

2021 NONPROFIT INNOVATION LAB



For Immediate Release

Contact: Michael J. Cerio
(401) 743-8269

Michael@CerioCommunications.com

United Way and Social Enterprise Greenhouse Announce Second Nonprofit Innovation Lab, Invite Local Organizations to Apply

Multi-month effort makes funding available to help nonprofits develop and implement new solutions to address pressing social issues and community needs

Providence, R.I. (March 22, 2021) — United Way of Rhode Island and Social Enterprise Greenhouse (SEG) are launching the next iteration of the Nonprofit Innovation Lab and are inviting local executives to apply to the unique program that offers seed funding and much more. Applications open on March 18 and can be completed [online](#); the deadline is April 23.

The Nonprofit Innovation Lab is a selective six-month program that offers up to 10 Rhode Island nonprofits the opportunity to transform innovative ideas into reality, enabling them to create even more social impact as they bring innovation and entrepreneurial thinking to their organizations. The program provides participating Fellows with the knowledge, resources, and networking opportunities that help bring transformative ideas to life.

A culminating, “Shark Tank-like” pitch event in November will award a total of \$90,000 in funding, paired with other in-kind services, to support the three most compelling innovation projects.

The effort begins in May with a 12-week virtual Boot Camp, followed by a 16-week Accelerator stage. During Boot Camp, Fellows receive intensive expert instruction as they engage with SEG’s award-winning curriculum, refine a business plan, and set goals. A \$5,000 stipend provided during the Boot Camp will support Fellows’ time away from their organization and cover expenses related to the early development of their innovation concepts.

Throughout the Nonprofit Innovation Lab, each participant is partnered with a custom team of coaches and provided access to hundreds of experts across the United Way and SEG communities. In November, the Fellows who offer the most compelling innovation plans will be invited to pitch for the prize funding.

Information sessions for program applications will be held virtually on March 31 from 10—11am, and on April 12 from 4—5pm. Registration for the sessions is [available online](#).

Run as a pilot in its inaugural year, the Nonprofit Innovation Lab was deemed a success by both participants and the state’s nonprofit community in 2020. Man Up, Inc. took home the program’s top prize of \$50,000, with College Crusade of Rhode Island (\$25,000) and Genesis Center (\$15,000) also receive funding.

“The Nonprofit Innovation Lab breathed new life into my idea and helped me remain focused on the underrepresented men Man Up supports,” said Rhonda Price, the organization’s CEO and Founder. “The support I received took my passion to a whole new level, guiding me from ideas to action. What I learned was invaluable.”

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About Social Enterprise Greenhouse

Social Enterprise Greenhouse creates positive social and economic impact by providing social entrepreneurs and enterprises with the tools and networks they need to thrive. It fosters an ecosystem of diverse stakeholders who work to enable a more just, equitable and resilient economy. SEG operates statewide in Rhode Island from three programming sites in Providence, Newport, and Pawtucket/Central Falls. Its network of 600+ social enterprises and 250+ business and community leaders contributes time, expertise, and funding to grow Rhode Island's social impact ecosystem. To learn more, visit www.segreenhouse.org.

About United Way of Rhode Island

United Way of Rhode Island is uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders. A member of the world's largest nonprofit network, we bring together individuals, business, nonprofit, community leaders and government to tackle the root causes of inequity and achieve specific, measurable goals. Our programs include 211, the statewide front door connecting Rhode Islanders with social services, resources, and vital programs. Both directly and through grants to nonprofits, we are investing to build economic opportunity, advance childhood learning, expand philanthropy, and to drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).