



Propeller Impact Accelerator: Startup Track

September 12, 2015 - December 14, 2015

Propeller is currently accepting applications for its Startup Accelerator, a sector-based 12-week intensive program, specifically designed to connect early-stage social entrepreneurs with the resources they need to turn their ideas into tested and viable solutions. One-on-one executive mentorship, access to high-level networks, peer-to-peer learning, pro bono resources, and free office space, are just some of the benefits of being a Propeller Impact Venture. Full details and application instructions, included below.

About Propeller:

Propeller: A Force for Social Innovation is a 501c3 nonprofit whose mission is to drive social, environmental, and economic impact by incubating ventures that have the potential to solve our city's most pressing issues. Our goal is to build a critical mass of social and environmental entrepreneurs tackling key challenges in food, water, educational equity (ages 0-24), and healthcare in order to truly move the needle.

Impact: Since 2011, Propeller has incubated 60 Impact Ventures that have collectively generated over 100 new jobs and \$20 million in external financing, revenues, and grants. We also run a 10,000 s.f. co-working/event space at 4035 Washington Ave. that houses 80+ companies. Propeller and its Impact Ventures have received notable attention from *TIME*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *GOOD*, *Forbes*, *The New York Times*, and others.

www.GoPropeller.org // @GoPropeller

Startup Accelerator:

September 12, 2015 - December 14, 2015

Intended for early-stage ventures, this 12-week intensive Accelerator program offers hands-on support to go from the idea stage to launch. Propeller's Startup Accelerator targets those companies or organizations that are currently in the idea, pilot or development phase of their product and/or service. During the program, participating ventures will be working towards acquiring their first paying customers and revenue.

Propeller drives systemic change within four issue areas: water, food security, educational equity (ages 0-24), and healthcare. For each sector, Propeller will prioritize solutions that specifically address the following issues:

- Water: Coastal restoration, urban water retention and quality, maritime industries and ports, and fisheries
- Food Security: Access, affordability, and consumption of healthy foods for underserved communities, local food economy
- Educational Equity (Ages 0-24): Systems and supports in early childhood, K-12, and "Opportunity Youth,"
- Healthcare: Access, affordability, and chronic diseases



Propeller believes that every venture is unique and requires a tailored approach, so our Startup Accelerator kicks off with a personalized venture assessment to identify the needs and goals of each entity. Needs could include market understanding, competitive assessment, customer validation, corporate set up, strategic prioritization, go-to-market strategies, generating sales leads, product development, and financial planning.

Following the Lean Startup Methodology, participants will be challenged to refine their business models through market research, hypothesis testing and customer validation. At the end of the program, Propeller may invite those participants who have a validated business model to receive deepened support in its “Growth Accelerator” (Feb 2015-June 2016).

Eligibility Requirements

Propeller selects its Startup Ventures from a competitive pool of applicants based on their high potential for social impact, financial viability, and demonstrated entrepreneurial leadership. For the 2015-2016 class, we’re seeking technical experts, entrepreneurs, community members, and catalysts for social change, bringing viable and innovative solutions to Propeller’s four target sectors of water, food security, educational equity (ages 0-24), and healthcare. Up to ten early-stage ventures will be selected for *each* sector.

Propeller seeks applicants that have identified a meaningful problem, and have a compelling and unique solution with an identified sustainable revenue stream(s). Applicants should be looking to bring their idea to market, or build initial market traction. Both for-profit, non-profit, and hybrid models are welcome to apply. Applicants should be pre-revenue or early revenue generating companies or organizations that have existed for no more than 2 years with paid staff, OR have no more than 2 full-time employees. An established organization may also apply if the venture is an entirely new product and/or service that meets the above criteria.

Program Benefits:

1. **Lead Sector Coaches:** Our program’s curriculum is led by experienced executives who have demonstrated significant entrepreneurial success and leadership, business acumen, and are committed to accelerating the impact and financial sustainability of social and environmental entrepreneurs in New Orleans. Our coaches commit 20 hours per week to the growth and development of participating ventures, including one hour of weekly face-to-face meetings per venture. Through a collaborative process, coaches assist Startup Ventures in developing individualized road maps and assist in achieving significant milestones and goals.

2015 Lead Coaches include:

Water — Mike Eckert, Former CEO/President of The Weather Channel, Chairman NO/LA Angel Network

Food/Health — Neil Gibbons, CEO GenoFab LLC, New Orleans BioInnovation Center

Education — TBD

2. **180 Pro Bono Professionals:** Startup Ventures receive access from a robust network of professionals, ready to assist with projects on an as-needed basis. Tailored support is offered within the areas of marketing, law, accounting, bookkeeping, financial modeling, + more.

- Participating pro bono companies include: PwC, Morgan Stanley, Baker Donelson, Barrasso Usdin, Entergy, FSC Interactive, EMH Strategy, Chaffe McCall, SouthPaw Creative, + many more!
 - Past Deliverables: incorporation (LLC, 501c3, Benefit Corp), contracts (NDA, MOU, employee contract), financial projections, chart of accounts set-up, Quickbooks set-up, social media strategy, PR strategy, logo, payroll setup, etc.
3. **Executive Mentor Office Hours:** Startup Ventures expand their networks with weekly opportunities to meet with influencers, executives, elected officials, high-level policymakers, and business leaders.
 - 33 Executive Mentors participated in 2014.
 - Mentors include: John Elstrott, Chairman of the Board of Whole Foods Market; Dr. Pat Quinlan, CEO of Ochsner Clinic Foundation and Ochsner International Services; Karen Carter Peterson, Louisiana State Senator and Chairwoman of the Louisiana Democratic Party; Charles Rice, CEO of Entergy; Kathleen Padian, Deputy Superintendent for Orleans Parish School Board; + many more.
 4. **Use of the Propeller Incubator, a Co-Working Office Space:** Startup Ventures have free membership at the Propeller Incubator throughout the 3-month Accelerator. Membership includes use of our co-working desks, WiFi, printing, a mailing address, conference room meeting space, locker storage, and parking. The Propeller Incubator is located at 4035 Washington Avenue. www.GoPropeller.org/Incubator
 5. **Peer Learning:** An important component of the program is building a trusted network of like-minded entrepreneurs. Startup Ventures learn from one another, find solutions, and share challenges, resources, and successes.
 6. **The Propeller Program Staff:** We are here to ensure your success by making timely connections with potential clients, policymakers, government officials and mentors.
 7. **Access to Free Workshops:** Propeller hosts a series of free workshops on topics relevant to entrepreneurs and small businesses, including: Finance, Excel, pitch coaching, accounting, PR/media, legal structures, fundraising, taxes, social media, + more.
 8. **Increased Visibility:** Propeller helps increase Startup Ventures' visibility through special events, media referrals, and feature articles in publications. Propeller and its ventures have received notable attention from *The New York Times*, *TIME*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *GOOD*, *Forbes*, + others.

Program Requirements

- Attend a program kick-off retreat (Saturday, September 12, 2015)
- Attend weekly in-person meetings with your Executive Coach
- Ability to consistently follow through on jointly developed and agreed-upon action steps, goals, and deliverables week to week
- Spend a minimum of 20 hours/week working on the venture during the program
- Responsiveness to Propeller Program Staff, including willingness to report out on social impact and financial progress, and to fill out programmatic surveys as requested



Selection Criteria

The ideal candidate is a high-potential entrepreneur who is interested in external assistance to accelerate his/her venture. We select participants based on three main criteria:

1. Entrepreneurial/leadership qualities

- Demonstrated leadership potential
- “Grit” – ability to overcome obstacles and continue despite failure
- Ability to decide on a course of action despite ambiguity
- Ability to focus and “get things done”
- Strong passion and commitment for the program area in which they plan to work
- 100% commitment to the social venture (minimum 20 hours/week)
- Practical skills, including problem-solving, strategic, and organizational abilities
- Personal integrity

2. Plans for organizational sustainability

- Reasonable and validated market analysis
- Identified sustainable revenue stream(s)

3. Innovation/potential for significant impact in Propeller’s four target sectors

(*see above for details on sectors)

- Clear and compelling problem definition
- Seriousness of the social/environmental problem to be addressed
- Sound strategy and plan for program development and delivery
- Plan for evaluating success and performance
- Innovative idea and approach
- Potential for tangible impact to the beneficiary population
- Potential for solving the identified problem at scale (locally, nationally, or internationally)
- Potential for effecting systemic change (e.g., policy change, societal change, influence in the field)

Application Process

1. (Optional) Attend one of our program Q&A sessions (see dates below). We are also happy to provide coaching on all application questions, such as market analysis, budget development, and problem definition, in advance of **June 9, 2015**. Contact Julia Stewart at jstewart@GoPropeller.org.
2. Complete the online application by **July 31, 2015 at 11:59pm CST**. Applications submitted by **June 9, 2015 at 11:59pm CST** will receive feedback with the opportunity to resubmit by the final deadline. www.GoPropeller.org/accelerator/apply
3. If you are selected to participate in our subsequent round of due diligence, we will invite you to provide additional materials and to schedule an interview. Second-round interviews will take place on a rolling basis between May 1, 2015 and August 7, 2015.
4. Selected 2015-16 Startup Ventures will be notified by **August 19, 2015**.

Upcoming Events	Dates	Info
Q&A Sessions	#1: Tues., April 28, 2015, 4:30pm-5:30pm #2: Tues., May 12, 2015, 12:00pm-1:00pm #3: Mon., May 25, 2015 12:00pm-1:00pm #4: Wed., June 3, 2015 4:30pm-5:30pm	www.GoPropeller.org/events
Application Feedback Deadline	June 9, 2015 11:59pm CST *Propeller's feedback will provided by June 16th	www.gopropeller.org/accelerator
Final Application Deadline	July 31, 2015 11:59pm CST	www.gopropeller.org/accelerator
Second Round Interviews	May 1, 2015 - August 7, 2015 (Rolling basis)	Propeller may contact applicants via email or phone to schedule an in-person interview or to request additional materials.
Startup Ventures' Selection Announcement	August 19, 2015	Announced via email, newsletter and media outlets
12-week Program Term	September 12, 2015 - December 14, 2015	*Saturday, Sept. 12th is a required Venture retreat.

Propeller Organizational Impact

- **60 Impact Ventures launched** since 2011 through Propeller's accelerator programs, including a local food hub, a maternal health collective, an education design studio, and a wetland mitigation company.
- **Over 100 full- and part-time jobs created**, contributing to an expanded workforce in New Orleans.
- **\$20 million in external financing and revenue** collectively generated by Propeller Fellows and Alumni.
- **\$60,000 in seed funding awarded** to Ventures through sector-based pitch competitions.
- **Collaborated to pass and implement state policy** for universal school lunch participation and Benefit Corporation legislation providing an alternate corporate entity for social ventures.

Sector Impact

Food security: 43% of public school children receiving healthy school meals at their school; \$9.8 million in revenue generated to support healthy school meals for children; construction of a 27,000 s.f. market and distribution center for local food in Central City; facilitation of over 120 agricultural redevelopment projects throughout New Orleans.

Water: 10 acres of urban land (valued at \$300,000) donated for preservation; rehabilitation of over 250 acres of wetlands funded by mitigation credits; over 25,000 gallons of stormwater runoff kept from the water system annually to prevent urban flooding; over 200 reporters, documentarians, authors, and politicians educated on immediate water issues facing our coast.

Healthcare: 200+ women receiving doula services including 100 low-income receiving services for free; over \$300,000 in financial support and medical care secured for the New Orleans children with disabilities, servicing over 150 families; \$1.2 million in financing raised to build a community cultural and health center in Broadmoor.

Educational equity: 416 educators innovating in the classroom, collectively impacting 12,000+ students; 300+ partner school trainees and 41 facilitator trainees to support students and prevent youth violence from interfering with learning; over 4,000 elementary students receiving health screenings (vision, hearing, dental, and immunization).



Testimonials from Accelerator Alumni:

"Propeller has been a tremendous resource for JAC. With the support of our consultant and the pro bono network, we've been able to increase our impact from 30 clients to 450 clients in only 10 months."

*Ameca Reali
Co-Founder, Justice & Accountability Center ('13)*

"Propeller has been our rock and our go-to place for our development needs. It has also been a home. We have been mentored, we have had support in key moments, and we have had a place to share our joys and frustrations. We have learned from the consultants, from the pro bono network, and from our peers. The Propeller staff has really nurtured us and our project, helped us believe in ourselves, and facilitated making our dreams come true."

*Elizabeth Gard Townsend & Ron Gard
Co-Founders, Limited Times LLC (Propeller '14)*

"One of the things I've found to be most challenging about launching a start up is not having a team. As a solo-founder, it was up to me to 'make it happen' and I missed the camaraderie that comes with a collective vision . . . until I joined Propeller. Working with my consultant, Eric, has been invaluable. He's the thought-partner I needed to gain self-confidence, to strategize sales and program offerings, and to establish short and long-term plans. Working with the other Ventures and the Propeller staff has also been very thought-provoking. [...] I highly recommend anyone interested in launching a socially-focused venture in NOLA apply."

*Amy Vreeland
Founder and CEO, TrueSchool ('14)*