

# PitchNOLA 2013: Community Solutions

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*Hosted by Propeller: A Force for Social Innovation, Tulane A.B. Freeman School of Business, and Tulane University Social Innovation Initiatives*

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**Application Deadline:** Thursday, October 17, 2013, 11:59pm CST

**Competition Date:** Tuesday, November 19, 2013, 6:30-8:30pm

PitchNOLA Q&A #1: Tuesday, August 27, 2013, 6:00pm-7:00pm

PitchNOLA Q&A #2: Thursday, October 3, 6:00-7:00pm

Business Modeling for Lean Startups: Monday, September, 23, 2013, 5:30-7:30pm  
(Highly Encouraged for Applicants)

## PitchNOLA: Community Solutions

You bring the idea, we bring the funding. This competition is a chance to voice your solution to a crowd who cares. How would you solve a pressing environmental or social challenge in New Orleans? We're looking for innovative and viable solutions to **food access, housing, education, public health, environment, crime, workforce development, and more.**

*"PitchNOLA was a phenomenal platform for JAC to present the expungement issue to the public. The \$5,000 1st place prize will increase our capacity to service more clients, thereby helping to break the cycle of recidivism and contribute to a thriving and healthy New Orleans."*

*- Ameca Realí , Co-Founder, Justice and Accountability Center of Louisiana*

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Selected semi-finalists will pitch their ideas in front of a voting audience and panel of judges on November 19, 2013 at Tulane University for the chance at more than \$5,000 in cash prizes and support for project implementation. The “Audience Favorite” Award will be funded through audience participation.

## Eligibility

***No hurdles or red tape here. PitchNOLA is an accessible pitch platform for New Orleanians to voice their solutions and drive social progress in a measurable way. For questions on eligibility, please contact Julia Stewart, Propeller Programs Manager, at [jstewart@GoPropeller.org](mailto:jstewart@GoPropeller.org).***

1. PitchNOLA is a contest open to anyone residing in, or relocating to, the Greater New Orleans Area. This includes individuals or teams, for profit or nonprofit ideas, with or without an incorporated business.
2. No need for 20-page business plans. We’re looking for projects in the start-up phase.
3. If you have an existing venture (legally incorporated), your venture must have earned less than \$50,000 in the previous fiscal calendar year (including sales, grant funding, capital, earned revenue, etc.).
4. Your idea should be a stand-alone effort that operates independently of existing organizations (including, but not limited to, management, staff, and infrastructure).
5. If you are selected as a semi-finalist, you must be present at the Pitch Workshop on November 7, 2013 and the Community Solutions competition on November 19, 2013.

*“Birthmark is excited and honored to have won at PitchNOLA: Community Solutions! The generous funding will allow us to double the number of families we work with, document the evidence that doulas make a difference, and help build our case for change. We believe that New Orleans can go from having the worst birth outcomes in the country to being a national leader in healthy birth outcomes for women and children.”*

*- Dana Karen, Co-Founder Birthmark*

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## How Do I Apply?

To access the online application, go to [www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola](http://www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola). Application deadline is Thursday, October 17, 11:59pm CST. Although PitchNOLA: Community Solutions is not a business plan competition, entrants will need to put concrete planning and research into submissions.

### What reviewers and judges are looking for:

- Clearly measurable, verifiable, and potentially significant social impacts.
- Clear understanding of key drivers of success.

### 1. What's the challenge you hope to solve?

- What is the social or environmental challenge in New Orleans that you wish to solve? Cite specific statistics that reflect the scope of the issue.

### 2. How will you solve it?

- Write a one sentence mission statement that clearly identifies the product or service you will offer to tackle your identified challenge.

### 3. Identify your buyers and users.

*Sometimes, those who use your product or service are different than those who pay for it. For example, Google: Advertisers pay for the service and the general public uses the service. If this applies to you, please specify your targeted users and buyers. If your users and buyers are the same, please explain that.*

#### A. Who is going to pay for your product or service?

*Please describe your target customers. This could include individuals, corporations, local or national government, advertisers, etc. Propeller gives preference to earned revenue models, rather than models which rely on fundraising.*

- How many customers do you think you can acquire in the first year?
- What is your overall goal for customer acquisition long-term?
- \* **Required:** Talk with at least five potential customers to gauge their interest in your product or service. How much would they be willing to pay?

#### B. Who is going to use or benefit from your product or service?

- How many users do you think you can acquire within the first year?
- What is your overall goal for user acquisition long-term?
- \* **Required:** Talk to at least five potential users or beneficiaries to gauge their interest in your product or service.

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## 4. Competitive Analysis

- Identify your potential competitors and/or collaborators.
- Name three key factors that differentiate your product or service from what is currently offered. Pitch us on the innovation of your idea.

## 5. Getting it done.

- A. Credibility:** What expertise, experience, connections, or resources do you (and your team) have that will contribute to your success in implementing your solution?
- B. Needs:** Who or what are the most important partners or resources you will need to implement your project (i.e. access to information, land, equipment, financing, human capital, etc.)?
- C. Time Frame:** What is your time frame for securing these key resources and partners? How long will it take you to implement your project overall?
- D. Project Cost:** What are your four biggest costs in year one?

*"It was wonderful to have more than 200 people in the audience learn about what we do, and to have the judges recognize how much hard work has gone into this project, and have confidence in us to keep growing. The funding will allow us to compensate our Harvest Coordinator and set the goal of harvesting 15,000 pounds of produce, which is double our harvest numbers for the past two years."*

*- Megan Nuismer, Program Manager, The New Orleans Fruit Tree Project*

## Process

The competition will take place in two rounds.

### Qualifying Round — Online Application

- The first round of the competition is based on an online application, which must be submitted by Thursday, October 17, 11:59pm CST at [www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola](http://www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola). Proposals will be scored by a committee of business leaders, academic faculty, and community members with experience and expertise in community revitalization and social/environmental impact organizations.
- Semi-finalists will be selected and notified on November 1, 2013.

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## Final Round — PitchNOLA 2013: Community Solutions!

- Tuesday, November 19, 6:30-8:30pm, selected semi-finalists will pitch their solutions at Tulane University, Woldenberg Art Center, Freeman Auditorium.
- Semi-finalists will have three minutes to pitch their ideas and present their slides to a panel of three “celebrity judges” and a voting audience.
- Following the presentations, the judging panel will select three of the semi-finalists for a round of follow-up questions. Judges will then select the First Place winner in front of the live audience.
- Finally, the voting audience will select the winner for the “Audience Favorite” award, funded by audience participation. All semi-finalists are eligible for this award. To register as an audience member, please visit [PitchNOLA2013.eventbrite.com](http://PitchNOLA2013.eventbrite.com).

## Business Support & Events

### 1. PitchNOLA Q&A // Tues. August 27, 2013, 6:00pm-7:00pm

- (Optional) For interested applicants to ask questions about the competition, their eligibility, selection criteria, or other.

### 2. PitchNOLA Q&A // Thurs. October 3, 2013, 6:00pm-7:00pm

- (Optional) For interested applicants to ask questions about the competition, their eligibility, selection criteria, or other.

### 3. Business Modeling for Lean Startups // Mon., September 23, 2013, 5:30-7:30pm (Strongly Encouraged)

- This workshop will cover the business model lean startup method. The primary emphasis will be on understanding your customers and value proposition. We highly recommend this workshop because the concepts covered will help to strengthen your application.
- If interested in learning more, please visit: <http://hbr.org/2013/05/why-the-lean-start-up-changes-everything>, or download the PDF entitled, “Harvard Business Review\_Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything.” This PDF is available at [www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola](http://www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola).

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## 4. Pitch Workshop // Thurs. November 7, 2013, 6:00-8:00pm (Required for semi-finalists)

- This workshop will assist semi-finalists with the development of their final presentation slides and pitches.

## Awards

- The “First Place Winner” will receive a \$5,000 cash prize, pro bono technical assistance, and consulting through Propeller.
- The “Audience Favorite” Award will be funded through audience participation.
- Winners are expected to use the award money and consulting hours in order to advance their winning ideas.
- *Note:* Semi-finalists who are eligible are also encouraged to develop their ideas further and apply for the Propeller 2014-2015 Social Venture Accelerator, a 10-month incubator program for social entrepreneurs. For more information, visit [www.GoPropeller.org/Accelerator](http://www.GoPropeller.org/Accelerator).

## Audience Participation

*Audience members play a key role in this competition as part of PitchNOLA's goal to better connect social entrepreneurs with networks and resources. For questions, contact Julia Stewart, Propeller Programs Manager, at [jstewart@GoPropeller.org](mailto:jstewart@GoPropeller.org).*

- Audience members are asked to make a \$5 donation at the time of registration to fund the “Audience Favorite Award,” with additional donations greatly appreciated. Votes will be cast via text message on Tuesday, Nov. 19 at the live competition. To register as an audience member, please visit [PitchNOLA2013.eventbrite.com](http://PitchNOLA2013.eventbrite.com).
- Additionally, we encourage audience members to provide relevant contacts, resources, or constructive feedback to assist PitchNOLA's semi-finalists in pursuing their ideas. Feedback cards will be provided at the competition.
- Seats are available on a first come first serve basis. Doors open at 6:00pm.
- Interested in joining our audience? Register online at [PitchNOLA2013.eventbrite.com](http://PitchNOLA2013.eventbrite.com).

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## Key Dates

### PitchNOLA Application Q&A #1:

Tuesday, August 27, 6:00pm-7:00pm  
*Propeller Incubator, 4035 Washington Avenue*  
RSVP at [www.GoPropeller.org/events](http://www.GoPropeller.org/events)

### PitchNOLA Application Q&A #2:

Thursday, October 3, 6:00pm-7:00pm  
*Propeller Incubator, 4035 Washington Avenue*  
RSVP at [www.GoPropeller.org/events](http://www.GoPropeller.org/events)

### Business Modeling for Lean Startups (Highly Encouraged)

Monday, September 23, 5:30-7:30pm  
*Propeller Incubator, 4035 Washington Avenue*  
RSVP at [www.GoPropeller.org/events](http://www.GoPropeller.org/events)

### Application Deadline

Thursday, October 17, 11:59pm CST  
Apply Online! [www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola](http://www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola)

### Pitch Workshop (required for semi-finalists)

Thursday, November 7, 6:00pm-8:00pm  
*Tulane University, Woldenberg Art Center, Freeman Auditorium*

### PitchNOLA 2013: Community Solutions

Tuesday, November 19, 6:30pm-8:30pm  
*Tulane University, Woldenberg Art Center, Freeman Auditorium*  
Register to attend! <http://pitchnola2013.eventbrite.com/>