

A PLAYBOOK FOR IMPROVING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTERS

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Published by InBIA.

International Business Innovation Association
P.O. Box 677297, Orlando, FL 32867

This research was made possible by JPMorgan Chase & Co. through Small Business Forward, a five year, \$150 million initiative connecting underserved small businesses with the capital, targeted assistance and support networks to help them grow faster, create jobs and strengthen local economies. To drive impact, Small Business Forward focuses on diversifying high-growth sectors, expanding entrepreneurial opportunities in neighborhoods and expanding access to flexible capital for underserved entrepreneurs.

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FORWARD

We want to start this playbook with an informal word about perspective and language. First, we ask all readers to come to this space with open minds. In this effort to contribute to a world in which all entrepreneurs have the same level of access to resources and opportunity, there is no one-size-fits-all answer that will work for every program. Also, as momentum gains and continues in efforts toward racial equality in the United States, new strategies will emerge, so we'd like to present this playbook as a work in progress. As new effective solutions become best practices, we will adapt our content accordingly.

As we approached the writing of this book, we wrestled with how to refer to the various groups of people who have historically had fewer opportunities and less access to resources. This book started as the “Minority Playbook,” but we wanted to avoid language with negative connotations, and we are also getting close to a point when white people are no longer the majority. We considered words and phrases like “underrepresented populations,” “underserved communities,” “the new majority” and “ascendant cultures.” In the end, we have decided to use the phrase “people of color” to refer to all non-white populations; when possible, we will use more specific language.

In this book, you may find something with which you do not agree. Please view this as a conversation we are initiating with our audience. Let us know your thoughts and experiences (you can find our contact info at www.inbia.org/team). But please also bear in mind that there are many points in which conflicting views exist and cannot be easily reconciled. We encourage you to continue reading, continue listening, and continue having an open mind. Let us all focus on the common goal of fostering innovation by creating diverse and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems.

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The demographic landscape is shifting in the United States such that the current white majority will be a minority by the middle of this century (see Figure 1). These changes are creating an economic imperative: the U.S. needs more entrepreneurs of color to create more successful businesses that contribute greater productivity to the GDP and more jobs to the economy. The current racial makeup of the country's entrepreneurial landscape is fragmented, largely due to systemic forces inherited from 20th century laws, policies and practices.

The problem facing city leaders and ecosystem builders today is how to bridge the gap between segregationist policies and practices of the past that excluded generations of inherent talent within communities of color and the available resources for assisting these traditionally disadvantaged populations.

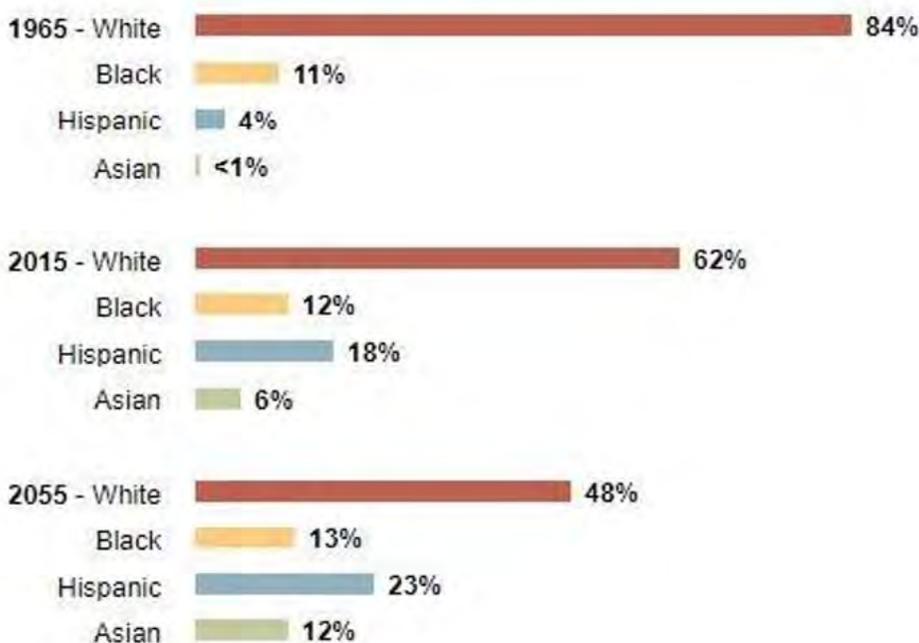


People across the country have realized that the U.S. **cannot afford** to continue creating barriers for communities of color through systems designed to favor a white majority.



The country is facing a competitive global marketplace and needs to cultivate and empower all of its entrepreneurial talent in order to sustain its leading level of global competitiveness in the world.

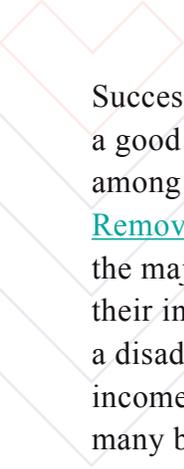
Changing demographics of US population



Source: Pew Research Center



FIGURE 1



Successfully starting a business involves much more than just a good idea; it requires access to networks, talent and funding, among other elements. [The Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs: Removing Barriers](#) study by the Kauffman Foundation found that the majority of entrepreneurs use personal or family savings to fund their initial phase (Figure 2), which puts entrepreneurs of color at a disadvantage due to the distinct disparity in median household incomes (Figure 3). The same study found that more than twice as many black entrepreneurs reported their profits were negatively impacted by lack of access to capital than did white entrepreneurs (Figure 4). In communities that traditionally do not have access to adequate resources to start businesses, it can be difficult to clear the initial hurdle of getting people to have entrepreneurial mindsets. And if they don't have the mindsets, they won't seek the assistance and resources entrepreneurship centers offer.

This intersection between underlying wealth disparities and race is significant, affecting the interest and timing of the decision to pursue entrepreneurship. Income and wealth patterns and inequality among some groups is increasing, placing a larger strain on resources. In 2019, the [Survey of Consumer Finances](#) showed that the median net worth for white families was \$188,200, compared to the median net worth of \$24,100 for black families and \$36,100 for Latino families.

At least 83% of new businesses that hire are not accessing external private institutional capital at startup.

Source of Startup Capital

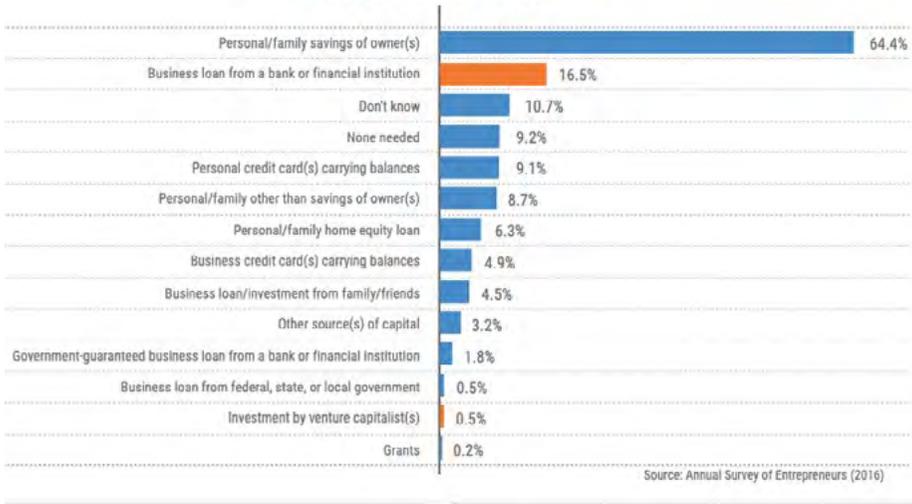


FIGURE 2



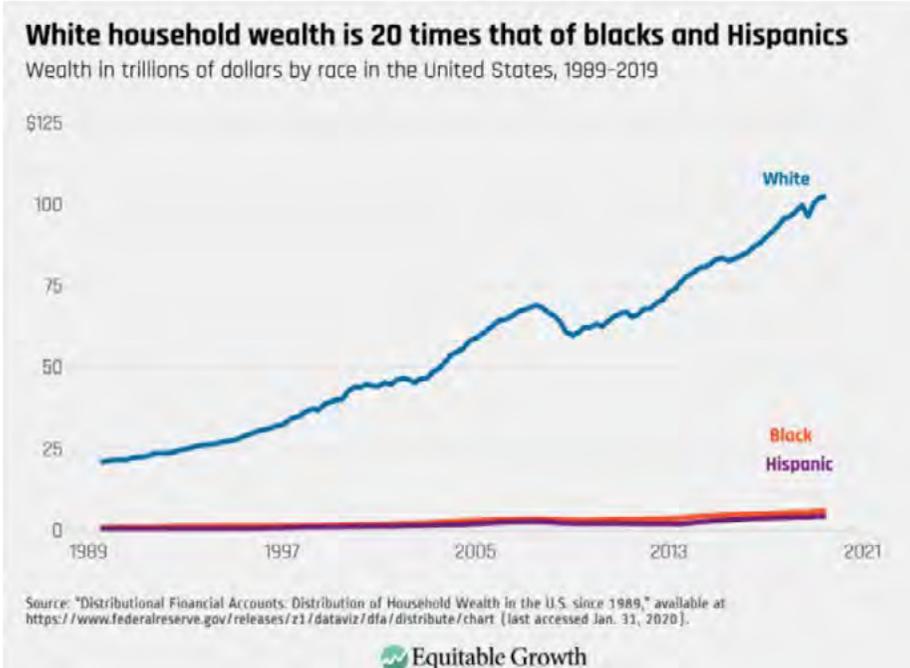


FIGURE 3

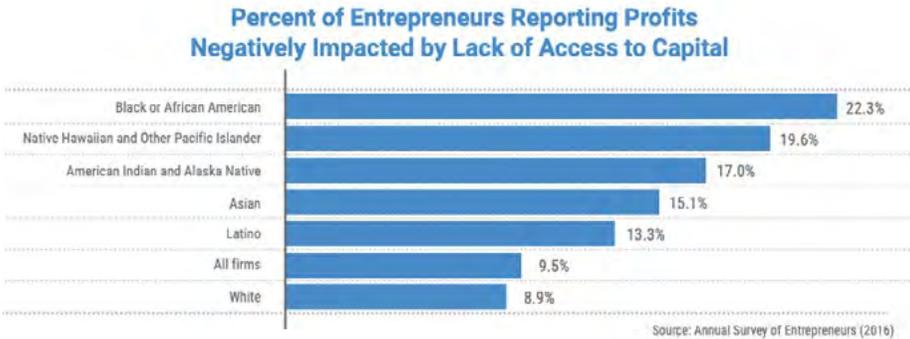
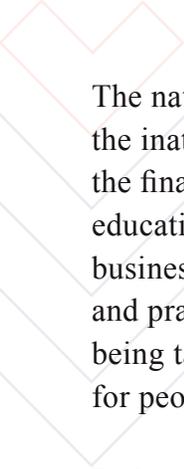


FIGURE 4



The national crisis of a growing wealth gap is exacerbated by the inattention paid to the discriminatory practices inherent in the finance industry. Americans take out loans to pay for higher education, maintain and upkeep homes, and to start and grow businesses. The financial sector has a history of segregated policies and practices that continues today and offsets the positive steps being taken to establish access to opportunities and capital resources for people of color, thereby ensuring the outcome is negative.

Risk capital is the key ingredient for entrepreneurs to develop ideas and deliver them to the market. Nearly every idea will require a committed and qualified team of individuals to execute a strategy and plan. But developing any idea into a minimally viable product and testing it in a target market requires funding. That requires a pathway that leads to equitable access to capital.

Ecosystem builders must be mindful that entrepreneurship for low-income people of color is not a matter of desire. In many situations, people have been conditioned by previous generations to avoid such risks because the potential for failure without a financial safety net meant the loss of all a family's hard-earned



America cannot sustain its lofty ranking in global competitiveness by **relying** solely on the productivity of its white male business owners.



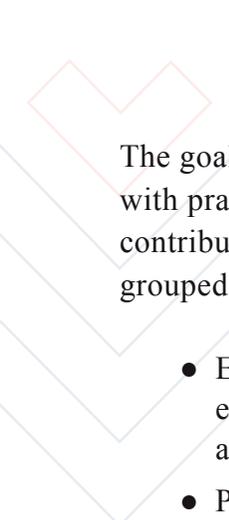
assets and income. America cannot sustain its lofty ranking in global competitiveness by relying solely on the productivity of its white male business owners. Cities and private sector partners can establish inclusive strategies and public policies that commit long-term investments toward cultivating a valuable landscape of diverse entrepreneurial talent, which could add rocket fuel to propel America's economy.

Today, America is still struggling to reconcile persistent grievances stemming from a long history of oppressing minorities (which continues today) while facing the reality of future reliance upon cultivating new entrepreneurial talent across the landscape of a multicultural, inclusive American society. The question that serves as a proverbial elephant in the room is:

Who will create the jobs of tomorrow?

America is in desperate need of more innovative entrepreneurs. Fortunately, the country is filled with untapped diverse innovative talent. How do we connect talent and resources within inclusive economic ecosystems to bolster and scale up measurable productivity outcomes?

Everyone can play a role in working toward economic transformation by affecting change in individual spheres of influence. For entrepreneurship center managers and other ecosystem builders, this means taking steps to create diverse and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems in which people of color see entrepreneurship as a realistic option, feel as if they belong within available resource structures, and are able to access the capital, connections and funding they need to establish sustainable, scalable businesses.



The goal of this playbook is to provide entrepreneurship centers with practical tactics for creating cultures of belonging and contributing to diverse and inclusive ecosystems. The strategies are grouped into three stages:

- Engagement and education – strategies and programs to encourage communities of color to see entrepreneurship as a viable option
- Programming and culture – creating programs to help entrepreneurs of color succeed and establishing cultures in which all people feel welcome
- Growth and sustainability – helping entrepreneurs make the connections and access the resources that will allow their businesses to survive and thrive

Each section will illustrate the tactics with case study examples from programs across the country, as well as some available resources. Though statistics show persistent disparities, there are many people and organizations working to change the status quo and create a future in which all people have equal opportunity and innovation reaches new heights as a result. This playbook is meant to be used as a guide for entrepreneurship center managers working to increase diversity and ensure inclusion to better engage innovative entrepreneurs who have otherwise been overlooked or excluded.

SECTION

ONE

ENGAGEMENT
& EDUCATION



SECTION ONE: ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

Before an entrepreneur looks for initial funding, writes a business plan, or even starts thinking of an idea as one that can potentially grow into a company, that person has to see entrepreneurship as a realistic option. Ecosystems that foster an entrepreneurial mindset in the schools and in the broader community lay fertile ground for startups to flourish. But ecosystems also have to lay the groundwork for people of color to make important connections and have access to resources and funding.

As entrepreneurship centers look to become more inclusive, they should start at the beginning of the cycle, with the ecosystem in which future entrepreneurs are growing up and learning. By engaging in specific tactics and activities, centers can encourage more people of color to engage in entrepreneurial activity. This section will explore several tactics, including:

- Connect with and talking to business owners of color
- Work with local, regional and state governments to ensure innovation efforts include strategies to become more diverse and inclusive
- Assess the existing ecosystem for resources and support of diversity and inclusion
- Encourage all school children to explore STEM-based topics and think of themselves as entrepreneurs

TACTIC

Connect with & talk to business owners of color

Reaching out to and interacting with business owners of color will help entrepreneurship center staff better understand cultural attitudes toward starting a business and challenges that exist. As noted by Albert Shen, former National Deputy Director of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), “Different ethnic communities operate and communicate differently in the business environment. Incubators and accelerators are often introduced as a one-size-fits-all solution. A better approach would be to create models that can be customized to connect with the minority community. And a good starting place is to initiate a dialogue with the minority business owners, taking the time to become more knowledgeable about their needs.”

([Creating Inclusive High-Tech Incubators and Accelerators](#), ICIC)

Rafael Caamano, the site manager of the University of Florida Winter Springs Incubator, also spoke of the importance of interacting with entrepreneurs from different cultural backgrounds, saying “I think understanding different entrepreneurs and different cultures while having the ability to interact and relate to their needs and the way they operate their businesses is very important. For example, I understand the Hispanic market, how [entrepreneurs] like to be advised...the level of customer service...they like to receive. And I also learned the same of our Indian entrepreneurs. It’s important to switch gears depending on where people are from.”

([Creating Inclusive High-Tech Incubators and Accelerators](#), ICIC)

TACTIC

Work with local, regional and state governments to ensure innovation efforts include strategies to become more diverse and inclusive

Many states see the impact entrepreneurship can have on their economies, particularly if used to encourage certain sectors to take hold and flourish. As a result, some allocate funds to boost startups, but they don't always assess how the money can be equally accessible to all entrepreneurs. Encouraging states to reexamine their programs to ensure all entrepreneurs can take advantage of opportunities is crucial to creating an inclusive ecosystem.

CASE STUDY: The Ohio Third Frontier Program

In 2002 and 2010, Ohio allocated money into the Third Frontier investment program (\$1.6 billion in 2002, augmented in 2010 with \$700 million) to redesign the manufacturing economy into a knowledge-based, tech-driven innovation economy. This program worked well for the majority white urban population across Ohio but left out the state's underrepresented populations, particularly women, rural white residents and people of color.

In 2014, the state started researching the challenges present in encouraging these populations to engage and fully participate in a new economic paradigm developed around technology innovation and entrepreneurship. The Ohio Board of Regents unanimously adopted the policy report, [Inclusive Competitiveness: Empowering Underrepresented Ohioans to Compete in the Innovation Economy](#) (Holifield 2014). Today, the Ohio Third Frontier serves as a successful national model for regional economic transformation toward a tech-based innovation economy.

TACTIC

Assess existing ecosystem for resources and support of diversity and inclusion

Many regions already have some programs and other resources aimed at entrepreneurial education and helping people of color make the connections they need to begin a startup journey.

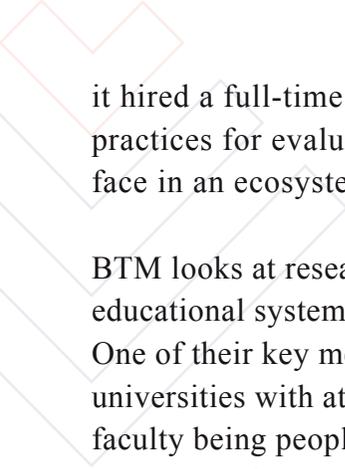
By identifying what already exists, how effectively those resources are impacting the community, and how to create meaningful partnerships, entrepreneurship center managers can identify gaps and opportunities for which their centers might be well suited.

This type of assessment helps avoid duplication of efforts and helps create more useful resources.

CASE STUDY: Black Tech Mecca

Assessing resources and opportunities requires data that offer insight into community assets, challenges, needs and vulnerabilities. The generational segregation of communities of color has resulted in a dearth of trusted information to inform policymakers, strategists, foundations, development leaders and other stakeholders who seek to invest in improving the economic productivity of target regions, and Black Tech Mecca (BTM) was founded to address this need in the ecosystem-building landscape.

Led by co-founders Fabian Elliott and Dineo Seakamela, BTM was established in 2015 as a Chicago-based data research partner for local city governments, academia and private institutions to create proprietary data that quantify technology engagement within Black communities. BTM developed a methodology in 2017 focused on 13 indicators derived from best practices research, including factors like mobility and connectivity that were previously identified by the Kauffman Foundation. In 2018,



it hired a full-time research director to take another look at best practices for evaluating some of the barriers people of color face in an ecosystem.

BTM looks at research indicators to assess how well the educational systems are doing with inclusivity in specific fields. One of their key measures is the percentage of colleges and universities with at least 50% of the STEM and computer science faculty being people of color. BTM also looks at pre-K through 12 extracurricular activities, measuring the location of coding camps and their geographic relationships to Black communities.

In looking specifically at entrepreneurship, BTM examines the culture and climate of incubators and accelerators, including how many people of color are represented in their leadership and their mentor networks. BTM also gathers information on the locations of incubators and accelerators in terms of how accessible they are to Black residents in more segregated neighborhoods.

“At Black Tech Mecca, we’ve developed a Black tech ecosystem city assessment framework,” said Elliott. “That allows us to be able to assess how the Black communities are engaging with their local tech sector across academic, corporate workforce and entrepreneurship pipelines. We use this tool to help cities leverage data to assess their Black Tech Ecosystem, equip leaders with insights through education, and then activate measurable growth through smart BTE activation. That relates to the challenges. People can tell you about the diversity data of Google but can’t tell you what’s happening in their own cities and communities.”

TACTIC

Work with others in the ecosystem to encourage all school children to explore STEM-based topics and think of themselves as potential entrepreneurs

Many children believe they can be or do anything when they grow up – firefighter, doctor, garbage truck driver – the possibilities seem limitless in youth. As kids get older, the messages to which they are exposed become increasingly ingrained and their youthful visions of the future often start to fade, replaced by whatever their cultures are telling them is more realistic. Ecosystems seeking to encourage entrepreneurship in young people should make sure messaging and educational opportunities are related to learning key skills and developing entrepreneurial mindsets.

Many entrepreneurship centers do not have the capacity to set up and run their own youth-based programs, but they can partner with other entities that are better suited to do this work, including schools and other community-based organizations. Through these partnerships, entrepreneurship centers can also help identify resources or national programs that might be helpful in their regions.

RESOURCE: [SMASH](#)

The Summer Math and Science Honors (SMASH) program was founded in 2001 and initially launched at the University of California Berkley to help high school students of color excel in a STEM-based curriculum, encouraging them to continue in these subjects in college and ultimately making them more competitive for STEM and computing occupations in which people of color are currently underrepresented. The SMASH Academy accepts ninth grade applicants into a three-year free program, during

which students spend five weeks each summer taking intensive courses on a college campus and then spend the academic year participating in monthly programming. By the end of the program, in addition to the in-depth instruction in key topic areas, students will have a strong community of peers and networks of STEM professionals that can help them as they move on to college and into the workforce.

The impact of the SMASH Academy starts when students are still in high school. While enrolled, 82% of the scholars plan to major in a STEM field in college; when they think about a career in STEM, they see themselves fitting in well. Additionally, 77% have already connected with a STEM professional who could help them navigate professional paths. In looking at the graduates, 72% have gone on to get a Bachelor's degree in a STEM-related field.

RESOURCE: [STEMIE](#)

The STEMIE (STEM + Invention + Entrepreneurship) Coalition is a three-year-old nonprofit global alliance of more than 35 organizations focused on formalizing invention and entrepreneurship training for every K-12 student in America. STEMIE teaches students real-world problem solving and creative skills through invention education and entrepreneurship activities. The coalition offers professional development for teachers and an invention curriculum for schools, as well as a national convention to provide additional insights and connections for educators.

According to Danny Briere, the executive director of the STEMIE Coalition, the program is “among the most diverse and inclusive K-12 educational programs with 59% female, 37% underserved, and 33% minority populations participating – awesome numbers for an engineering and entrepreneurship program. Any community that is serious about creating an innovative and entrepreneurial ecosystem



Any community that is serious about creating an innovative and entrepreneurial ecosystem **needs** to have strong K-12 invention and entrepreneurship partners



needs to have strong K-12 invention and entrepreneurship partners so that it can grow its own entrepreneurs and not try to convert them later on as adults.”

RESOURCE: [Korda Institute for Teaching](#)

The Korda Institute for Teaching is an Ohio-based nonprofit operating on a teaching methodology developed by Doris Korda that empowers students through deep learning to solve rigorous challenges in their communities. The institute trains high school entrepreneurship teachers to use entrepreneurial concepts as a vehicle for learning skills, and it works with educators across the globe to change the way teachers teach and students learn in urban and rural public districts, career tech programs, and schools of all types.

“I am driven by the tragedy and injustice of an education system that is both completely ineffective and perpetuating economic inequity,” said founder Doris Korda. “My focus is to make change where it’s most needed – inside existing classrooms in underserved

schools whose students have limited opportunity for academic achievement. As a systems engineer and tech entrepreneur, I learned to make big system change through local actions.

I am approaching school change similarly – applying entrepreneurial innovation to the classroom and to whole school change. I begin with school leadership that has the will to create the conditions for experiment and collaboration. With the leadership, we identify a design team of administrators and willing teachers to do a pilot entrepreneurial unit inside an existing classroom. I begin by immersing them in an entrepreneurial experience and mindset, then giving the teachers everything they need to design and implement a pilot unit without having to create anything themselves. Through the pilot, teachers experience a radically different method of teaching that results in transformative learning for even their most difficult to reach students. After that, teachers are motivated to change the way they teach everything.”

CASE STUDY: The National Institute for Inclusive Competitiveness

Dr. Jamie Bracey-Green, an award-winning minority STEM student pipeline builder in the College of Engineering at Temple University in Philadelphia, used a strategic framework to launch the National Institute for Inclusive Competitiveness (NIIC). As the CEO of the NIIC, Dr. Bracey-Green built on the idea of developing new systems and frameworks at the community level to prepare students of color to compete in arenas of entrepreneurship in a knowledge-based, tech-driven, globally competitive innovation economy. She focused on areas of environmental sustainability.

“We are translating economic policy into strategies for ensuring America’s current urban residents are part of the STEM talent development pipeline, as well as promoting economic opportunity meeting the needs of urban centers that are going to

change, hopefully for the better,” says Bracey-Green. “While many contemporary dystopian movies suggest that the planet and economic pursuits can’t co-exist, thousands of years of civilization’s growth suggest the will to create a healthy blend is the challenge. The NIIC is designed to provide a pathway to prosperity through application of market-driven solutions to environmental challenges of sustainability in the era of climate change.”

Dr. Bracey-Green’s targeting of market-driven sustainable solutions to climate change in the food, water and energy industries is the first entrepreneurial application of inclusive competitiveness strategies aimed at students of color. It catapults underrepresented entrepreneurial talent into competitive arenas of entrepreneurship through applied STEM education and tech-innovation in the environmental sciences. Dr. Bracey-Green and the NIIC are preparing student entrepreneurs of color to compete in industries that represent growing arenas of economic opportunity.

“It’s within the context of STEM practitioners aligned with US business interests that the National Institute for Inclusive Competitiveness advocates for increased diversity, inclusion and participation of marginalized communities in learning the science, engineering and technologies required to contribute and benefit from sustainability industries that support quality of life in local communities as they grow,” says Dr. Bracey-Green. “The economic opportunity related to human migration in the face of climate change is a huge opportunity, ranging from indoor vertical smart farming, to engineering new water treatment practices, to energy technologies and bio-mass waste management.”

SECTION

TWO



PROGRAMMING
& CULTURE

SECTION TWO: PROGRAMMING & CULTURE

Entrepreneurship centers are uniquely positioned to increase the number of entrepreneurs of color who are able to establish successful businesses through the programming they offer and the culture they create. In efforts to become more diverse, center managers and other staff should look especially carefully at two pieces:

1

Does the center's programming target and support diverse populations?

2

When entrepreneurs walk in the door, do they feel a sense of belonging?

Starting and managing an entrepreneurship center involves dozens of choices, some more significant than others. The location of the center can have a huge impact on the demographics of the entrepreneurs reached, especially if it is not easily accessible by public transportation. If the location has already been set or is otherwise not flexible, center staff should look at creative ways to make it easy for target demographics to get there, and once they are there, that they feel a sense of belonging created by how the space is arranged, what the atmosphere is like, who approaches them, and many other details.

To help entrepreneurs of color who have long lacked equal access to resources succeed in the startup world, entrepreneurship centers often also need to offer specific programming, deliberate connections and other targeted resources. The approach these centers take depends on many factors, including the nature of their ecosystems and the demographic(s) they intend to target.

This section will explore some of the tactics entrepreneurship centers can use to create more diverse and inclusive offerings. These tactics include:

- Be deliberate about space selection, design, accessibility and culture
- Offer specific programming to reach target communities
- Engage mentors and volunteers from the community who represent the target demographics and have a social justice lens
- Create partnerships with other ecosystem players to provide more resources for entrepreneurs

TACTIC

Be deliberate about space selection, design, accessibility and culture

Location and space design can be significant factors in how inclusive an entrepreneurship center will be. If the center is in a neighborhood with a high population of people of color, and/or if it is easily accessible to public transportation, it will be more likely to attract diverse participants. The way the space appears has a more nuanced impact, informed by how comfortable people of various backgrounds feel when they walk in the door.

Accessibility isn't just about location and appearance, though – affordability plays an important role, too. If the pricing structure is out of range for entrepreneurs of modest means, the program will only attract people who have the kind of financial safety net that is much more typical of the white population.

CASE STUDY: Impact Hub Baltimore

Impact Hub Baltimore describes itself as “a coworking space, innovation lab and community forum for civic-minded groups to meet, work and connect.” The facility is located at the ground level of a storefront-style space close to public transit and strives to achieve an atmosphere in which anyone can walk in to get what they need and make connections. They encourage all members to work together to ensure safety and security, which has the added benefit of everyone being engaged with each other and taking ownership of the space. The facility intentionally has its community kitchen front and center so that it feels like a coffee shop when people walk in.

Impact Hub also realized their pricing structure was prohibiting many in their target audience from taking advantage of the space and programming, so they added more accessible options. They lowered the price of unlimited 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week access from \$250 to \$150 and created an option for unlimited access Monday through Friday for \$50 per week. The staff anticipated this shift would have a negative short-term impact, and it did, dropping revenue by about 40% in the first three months. But they also felt confident that the changes would ultimately increase both participation and diversity, and that prediction proved true as well, with revenues increasing 25-30% and diversity increasing 7-8%.

CASE STUDY: La Cocina

The San Francisco-based La Cocina was established in 2005 to help low-income food entrepreneurs successfully grow their businesses so they can support themselves, their families and the community. They provide their commercial kitchen space at affordable rates, as well as industry-specific technical assistance and access to market opportunities.

The La Cocina facility is in the San Francisco Mission District, which has become gentrified in recent years due to its convenience for people in the tech industry. Low-income people have been pushed out to the suburbs and exurbs as rent has doubled. La Cocina is deliberately working with organizations in the East Bay to continue to reach their target demographic.

La Cocina also makes efforts to ensure the culture and programming of the organization are welcoming and accessible to entrepreneurs of all different backgrounds. All of their programming is bilingual – English and Spanish – but they have entrepreneurs from all over the world, so they do their best to find volunteers who can provide resources in languages with which people are comfortable. La Cocina also strives to have a family-friendly atmosphere, knowing that childcare can be a significant barrier for entrepreneurs participating in events and programming.

CASE STUDY: The Georgia Micro Enterprise Network (GMEN)

The Georgia Micro Enterprise Network (GMEN) is a nonprofit association that acts as a resource for micro-businesses by connecting them with business development training and lending organizations. Their mission is to create opportunities and jobs, particularly for people in disadvantaged communities. More than 75

membership organizations provide direct services to entrepreneurs through GMEN, which trains the trainers.

Business literacy training is often missing from the general educational system, so people who are looking to build businesses often have gaps of knowledge when it comes to financial systems and uses of credit and capital, as well as gaps in technology access. GMEN uses its resources and skills to create curricula specific to Blacks, people with disabilities, and women and provide targeted training for young entrepreneurs and older adult populations.

TACTIC

Offer specific programming and employ tactics to reach target communities

Helping entrepreneurs of color overcome existing barriers and racial disparities necessitates programming designed to address specific challenges, offered in a way that is accessible to the target demographics. The nature of these offerings depends on the dynamics of the local region and the demographic(s) targeted, so there is not a one-size-fits-all answer; still, there are lessons to be learned from what some organizations are doing.

CASE STUDY: Smarter in the City

Boston has a global reputation as a hotbed for startup companies, but racial disparity persists, particularly when it comes to tech companies securing funding. As the first tech accelerator in the predominantly Black neighborhood of Roxbury, Smarter in the City is taking steps to change that narrative. With a focus specifically on entrepreneurs of color, Smarter in the City draws investors' attention to companies they otherwise might have overlooked.

All companies accepted into the rigorous five-month program receive a \$4,000 zero-equity stipend, professional mentorship, coworking space and technical assistance. Since 2014, Smarter in the City has launched more than 20 startups owned by entrepreneurs of color.

CASE STUDY: Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians

The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians was founded in Philadelphia in 2003 to connect immigrants to economic opportunities through workforce development, entrepreneurship and civic engagement. The goals of the organization are to promote both economic development and immigrant integration. The entrepreneurship program is designed according to an inclusive model and works to create connections between entrepreneurs, businesses and ecosystems across the world.

The way the Welcoming Center fosters immigrant integration is a key feature of its offerings. They have bilingual instructors teaching English for Entrepreneurs to specific language groups. These trainings help entrepreneurs learn the language they need to run a business, negotiate with customers, do conflict resolution, have good customer service, report crimes, and more.

CASE STUDY: New Mexico Community Capital's Native Entrepreneur in Residence (NEIR) Program

Established in 2014 by Albuquerque-based New Mexico Community Capital, the NEIR program provides tools to help emerging Native American businesses with financial literacy, business skills, and key connections. To date, the program has

served participants from over 28 tribes and pueblos, graduating 46 entrepreneurs and creating 265 new jobs.

The NEIR program recognizes that every entrepreneur has unique strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities, so their offerings are custom tailored to meet specific needs through one-to-one training with an experienced mentor entrepreneur. Through these relationships, entrepreneurs develop business skills, improve problem solving, receive support and engage with the broader community.

NEIR program participants receive monthly stipends to support their businesses, as well as dedicated office space, shared meeting and event spaces, and basic IT instruction. Upon graduation from the program, entrepreneurs join a peer advisory group to consult on business pitches, work through challenges, and provide general support.

Ultimately, the goal of the NEIR program is to increase the number of Native American-owned startups in the community while also increasing revenue and jobs overall. NEIR also engages existing community networks and creates new entrepreneurial resources.

CASE STUDY: **EforAll: EparaTodos Program**

Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll) was founded in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 2010 by entrepreneur and venture capitalist Desh Deshpande. He and his wife Jaishree provided the initial capital and set the vision of changing communities by closing the opportunity gap and creating employment. The organization proactively seeks inclusivity and diversity, connection with the communities they serve, and a collaborative and supportive culture. Through its business accelerator, pitch competitions, virtual workshops,

coworking spaces and other initiatives, EforAll is impacting people of color in and around Boston.

EforAll initially held a pitch competition in Lawrence, which has a 70% Latino population. On the day of the event, no one of Latino descent attended. The organizers felt as if they had failed since they clearly had not reached their target demographic, and they realized that the approach of advertising in English almost entirely online had drawn white people from nearby towns instead of the intended audience. The first step they took to rectify this was to dive deep into Lawrence, meeting with the business community, other institutions, nonprofits and government entities to get help with distributing information about their program. They also hired staffers who were from the community in order to build trust.

In addition to changing the approach to reach the intended audience, EforAll started EparaTodos, a fully Spanish language version of their accelerator program. Staff members are bilingual and strive to have mentors who are representative of the community, though that piece can be difficult because of the low number of successful entrepreneurs this underserved population has had. EparaTodos has now expanded into Lynne and Holyoke, both in Massachusetts, as well as Longmont, Colorado.

TACTIC

Engage mentors and volunteers from the target community who represent the target demographics and have a social justice lens

CASE STUDY: Seed Spot

Founded in 2012, Seed Spot is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit organization that works to support social entrepreneurs who create products, services or technologies that improve lives. They provide access to mentors, business fundamentals, community partners, capital sources and other resources these entrepreneurs need to succeed.

Seed Spot focuses on ensuring mentors reflect the population with which they work. They use an annual impact survey to identify key areas of entrepreneur needs, both during and after participation in the program. Once they have a sense for where the greatest needs lie, they work with team and the advisory board networks to find stakeholders who could meet those needs, cultivating relationships and providing mentor training before matching mentors with entrepreneurs. As the process continues, they have checkpoints to make sure all is going well, and they create goals to keep the mentors and entrepreneurs on track.

CASE STUDY: Impact Hub Baltimore

Impact Hub Baltimore, described in the previous section, takes a deliberate approach to the people they choose as volunteers. When selecting both their advisory board and mentors, they look for people who look at the world through social justice and racial justice lenses. They also strive for a level of diversity that reflects the city in which they live. For Baltimore, that means having a little more than half of mentors and advisors who are black, and a similar % who are women.

CASE STUDY: Native Entrepreneur in Residence Program (NEIR)

The NEIR program, described in the previous section, is deliberate in its strategy of identifying mentors to work with the entrepreneurs. They have contractors to do the mentoring, several of whom are Native American. Their goal is to increase the Native American representation among their mentors, and they recruit graduates to make it happen. In addition, they look for people who have both been successful entrepreneurs and are good teachers.

CASE STUDY: EforAll

EforAll, also described in the previous section, uses a model that requires them to recruit and retain thousands of mentors across the cohorts in all of their programs. They want to have mentors that reflect the diversity of their entrepreneurs, but there is currently a much larger pool of white male entrepreneurs who are willing to be mentors. About one-third of their mentors are women, but in other demographics they still struggle to find people who have succeeded and are willing to become involved as mentors.

TACTIC

Create partnerships with other ecosystem players to provide more resources for entrepreneurs

Meeting the specific needs of all entrepreneur groups can be an overwhelming prospect for a single entrepreneurship center, especially in regions where there is much diversity. Creating partnerships

with other organizations can help bolster capacity and resources, ultimately benefiting the entrepreneurs by creating new offerings and connecting them with key opportunities.

CASE STUDY: Tampa Bay Wave

For more than a decade, Tampa Bay Wave has been promoting startup activity in Tampa Bay, supporting the tech-enabled ecosystem through accelerator programs, coworking spaces, events, and more. The organization strives to be committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in every aspect of what they do and how they select and serve entrepreneurs.

One of the ways Tampa Bay Wave supports diversity is through a partnership with the Nielson Foundation to host the TechDiversity accelerator. The accelerator's cohorts receive guidance and mentorship, connect with a community of diverse entrepreneurs, access capital and pitch preparation through the growing and engaged investor network, and use the space and marketing support of Tampa Bay Wave. The Nielson Foundation provides the funding for the cohorts to participate and, when the 90-day program is over, to continue with diversity training and educating founders on supplier diversity programs.

CASE STUDY: Rev1 Ventures

Based in Columbus, Ohio, Rev1 Ventures describes itself as an investor startup studio that helps startups scale and corporates innovate. They achieve these goals through more than funding – they also provide guidance, connections and space for entrepreneurs to develop their ideas into successful ventures.

Rev1 is partnering with the City of Columbus to lead a working committee to improve services and capital position for entrepreneurs. This effort is part of the Columbus Small Business

Agenda, which has a stated goal to “cultivate an inclusive, dynamic and continuously improving small business ecosystem that enables all entrepreneurs to enjoy equitable opportunity for success that contributes to local economic development outcomes.” In this partnership, ecosystem builders will coordinate the effort, develop action plans and budgets, establish accountability and raise funding, while the city will ensure the agenda is executed by a coalition of stakeholders.



SECTION

THREE



GROWTH &
SUSTAINABILITY

SECTION THREE: GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY

Once an entrepreneur has leveraged resources, opportunities and connections to start a company, he or she starts to focus on how to make the business sustainable and, when applicable, how to scale. Entrepreneurs of color, particularly Black entrepreneurs, are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to accessing funds and resources.

The policies of the 20th century that created sustained economic oppression have produced a wide gap in financial capacity among racial groups. As referenced in the introduction to this playbook, according to the 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances, median wealth for Black families is less than 15 % that of white families, and institutions continue to make this gap difficult to overcome. Banks leverage funds from mortgage loans to invest in small businesses, so the real estate industry has long been a bell-weather indicator of wealth in America. Home ownership is key to family stability, educational achievement, and developing equity, net worth, and generational wealth. It is a key indicator of the economic foundation families have to pass to the next generation.

A study by the Center for Investigative Reporting's online publication [Reveal](#) found that Black and Latino populations were far more likely to be denied conventional mortgages than whites, even when income, loan size and other factors were taken into account. According to the Kauffman Foundation, 81% of startups get their initial funding through personal net worth, family wealth, or connections to networks, putting entrepreneurs of color at a significant disadvantage. Also, less than 1% of venture capital funds are given to Black enterprises, so connecting with resources and talent is crucial for entrepreneurs of color looking to overcome these gaps.

There are many resources aimed at reducing these access gaps and many organizations working to help entrepreneurs of color become better connected. This section will explore how these efforts are being leveraged to help companies grow, thrive and scale.

Tactics include:

- Create communities and networks that encourage connections to access talent and funding
- Help startups secure government funding and/or leverage government resources for success
- Provide established businesses with training development and strategic planning to help them improve operations and key connections
- Create funds specifically designed for entrepreneurs in the target demographic
- Advocate for and facilitate customer connections and relationships
- Form a collaborative network with other entrepreneurial support entities to help companies access the funding, talent and other resources they need to succeed
- Provide space for growing companies to promote a culture that creates a sense of belonging

TACTIC

Create communities and networks that encourage connections to access talent and funding

Much entrepreneurial success can be attributed to the networks with which founders are connected. If they know the right people, they can more easily access capital, find customers, secure space, attract talent, and more. Systemic disadvantages often mean that entrepreneurs of color do not have these types of connections, so helping them build networks is an important step in ensuring company growth and sustainability.

RESOURCE: [Latinobuilt](#)

Lisa Morales-Helleboro founded Latinobuilt.com when she recognized a need for Latino and Latina founders to be better connected. Specifically built for Latino and Latina technology startups, the site showcases the entrepreneurs and their companies in a way that increases their visibility. With increased attention, the companies are better able to connect to both funding and talent.

CASE STUDY: [Association for Enterprise Opportunity \(AEO\) Tapestry Project](#)

Launched in June of 2018 by the Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO), the Tapestry Project is an initiative to accelerate Black business development. The project was launched in response to an AEO report that identified three acute challenges that hinder Black business development: the wealth gap, credit gap, and a trust gap that is caused by implicit bias.

The Tapestry Project led to the creation of an action lab where entrepreneurs can experiment with innovations designed to eliminate these gaps that prevent Black-owned businesses from reaching their potential. AEO has awarded money to collaborative projects in five cities to address these three issues, supporting ecosystem pilot demonstrations and funding resources to assist Black business owners. The Tapestry Project also has an innovation registry, an online resource designed to help connect entrepreneurs with funders,

investors and other potential collaborators. As part of the registry, entrepreneurs have the opportunity to showcase individual projects or innovations as well as their collective stories. They can also find, connect and build relationships with mentors suited to their stage of development and industry. This network also has become a platform where entrepreneurs can share information, engage in peer learning, and collaborate on policies and plans.

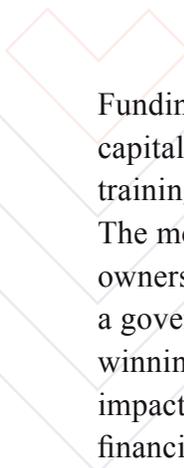
TACTIC

Help startups secure government funding and/or leverage government resources for success

The U.S. government provides specific funding to help entrepreneurs start and sustain their businesses. Knowing the ins and outs of this funding, including what money is available, who qualifies for it, and how to successfully apply for it, is key to helping target companies thrive. Also, programs specifically designed to help companies leverage these government opportunities can increase their success in securing contracts and funding.

RESOURCE: [America's Seed Fund – SBIR and STTR](#)

Established 40 years ago by the National Science Foundation, which continues to back it today, America's Seed Fund focuses on high-risk, high-impact technologies that show promise but have not yet been validated. Each year, the program awards \$200 million to entrepreneurs across the country through Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grants. The goal is to foster innovation and help create businesses and jobs in the United States.



Funding through SBIR and STTR provides companies with the capital they need to conduct product research while receiving training and mentorship from seasoned entrepreneurs and innovators. The money is provided for 0% equity, so entrepreneurs retain full ownership and do not have to pay back the grant. Because this is a governmental program, the financial incentives are different, so winning applicants can be selected on their potential for societal impact, even if the model looks like it will take longer to have a financial return. Find more information at seedfund.nsf.gov.

RESOURCE: Minority Business Development Agency

Housed within the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Minority Business Development Agency is dedicated to helping minority businesses grow and become globally competitive through programs, services and initiatives. They work toward this mission through a national network of business centers, manufacturing centers, export centers, a federal procurement center, and a variety of grants. MBDA helps connect entrepreneurs with private lenders – in fiscal year 2019, they helped minority-owned businesses secure more than \$1.6 billion in capital. They also help entrepreneurs with access to contracts – in the same year, MBDA helped minority-owned businesses secure \$3.1 billion in contracts. Find more information at www.mbda.gov.

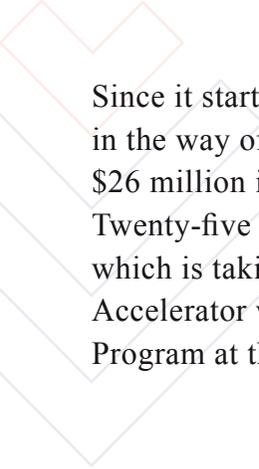
CASE STUDY: Bowie Business Innovation Center (BIC) 8(a) program

The Bowie Business Innovation Center (BIC), which is affiliated with Bowie State University in Bowie, Maryland, formed a partnership with the Small Business Administration (SBA) to start an accelerator for companies in the SBA’s 8(a) Business Development program. The goal of 8(a) is to “help provide a level playing field for small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged people or entities” by giving them

access to certain government contracts with limited competition. The SBA's 8(a) program also connects qualifying businesses with a business opportunity specialist to help them navigate federal contracting, form partnerships with established businesses through the mentor-protégé program, and receive management and technical assistance such as training, counseling, marketing assistance and executive development.

The SBA collaborated with Bowie BIC to create the 8(a) Accelerator program, a seven-week initiative through which participating companies participate in seven half-day sessions on topics such as business focus, deal mix, sales planning, financial planning, capture planning and pricing. Participants go through a capability review with federal contracting officers. Through this program, companies can maximize their return on the 8(a) program through specific coaching on capture strategy, connections with 8(a) business leaders, one-on-one mentoring with successful 8(a) executives and peer connections to expand their networks. Participating companies also receive access to the EZGovOpps Market Intelligence tool, legal resources and other resource materials.

Bowie BIC's 8(a) Accelerator program was the first of its type in the U.S. and is providing new opportunities for entrepreneurs of color. Many of the 8(a) participants do not have a robust business background to help them be successful in executing government contracts. Though the 8(a) certification helps with access, securing contracts still requires diligent business development. Even after many years in the program, some companies still lack robust programs, and those that lose their certification often go out of business within 24 months. The accelerator program helps address some of these issues, fill in gaps, and increase the likelihood of success for 8(a) companies.



Since it started in 2019, the accelerator program has much to show in the way of success. There have been 32 graduates, securing \$26 million in new government contracts through the fall of 2020. Twenty-five companies are currently participating in the fall cohort, which is taking place fully online. Finally, the Bowie BIC 8(a) Accelerator was named InBIA's Most Innovative Entrepreneurship Program at the organization's 2020 awards competition.

TACTIC

Provide established businesses with training development and strategic planning to help them improve operations and key connections

Having an idea and starting a business based on that idea doesn't always translate smoothly into running a company well. Business owners who have made it past the initial stages often greatly benefit from additional training and assistance to help them stay on track and achieve growth.

CASE STUDY:

Interise Streetwise MBA program

Founded in Boston in 2004, Interise exists to help minority-owned businesses grow, particularly in low to moderate income neighborhoods. The organization is working towards the goal of ending the racial wealth gap through small business growth with research, programs for small businesses and national partnerships that have local and regional impacts.

One of the programs Interise offers is the Streetwise MBA, which provides small business owners with the knowledge, management skills and networks they need to grow their businesses. As these businesses grow, they contribute to inclusive economic development and job creation. Streetwise is currently in over 90 cities, many of which are receiving funding from the Small Business Administration.

The seven-month course is designed for established businesses – those that have been in existence for at least two years – that have seen a plateau in growth. Participants work on their balance sheets, assess capital access, strategize crisis management and more. At the end of the course, participants present their three-year strategic growth action plans. They remain connected to the program for another three years after that, receiving peer-to-peer mentoring.

Participating in the Streetwise program has proven to increase success for businesses, 77% of which are owned by Black entrepreneurs. They see an average of 36% growth rate in revenue and four times the job creation rate of the private sector. Also, 60% report new employees hired locally at salaries 3% higher than the national average.

TACTIC

Create funds specifically designed for entrepreneurs in the target demographic

To address gaps in funding, some organizations have established their own funds to invest in entrepreneurs who struggle to access traditional funding sources.

CASE STUDY: Jumpstart, Inc.

Jumpstart, Inc., is a Cleveland-based venture development organization that introduced a team in 2018 dedicated to addressing the gap in Ohio's innovation economy that has left minority populations behind. They launched the Inclusive Fund targeting women and minority enterprises and developed a platform of systems approaches to address the lack of opportunity in certain pipelines of productivity, including STEAM education, tech-based workforce development, high-growth entrepreneurship, community small business sustainability and growth, access to funding, fund management and deal flow.

Jumpstart's team of inclusive strategists provide entrepreneurs of color the direction they need to access the appropriate resources wherever they are along their entrepreneurial journey. Entrepreneurs are able to choose from a suite of services to inform, educate, train, prepare and connect entrepreneurs to networks, markets and success.

TACTIC

Advocate for and facilitate customer connections and relationships

Securing the right customers is a key part of sustainability and success, so helping entrepreneurs understand their markets and develop relationships can be crucial. In some cases, the entrepreneurs may not know the markets even exist. Entrepreneurship centers can help create connections and encourage critical relationship building.

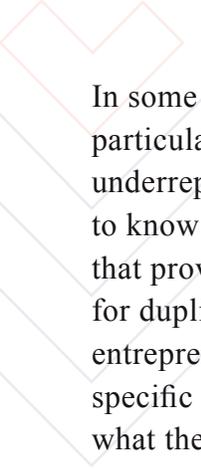
CASE STUDY: Bowie Business Innovation Center

One of the primary purposes of the Bowie BIC 8(a) Accelerator program previously referenced is to help locally owned companies connect with government contractor customers. The city of Bowie has a distinct population of federal employees but has not traditionally had a lot of tech startups. Over the years, the leadership at Bowie BIC decided there was a need to help entrepreneurs pursue government contacts to produce good-paying jobs, fill office space and propel economic development. There was an opportunity to access a new customer base in the form of government contractors, but the startups needed assistance to tap into the market.

The 8(a) Accelerator has provided company owners with an understanding of how to work with government contractors as well as the confidence they need in contract negotiation. Through sector-specific mentoring, they get to know other companies in the same space, which enhances their understanding of the dynamics. They also have the opportunity to connect with the government contractors themselves during a pitch event and the speed dating that follows. Combined with the assistance of a business opportunity specialist from the SBA, these resources help companies access customers in a way they would not otherwise have been able to do.

TACTIC

Form a collaborative network with other entrepreneurial support entities to help companies access the funding, talent and other resources they need to succeed



In some regions, many resources exist to support entrepreneurs, particularly those of color who have traditionally been underrepresented. However, sometimes entrepreneurs struggle to know which resources are the best fit. Also, if the organizations that provide these resources operate in silos, there is much room for duplication of effort. When the organizations supporting these entrepreneurs work together, they can help companies access the specific resources they need and focus their efforts on what they do well.

CASE STUDY: **Business Growth Collaborative**

In northeastern Ohio, eleven nonprofits have joined forces to create the Business Growth Collaborative (BGC) with the goal of building an easy-to-navigate resources ecosystem to meet the needs of diverse entrepreneurs and small business owners. Through regular meetings, the organizations communicate frequently about the best ways to help clients. They provide the details of establishing a business, including certification and legal requirements, business plan development, financial education, access to capital, prototype development, peer networking, and access to government and corporate contract opportunities. With these efforts, the BCG is working to catalyze economic growth through equitable wealth and job creation, overcoming historical barriers and always putting the needs of the entrepreneur first.

Entrepreneurs in the target groups could either lack awareness about available resources or become overwhelmed by all the different service providers. Some also have service provider fatigue – past experiences that have made them skeptical about prospects of assistance. By bringing the eleven organizations together, BCG is addressing the systematic economic inequality that hinders growth by simplifying the search process for entrepreneurs of

color and connecting them to the best quality resources to fit their specific needs. The collaborative is like a one-stop shop, but each organization is able to focus on what it does well within the ecosystem instead of trying to be all things for all entrepreneurs. Having multiple resource providers working together also lets the businesses know they have a broad support system.

Funded by the Cleveland Foundation, KeyBank, Cuyahoga County, the City of Cleveland, PNC Bank and the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, and catalyzed by the previously mentioned Jumpstart, Inc., the collaborative leverages best practices to serve companies in Cleveland through online resource identification tools and other strategies. The eleven organizations share a customer relationship management (CRM) system to track companies and make sure that every entrepreneur and company in the system has a minimum of two touches from the partners. If an entrepreneur has unmet needs, the partner who identifies the gap presents it to the collaborative to address it.

All of the organizations maintain their independent functions, structure and identities and step in to provide assistance as needed. The collaborative assesses each organization's mix of services, geographies and ideal client profile to have a good sense of which resources fit in any given situation. The organizations have all agreed to a joint method of assessment and growth continuum classification. They have also developed protocols for client intake and sharing of information through methods such as the CRM. Based on the assessments, organizations are assigned and tracked to ensure service delivery and results. The collaborative does an annual evaluation to make sure everyone stays on track.



TACTIC

Provide space for growing companies to promote a culture that creates a sense of belonging

Companies cannot grow if they do not have the space they need, so, in some cases, helping entrepreneurs survive and thrive means providing appropriate facilities. In addition to creating space, these facilities can encourage a culture that attracts other businesses and customers, leading to a thriving economy.

CASE STUDY: Northeast Ohio Hispanic Center for Economic Development's (NEOHCED) CENTROVILLA25 (C25) project

In September 2019, the Northeast Ohio Hispanic Center for Economic Development (NEOHCED) purchased a warehouse in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood of Cleveland with financing from the Cleveland Department of Advisors, the real estate investment affiliate of the Greater Cleveland Partnership, and with a social impact investment from the Cleveland Foundation. NEOHCED has since been working to develop the space into CENTROVILLA25 (C25), a unique neighborhood gathering place with more than 20 vendor kiosks for neighborhood-based lifestyle microentrepreneurs, three storefront retail units, an anchor restaurant, year-round community programming space, and a commercial shared kitchen. The two floors above this space will become the home base for the Hispanic Business Center, incubated startup companies and multilingual service providers.

Clark-Fulton has long had the densest population of Hispanic and Latino residents in the state of Ohio, yet it lacks the kind of visible Latino-owned businesses that thrive in many other cities. The area is sandwiched between three developed neighborhoods and lacks affordable, developable space for new businesses, and it has become even more important for the residents of Clark-Fulton to develop a sense of place. CV25 aims to fill that gap, allowing Hispanic and Latino businesses to access the services and capital that will help them grow in the community before they are priced out. Construction is still underway, but once CV25 is finished, it is expected to provide 146 new employment opportunities and \$144 million in cumulative output for the first five years it is in operation.



CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

As the population of the United States continues to become more diverse, it is essential to foster innovations and encourage business success among people of color; if not, the country's economy will suffer. To keep entire demographic groups at a disadvantage through systemic issues leaves a significant source of talent and potential untapped. The country is facing a competitive global marketplace and needs to cultivate and empower all of its entrepreneurial talent in order to sustain its current standing in the world.

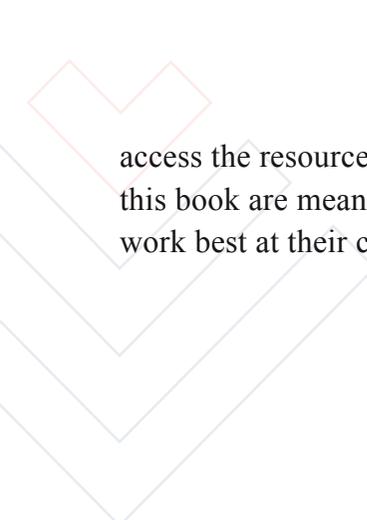
It is clear that distinct disparities still exist on many levels, including financial, educational and cultural. The 2019 *Survey of Consumer Finances* shows just how distinct the wealth gap is between white families and people of all other racial backgrounds. Black families have a median net worth that is about 15% of that of white families; those the study classifies as Hispanic have a median net worth of about 20% of that of white families; and the study puts all other racial backgrounds into the category of "other," which has less of a gap than Hispanic or Black families, but still a net worth that is about half that of white families. These statistics highlight the potential of entrepreneurship for people of color.

Beyond the wealth gap, there are many other challenges entrepreneurs of color face in starting their own companies. People of color are less likely to participate in STEM-related curricula, have less access to college because of financial barriers, and have not seen entrepreneurship, as traditionally defined, as a realistic option. In addition to wealth gaps, the U.S. has long been dealing with issues of implicit bias and systemic racism that prevent people of color from having the same access to opportunity as their white counterparts, unable to use social and financial capital to bootstrap and scale promising ventures.

In looking to overcome wealth gaps and an economy that is disproportionately dependent on white businessmen, encouraging entrepreneurship among people of color is key. As a recent report by the Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation states, "though efforts focused on wealth creation in communities often focus on homeownership, educational attainment and workforce development as the foundation of improvement, addressing economic equity through entrepreneurial equity is likely a more potent way to address these gaps." (Banks and McKoy, 2019)

Entrepreneurship centers are uniquely positioned to help entrepreneurs of color succeed since most centers already have missions aimed at helping startups survive through the early phases and thrive in the long run. However, centers have to recognize that people of color are starting at a different point from white people and face different challenges. Creating a culture of belonging goes far beyond offering a few extra programs targeted at underrepresented communities. Centers should all take a careful look at current demographics – of staff, of companies, of advisory boards, of their broader community – and assess how inclusive they really are and how well they are reaching a diverse audience. With a better sense of their current culture, offerings and community, centers can strategize what needs to improve, change and/or be added to ensure that entrepreneurs of color engage, survive and thrive.

There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to ensuring an entrepreneurship center is diverse and inclusive, but there are many effective strategies and people who are creating a more diverse, and therefore a much stronger, national economy through enabling entrepreneurs of color. This playbook outlines some of these tactics and highlights people who are employing them well. From engaging youth and creating new educational opportunities to designing intentional programs for different cultures to helping entrepreneurs



access the resources and funding they need to succeed, the tactics in this book are meant to inspire readers to get creative about what will work best at their centers and in their communities.



With a better sense of their current culture, offerings and community, centers can strategize what needs to **improve**



This is not the end of the story. There will be more tactics to describe and case studies to highlight as entrepreneurial ecosystems continue with these efforts. Even in the course of writing this playbook, more examples came to the forefront, and we look forward to highlighting the most promising of these initiatives in future publications, trainings and event content. Many entrepreneurship centers are working with their communities to find solutions, leverage funding, and work together to close the wealth gap by promoting entrepreneurship for people of color. InBIA will continue adding to this playbook with future editions and invites anyone who has strategies to suggest to contact us through our website, inbia.org.