



# Propeller Impact Accelerator: Startup Track

September 8, 2017 - December 15, 2017

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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 are included below.

## About Propeller:

**Propeller:** A Force for Social Innovation is a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to supporting social innovation in New Orleans. Our mission is to grow and support entrepreneurs to tackle social and environmental disparities. We envision a powerful community of diverse entrepreneurs and stakeholders working together for a more equitable future where everyone can lead healthy, fulfilling lives free of racism, poverty, and other systems of oppression.

**Impact:** Since 2011, Propeller has incubated over 130 ventures that have collectively generated over 300 new jobs and \$74 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 50+ organizations and 100+ individuals. Propeller and its ventures have received notable attention in publications including *TIME Magazine*, *USA Today*, *Entrepreneur*, *Fast Company*, *Forbes*, and *The New York Times*.

[www.GoPropeller.org](http://www.GoPropeller.org) // @GoPropeller

## Startup Accelerator | Program Details:

**September 8, 2017- December 15, 2017**

Intended for early-stage ventures, this 12-week intensive Accelerator program offers hands-on support to go from 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 launching their pilot and/or acquiring their first paying customers and revenue.

Propeller drives systemic change within four issue areas: water, food access, educational equity (ages 0-24), and health. 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 (healthy food retail, school food, markets); local food economy (local distribution, aggregation, processing, farm to school)
- Educational Equity (Ages 0-24): (Ages 0-24): Systems and supports in early childhood (high quality early childcare facilities), K-12 (transportation, chronic absenteeism, suspension/dropout rates, wraparound services) and "Opportunity Youth" (workforce development)



- **Health Care:** Access, affordability, and chronic diseases for at-risk and underserved populations (child/maternal health, STD/STIs, health insurance utilization, transportation, wraparound services, medication, referral services, health clinics, mental health, dental, continuity in primary care)

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 specific entity. Needs could include market research, 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” (March 2018- June 2018).

## Eligibility Requirements

Propeller selects its Startup Ventures from a competitive pool of applicants that have identified a meaningful problem, and have a compelling and unique solution with an identified sustainable revenue stream(s). We’re seeking sector experts, entrepreneurs, community members, and catalysts for social change, bringing viable and innovative solutions to Propeller’s four target sectors of water, food access, educational equity (ages 0-24), and health. Up to six early-stage ventures (for-profit and non-profit) will be selected for *each* sector.

Applicants should be pre-revenue or early revenue generating companies or organizations that have fewer than 2 employees or have been in existence for less than 2 years with paid staff. 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 2 hours per week to the growth and development of participating ventures, including one hour of weekly face-to-face meetings per venture and one hour of follow-up. Through a collaborative process, coaches assist Startup Ventures in developing individualized road maps and assist in achieving significant milestones and goals.
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, 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, investors, donors, elected officials, high-level policymakers, and business leaders.
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, and parking. The Propeller Incubator is located at 4035 Washington Avenue. [www.GoPropeller.org/Incubator](http://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 9, 2017)
- Attend weekly in-person meetings with your Lead Mentor (September 9, 2017 – December 15, 2017)
- 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. When assessing applications, we select participants based on the following criteria:

- **Business Model:** Does your business solve a problem? Describe your plan for growing your business.
- **Team:** Explain how your team can solve the problem.
- **Product/Service:** Explain how your product or service works.
- **Customer:** Does the customer like your product/service? Explain why you believe customers will pay for your product or service
- **Financials:** Will the company be profitable or remain financially viable? Explain how your company will make money.



- **Impact/Scale:** Is the company set up for long-term success? Describe your plan to grow and scale your company’s work and impact.
  - **Return on Capital (Financial and/or Social):**
    - **Financial:** If an investor invests, will they receive a financial return? If an institution loans, will the team be able to repay the loan?
- Social:** If a foundation or donor supports the mission, will the team make the impact that it claims to make?

## 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 26, 2017**. Contact the Programs Team at [programs@GoPropeller.org](mailto:programs@GoPropeller.org)
2. Propeller may fill the entire Startup 2017 class with applicants who apply by the Priority Applicant Deadline. To ensure your application is considered, complete the application by **June 26, 2017 at 11:59pm CST**.
3. If spots are still available after the Priority Applicant Deadline, Propeller will consider all applications submitted prior to the Final Application Deadline on **July 24, 2017 at 11:59pm CST**.  
[www.GoPropeller.org/accelerator/apply](http://www.GoPropeller.org/accelerator/apply)
4. Selected 2017 Startup Ventures will be notified by **August 18, 2017**.

## Important Dates

Upcoming Events	Dates	Info
Q&A Sessions	<p>#1: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 Propeller, 4035 Washington Avenue 5PM-6PM CST</p> <p>#2: Thursday, June 8, 2017 Virtual Session 12PM-1PM CST</p> <p>#3: Tuesday, June 13, 2017 - Budgeting Assistance Propeller, 4035 Washington Avenue 5PM-6PM CST</p> <p>#4: Monday, July 10, 2017 Propeller, 4035 Washington Avenue 5PM-6PM CST</p>	<a href="http://www.GoPropeller.org/events">www.GoPropeller.org/events</a>

Upcoming Events	Dates	Info
	#5: Tuesday, July 18, 2017 Virtual Session 12PM - 1PM CST	
Round 1   Priority Applicant Deadline	June 26, 2017 11:59pm CST *Rolling admissions means that ALL applicants may be chosen in the first round.	<a href="http://www.gopropeller.org/accelerator">www.gopropeller.org/accelerator</a>
Final Application Deadline <i>(if needed)</i>	July 24, 2017 11:59pm CST	<a href="http://www.gopropeller.org/accelerator">www.gopropeller.org/accelerator</a>
Startup Accelerator Begins	September 8, 2017	
Startup Accelerator Ends	December 15, 2017	

### 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)*

*" Since starting our business - restoring the cypress wetland, one of the most exciting experiences came from spending time with the folks at Propeller...the private coaching and peer meetings helped us network and build aspects of our business we didn't even know were missing."*

*Dr. Gary Shaffer  
Co-Founder, Wetland Resources (Propeller '14)*



*“ Propeller is most definitely the reason why my biking company has developed structure and a wider customer base. I'm forever grateful for my experience with Propeller, and would encourage fellow entrepreneurs to take advantage of an opportunity to be a part of Propeller.”*

*Nick Reed  
Founder, Bike Rite ('16)*