Craft3 is a certified, nonprofit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), with a mission to strengthen economic, ecological, and family resilience in Pacific Northwest communities. By providing loans—ranging in size from $5,000 to $15 million—to entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizations, and individuals, Craft3 serves borrowers who lack access to traditional financing, including minority-, women-, and immigrant-owned businesses in Washington and Oregon. In order to maximize its impact, Craft3 prioritizes projects that create jobs and positively impact families and the environment.

Craft3’s unique mission encompasses the “three bottom lines” of economic, ecological, and family resilience. The organization was founded on the belief that these three concerns are interconnected and cannot be addressed successfully as isolated problems. After 19 years of working across the “silos” of economic development, environmental sustainability, and social equity, Craft3 has developed a unique approach that allows it to design innovative solutions to varied problems confronting urban and rural communities.

As a non-bank CDFI lender, Craft3 provides array of capital products, specifically tailored to help meet the needs of its clients, including many start-ups and expanding businesses. Craft3 provides loans with flexible terms to help businesses finance commercial real estate and acquisitions, purchase new inventory and equipment, install energy-efficiency upgrades, and secure working capital. Beyond serving entrepreneurs, Craft3 also helps finance community development, including healthcare, childcare, environmental conservation, and human services initiatives. This assistance includes competitive loan products for individual homeowners for septic system or energy-efficiency upgrades.

Craft3 manages $166 million in total assets and has invested $268 million in 3,954 people and businesses since 1995. Craft3 has received more than $5.6 million in awards from the CDFI Fund.

WayOut Kids

WayOut Kids is a nonprofit organization, located in Tacoma, Washington. Since 2004, the organization has offered underserved youth a ‘way out’ of the economic and educational barriers in their community, which suffers from an 18 percent unemployment rate and a 47 percent poverty rate.

WayOut Kids provides parents, educators, and young people with positive influences and educational resources on health, education, and the environment. Because many studies have found that music is a highly effective means of teaching children the building blocks of a successful education, WayOut Kids uses music and multimedia resources to create an innovative and motivating environment for learning. WayOut Kids also uses the character Rodney Raccoon to deliver lesson plans that further each child’s educational process.

To expand outreach, WayOut Kids sought working capital from several traditional lenders. However, because it lacked collateral and a loan guarantor, WayOut Kids was unable to access the financing it needed.

In 2013, Craft3 provided a $50,000 loan to the organization to build operational capacity, develop new products, and expand into the digital market. With this support, WayOut Kids was able to access a generous grant from The Russell Family Foundation, which was contingent upon the Craft3 funding. It also created two jobs and increased the number of low-income families served by 300.