the fund, while VMEC provides access to services, technical expertise and project management. The program is designed for small manufacturers that may not otherwise have ready access to specialized support. Projects are company-specific and structured around practical needs that can strengthen competitiveness, operations, capacity, and growth potential.

As of September 2026, the overall impact of Maker's Fund projects is over \$120,000 including increased sales, cost savings, investments and avoided investments; additionally, over 2 dozen jobs were created or retained.

INDUSTRY DIVERSITY

The fund supported a varied manufacturing base, including food and beverage, cut and sew, housing and construction, metal fabrication, electronics, and wood products companies. This mix illustrates the diversity of Vermont's manufacturing community.



Project Success Stories

DELL'AMORE MARINARA | Burlington, VT

Dell'Amore Marinara faced a significant production challenge when an industrial can opener on its automated canning line failed. The opener was no longer supported by the original manufacturer, so employees were forced to open cans manually, slowing production. Through the Maker's Fund, VMEC connected Dell'Amore with Essex-based Dupre Solutions, which rebuilt and upgraded the equipment, including its pneumatic system, to improve reliability in the food-production environment and get the can opener back to work.

"Without VMEC driving a solution and the Maker's Fund, we would still be opening cans by hand. We couldn't have done what needed to happen without VMEC making the connection with Dupre Solutions. I am grateful to them and Northfield Savings Bank." — FRANK DELL'AMORE, FOUNDER & OWNER



GPMS INTERNATIONAL | Waterbury, VT

GPMS International, a leader in predictive health and usage monitoring systems for rotorcraft, turned to VMEC after experiencing electrical failures during manufacturing and quality assurance testing. Through a VMEC-facilitated Structured Problem Solving process, the Manufacturing Collaborative provided advanced Industrial CT Scanning that quickly identified electrical shorting between a printed circuit board and its enclosure as the root cause. Maker's Fund support made this specialized technology financially accessible to GPMS, enabling the company to correct the problem when the scanning otherwise may have been out of reach.

"We appreciate the Maker's Fund being available to support the high tech problem solving at an attainable cost. The Fund brought technology to us that we otherwise might not have been able to afford." — JULIA AUSTIN, VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS



PAPRIKA CATERING | Waterbury, VT

Paprika Catering grew from farmers markets and catering into a dedicated empanada shop with ambitions to expand into retail grocery and convenience stores. As the company prepared for that expansion, VMEC connected Paprika with TVG Production, whose expertise helped the owners select and design recyclable, environmentally friendly packaging that reflected the company's brand and mission. Support from the Maker's Fund helped make that specialized packaging expertise affordable, reducing the financial risk of a critical step in Paprika's move into the retail market.

"The NSB and VMEC Maker's Fund helped validate and de-risk our packaging project. It took the opportunity from never to now. The expansion into the retail business would not have been possible without the Maker's Fund." — JEN MCCABE, CO-FOUNDER AND CO-OWNER



"Northfield Savings Bank is pleased to have founded the Maker's Fund, providing increased access for Vermont's smaller manufacturers to VMEC's services. The demand and success of the Fund is a testament to the importance of VMEC to the manufacturing community."



ROSEMARIE WHITE, SENIOR VP OF COMMERCIAL BANKING, NORTHFIELD SAVINGS BANK

"This kind of mission-driven philanthropy — engaging a local bank such as Northfield Savings Bank with small manufacturers to help them be successful — is a model worth expanding based on its success. We look forward to more partnerships in the future."



PATRICK BOYLE, CENTER DIRECTOR & CEO, VERMONT MANUFACTURING EXTENSION CENTER