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Is your EB-5 business  
plan ready for USCIS?

## EB-5 Immigration Business Plans



EB-5 foreign direct investment into the U.S. economy was more than 10 times higher in 2016 (\$3.8 billion) compared to 2008 (\$321 million).



## The EB-5 Program is Growing

Both interest in and impact of the EB-5 program are substantially higher than a decade ago. EB-5 applications more than doubled in Q1 2016 compared to the same period the year before. And in 2016, EB-5 direct investment was more than 10 times higher than 2008—an estimated \$3.8 billion into the U.S. economy, up from \$321 million.

There are several types of business immigration visas, but EB-5 visas are the only ones that are designed to be permanent. Coupled with the limit of 10,000 granted each year, they're both highly desirable and challenging to obtain. Under current law, you must personally invest at least \$500,000 to \$1 million and create 10 permanent, full-time American jobs. After two years, USCIS reviews your progress and decides whether to award you citizenship.

A key part of the EB-5 visa application is the business plan, which makes the case to USCIS that the business will be tenable and create the required jobs. At Masterplans, we have more than 10 years of experience creating detailed business plans for people seeking investment and work visas. Our trained team of in-house visa experts, financial modelers, and market analysts can write the exact plan you need—and get it done fast.

We've written more than 300 successful EB-5 business plans for direct investment cases and a wide range of Regional Center-based projects. The business plans we create are fully customized, compliant with Matter of Ho, and contractually guaranteed to meet the USCIS criteria for submission – if a client receives a Request for Evidence (RFE), Masterplans does the edits for free.

“ We love it when EB-5 clients come to us with a passion to start a business in the U.S. We help translate their visions and goals into realistic financial projections.

**Kelly Hinkle**  
VP of Finance



Only 10,000 EB-5 visas are granted each year, and applicants undergo thorough scrutiny from USCIS. But if your business plan and visa application are approved, you have a path to permanent citizenship.



## What to include in your EB-5 business plan

The EB-5 program is popular because it not only creates U.S. jobs and boosts the American economy, but it provides a path to a permanent green card.

But getting one isn't easy. After you invest time, energy, and thousands of dollars, USCIS could deny your visa application just because your business plan wasn't good enough. Your plan must show how your investment will grow the business and create jobs. Without this vital piece of the immigration puzzle, USCIS will reject your submission. Here's what to make sure you include:

### **Substantial, at-risk capital investment, correctly applied**

In addition to specifying your investment amount of \$500,000 to \$1 million or more, break down its uses among expenses (e.g., rent, permits, insurance) and assets (e.g., inventory, equipment, working capital, construction).

### **Realistic financial projections and job creation forecasting**

How many permanent, full-time jobs will you create (at least 10)? Provide a detailed hiring timeline by month for the first 24 months of operations. Base estimated salaries on industry standards.

### **Clear, quantified market need**

What problem does your business solve in its specific market? How many potential customers will it truly serve?

### **Detailed descriptions of management roles and duties**

What title will the EB-5 applicant have (e.g., President, CEO, Manager, etc.)? What are the core responsibilities? In direct investment cases, USCIS requires applicants to have "active participation" in the company, although the extent will vary based on your project.

If you don't satisfy the USCIS requirements, your visa adjudicator will issue a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID), which means—at best—you have to fix your business plan and try again. It can be challenging to get things right, so hire the experts at Masterplans.

If you have a USCIS-approved EB-5 visa application and business plan, what is it like to be one of the lucky 10,000?

Bai Huang\* had always wanted to be an American citizen. And now the Chongqing resident was finally accomplishing her goal.

She and her family had dutifully saved money over decades of hard work, enough to invest \$500,000 in a project in a Targeted Employment Area (TEA), with higher-than-average unemployment rates: Mobile, Alabama. Working with her attorney and the United States' leading business plan development firm, Bai Huang and her husband explained their venture: a modern, eco-friendly retirement home. Not only would the project use sustainable building practices and feature attractive amenities, but it would serve the area's booming senior population.

Bai Huang and her attorney made sure the business plan firm understood that in addition to the managerial roles she and her husband would fill, there would be an additional 15 full-time, permanent jobs created, from front desk staff to medical, cooking, concierge, and janitorial roles. The business planning firm performed in-depth market research and created detailed financial forecasts. Together with the official TEA letter from Alabama state officials, the business plan and visa application were submitted to USCIS adjudicators.

After waiting eagerly, Bai Huang was thrilled to learn that the visa application was approved. She knew there was hard work ahead--after all, USCIS wouldn't grant a permanent green card until two years later, as long as at least 10 permanent jobs were still in place. She still had a lot to do. But at least she'd made it through arguably the most difficult part: the USCIS approval process. Now she was one of the lucky 10,000 with an EB-5 visa.

\*Name and identifying details have been changed.

To ensure you have the smoothest process with USCIS, your business plan financials must be realistic.



Building a financial forecast for your EB-5 business plan can be tricky. Here's some advice from Masterplans' VP of Finance, Kelly Hinkle:

**Q. How do you create a financial forecast for an EB-5 business plan, either for a Regional Center or direct investment?**

A. In creating a financial forecast for EB-5 business plans, we need to demonstrate that EB-5 investment is being put to use and is 'at risk.' If \$5 million in EB-5 funds are being raised but \$2 million is sitting in cash, that could be a red flag and trigger a Request for Evidence (or RFE) from USCIS.

So that our business plans are compliant with Matter of Ho, we develop a five-year forecast which details revenue, expenses, and income. For direct EB-5 investment business plans, we compare the business's financials to other companies in the industry to make sure that expenses and profits are reasonable.

**Q. How do you make sure all of the positions in a personnel plan fulfill the EB-5 qualifying criteria?**

A. Within two years of approval of an EB-5 application, 10 qualifying jobs need to be created (or saved, in unique instances) per investor. To be qualifying, the jobs need to be filled by non-investor employees who are full time (working a minimum of 35 hours per week unless there is a job sharing arrangement.) We also always make sure that employees are making at least minimum wage.

*Thanks, Kelly!*

# Another distinguishing factor about Masterplans is our access to subscriber-only databases:



Esri Business Analyst: The world's most powerful geographic information system (GIS) software has granular, compelling demographic data that makes your business plan compelling and attractive to USCIS.



IBISWorld: Leading market research on thousands of industries worldwide, including revenue, estimated growth, customer and product segmentation, and much more.



eMarketer PRO: The best source for insights and trends about digital marketing, media, and e-commerce--including compelling articles, charts, and graphs to make your business plan pop.

Current, in-depth market research is crucial for making your EB-5 business plan pass muster with USCIS.

At Masterplans, our access to powerfully granular data is what sets us apart. Not only do we maintain memberships to subscriber-only research databases, but thanks to our 14 years of experience, we have a wealth of information to draw on. We've developed more than 300 business plans for EB-5 visa applicants and thousands more for capital raises. No other business plan firm can say the same!

Here's how the data at our fingertips makes your EB-5 application stronger:

**ESRI:** We can pinpoint radial demographic info by miles and driving minutes of a certain location, percent of residents in a certain income bracket, or number of adults who patronize businesses like yours. This is strong evidence that your enterprise will be viable and able to support your forecasted jobs for at least two years, when USCIS evaluates your progress.

**IBISWorld:** Anyone can claim an industry or city is on the upswing. It's more convincing to USCIS if you include concrete industry metrics, such as average percent revenue growth over the past five years and projected over the next five years, how revenue is distributed among product or service segments, and market segmentation. This proves you have an in-depth understanding of your industry's past, present, and future.

**eMarketer Pro:** If you're going to market your business online or through a new technology, you need statistics to prove that the audience is there. From AR and VR to tablets, eMarketer has the latest data. This proves that you understand your target market and how they consume information – and how to reach them to advertise your new venture.

“Solid market research is the foundation for any robust financial model. Quality research should dictate everything from pricing to expected sales to personnel plans. Unless you do your research, your financial forecast could very well be unrealistic—and that can hurt you when you apply for an EB-5 immigration visa.

**Paul Hightower MBA**  
VP of Business Development



# Our experts give you and your lawyer an edge:

**Experience:** With over 2,000 immigration business plans submitted over 14 years, we know exactly how to fulfill the government's filing criteria.

**Knowledge:** Work with our team of financial modelers, researchers, and writers.

**Answers:** From Use of Funds questions to CIS requirements, we can guide you.

**Support:** Get an RFE using our plan? We'll edit our work for free.



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

## Our Mission

As a key part of your EB-5 visa application, a business plan might be the only thing standing in between you and your dreams of coming to the U.S. permanently.

Masterplans is the solution. We've helped hundreds of foreign entrepreneurs seeking EB-5 visas to figure out their organizational chart, concrete market needs, and necessary investment—topics that directly affect whether or not USCIS approves your visa. If you take your visa application seriously, you should take your business plan seriously too. We do.

At Masterplans, we draw upon more than 14 years of experience to develop compelling financial forecasts, exclusive market and industry analysis, growth strategies, and more. With more than 300 EB-5 business plans under our belt, we know what you need. Give yourself the best chance possible!

“ I feel honored that Masterplans plays such a major role in entrepreneurs' lives as they make such a big life change and emigrate to the United States. It's not something we take lightly!

**Brent Butler**  
CEO



# It starts with a proven process.



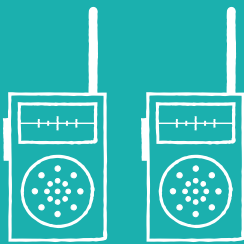
## Kick-off call

We'll start with an in-depth phone call with your project manager to establish your goals.



## Research

We make sure we understand your project and dive into research.



## Collaborate

After our researchers are done, your project manager synthesizes their work into a cohesive narrative.



## First draft

We deliver a comprehensive picture of your company's plans and begin to fine-tune.



## Revision

We collaborate with you to revise the draft into exactly what you want.



## Final draft

You're ready to add your business plan to your visa application!



## Our Process

Here's what you can expect when you partner with us:

**Kick-off call:** You work directly with a project manager who will create your EB-5 plan—you don't have to write a thing. We start with an in-depth phone call to learn your business model, or if you're more comfortable working in writing, a straightforward questionnaire. This is a get-to-know-you process when we learn about your vision and goals, as well as what you need from us.

**Research:** During our internal research phase, we make sure we have all the information necessary for an outstanding EB-5 business plan. Some of this comes from you, like your resume and your history. Other parts are things we research on your behalf, like the average square footage of a retail space. If we need to seek out information, we do so.

**Collaborate:** Your project manager coordinates a research analyst, strategy writer, and financial modeler, who each focus on their specialty and rely on their expertise to deliver the components of your plan. Once done, your project manager makes sure it's logical, flows well, and—most importantly—will stand up to scrutiny from your adjudicator.

**First draft:** Our team-based model allows us to specialize and develop your plan on a rapid timeframe. As little as seven days after our initial phone call with you, you receive a first draft of your business plan. You review it, adding edits, questions, and missing information.

**Revision:** We want your feedback. We've built in a comfortable revision period so you have plenty of time to dialog with us at no extra charge. With your edits in hand, we perform additional research and revise your first draft so it's ready for your attorney, client, or the filing itself.

**Final draft:** This is it! We hand off your EB-5 business plan, which is ready for you to add to your visa application. Best of luck!

# Our experienced team does the work.



**Project Manager**



**Lead Writer**



**Research Analyst**



**Financial Modeler**

We hire, mentor, and retain people who are  
passionate about working with entrepreneurs.

It's the reason we're the premier business plan writing company.

**Entrepreneur**

**PORTLAND  
BUSINESS  
JOURNAL**



**A +**

**Bloomberg  
BusinessWeek**

**Inc.  
500**

Over 10,000  on  
**facebook**

# What It Takes to Be a Business Plan Expert

From researchers to financial modelers and project managers, our team is highly specialized, each focusing on a key component of your EB-5 business plan:

## Project Manager

Your main point of contact and #1 resource. Their job is to be your guide through the business plan development process, navigating common pitfalls and carrying most of the burden. They're adept at anticipating your needs and drawing on their extensive EB-5 experience to bring invaluable perspective to your venture and industry as a whole.

## Research Analyst

Our analytical thinkers parse dense, subscription-only databases and spreadsheets with ease—but that's not all. They then translate that demographic and industry data into an insightful narrative about the climate surrounding your business and the implications for your business's future.

## Lead Writer

The USCIS not only wants to know that your venture is a viable one, but that you specifically are the right candidate for an active role in it. That's where our writers come in. They excel at highlighting your most relevant experience to create an ironclad bio and job description for your new role, along with corresponding details about your EB-5 investment and business objectives.

## Financial Modeler

Anyone can say they'll be profitable or hiring a staff of 10+ people in a couple years; our financial modelers prove it. Each is a numbers whiz, and many also bring real-world experience as business owners. That means their financial forecasts are grounded in reality, from your balance sheet and cash flow to your profit and loss or income statements.

“ Nothing brings purpose to my day quite like hearing from a lawyer or client that a visa petition was approved—especially with EB-5, where the criteria are so stringent and the stakes are always higher. It just feels like such a victory.”

**William Dean**  
VP of Immigration



The result? Your USCIS-ready business plan gets approved:

“ I wanted to let you know that the EB-5 petition for Three Fold was approved!

Thank you for your assistance and getting us a great business plan.

**George R. Ernst**

Roberts Law Firm, P.A

Our specialized immigration team has created a wide range of business plans for direct investment and Regional Center-based projects, and we've learned exactly what adjudicators look for. Business plans can be daunting and time-consuming, but with our expertise and teamwork, you get a first draft in as little as seven days. And if you get a Request for Evidence (RFE) from USCIS, we handle the edits for free!

### **Praise from leading immigration attorneys:**

“ My job is to ensure successful case approvals for my clients in their E-2, L-1, and EB-5 cases, and thank you, Masterplans, for making it so easy! Your expertise in business plan preparation, coupled with your fantastic, friendly, and patient professional staff have made all the difference. Thanks for helping my clients achieve success.

**Carolyn Pedersen**

American Immigration Law Center

“ Masterplans has done an exceptional job for all my clients. Masterplans is easy to work with and your fees are reasonable.

**Monica E. Lukoscsek**

U.S. Immigration Law Group LLP

“ There are many business plan providers in the market, but I have complete confidence in the plans that come in from Masterplans... They're always very professional, very thorough, and provide the information that is essential for success when seeking immigration benefits for foreign investors.

**Timothy M. Wheelwright**

Durham Jones & Pinegar

masterplans.com<sup>mp</sup>

Take the first step  
toward your visa

immigration@masterplans.com  
(877) 543-2011

1355 NW Everett St. Suite 100  
Portland, OR 97209

William Dean  
VP of Immigration

