

PRESS RELEASE

50 Valley Street, Providence, RI 02909-2459
(401) 444-0600 | fax (401) 444-0635

www.unitedwayri.org



United Way of Rhode Island

Contacts: United Way of R.I.: Michael J. Cerio | michael@ceriocommunications.com | (401) 743-8269
Social Enterprise Greenhouse: Mike Raia | mikeraia@halfstreetconsulting.com | (401) 340-9425

Final Pitch Event for Nonprofit Innovation Lab Set for Feb. 1 at The Guild, All Rhode Islanders Invited to Attend

With a total of \$90,000 in seed funding at stake, 10 organizations will participate in a “Shark Tank”-like presentation for a chance to bring their unique idea to life

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND (Jan. 24, 2023) — The stage is set. On Wednesday, Feb. 1, the latest Nonprofit Innovation Lab will culminate as 10 Rhode Island organizations make their final pitch for a chance to secure seed funding to help bring their unique program idea to life. The program showcase and pitch night will be held at The Guild in Pawtucket beginning at 5 p.m. All Rhode Islanders are invited to attend and may [register online](#) in advance.

A total of \$90,000 in funding is being made available, and organizational pitches will be judged by a panel featuring Congressman James Langevin; Eileen Hayes, president and CEO, Amos House; and Maria Kasparian, executive director, Edesia. Lanre Ajakaiye, United Way of Rhode Island’s chief development officer and a well-known local entrepreneur, will serve as emcee.

The Nonprofit Innovation Lab is funded by United Way and delivered by Social Enterprise Greenhouse. Its goal is to spark development and implementation of innovative solutions that enable organizations to expand and accelerate their ability to create positive impact. Over the course of the past eight months, the 10 participating nonprofit fellows have each worked with a team of coaches to transform their ideas into an actionable reality.

In addition to attending the pitch event, members of the community are invited to cast their vote for the “Public Choice Award” and help their favorite idea secure funding. Each participating organization has created a brief video capturing what they hope to accomplish through their vision. Rhode Islanders can simply [watch the videos](#), click “Vote” for the idea they find most compelling, and submit their name and email so the selection can be validated. [Public voting](#) is currently open and votes will be accepted through 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 1. The winning organization will receive \$5,000 and will be announced at the final pitch event.

During the event, hear pitches from:

- [Asthenis](#)
- [Beat the Streets New England](#)
- [The Center for Dynamic Learning](#)
- [Gnome Surf](#)
- [Hands in Harmony](#)
- [Meeting Street](#)
- [Partnership for Providence Parks](#)
- [Reentry Campus Program](#)
- [Rhode Island Black Storytellers](#)
- [Riverzedge Arts](#)

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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, businesses, nonprofits, 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 drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Twitter](#).

Social Enterprise Greenhouse (SEG) accelerates impact by providing inclusive support and networks for entrepreneurs and businesses committed to positive societal and economic change. SEG fosters an ecosystem of diverse stakeholders who work to enable a more just, equitable, and resilient economy. SEG is based in Rhode Island and operates statewide virtually and from sites in Providence, Newport, and Pawtucket/Central Falls. Its network of 1,800+ enterprises and 200+ business and community leaders contributes time, expertise, and funding to grow Rhode Island's social impact ecosystem. To learn more, visit <http://www.segreenhouse.org/>.