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## **The Idea Village announces plans and opens applications for the 2017 Entrepreneur Season**

*The 9th annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week will take place March 19 – 24, 2017*

**NEW ORLEANS** – Today, The Idea Village announces plans for its upcoming cycle of programs and events designed to drive entrepreneurial activity in New Orleans. The 2017 Entrepreneur Season, which begins this Friday, July 1, will culminate March 19 – 24, 2017, with the 9<sup>th</sup> annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by IBERIABANK.

“For the past 16 years, The Idea Village has been dedicated to building a vibrant entrepreneurial community,” said The Idea Village’s COO Emily Madero, who will become acting CEO on August 1. “This year, we will focus our efforts on sustaining the movement by executing initiatives that scale local participation. We have assembled a powerful network of mentors and experts, as well as world-class resources, for anyone looking to start, grow, or scale a business in New Orleans.”

The community can engage in The Idea Village’s 2017 programming in the following ways:

1. **Adopt the entrepreneurial mindset:** Beginning in September, The Idea Village will host a series of monthly workshops and networking events covering a range of topics relevant to the entire entrepreneurial community.
2. **Test a business idea or tackle a pressing challenge with experts:** The Idea Village offers free, 60-minute, one-on-one strategy sessions led by seasoned entrepreneurs and business experts. The goal is for participating entrepreneurs to walk away with next steps that they can immediately implement. **Applications are now open; [learn more and apply here.](#)**
3. **Scale your venture through one of our accelerator programs:** The Idea Village’s accelerators provide local entrepreneurs with exclusive access to dedicated Entrepreneurs-in-Residence (EIRs) as well as an influential network of mentors and experts. Participants also gain access to the resources necessary to accelerate the growth of their ventures and develop the skills required to emerge as entrepreneurial leaders. The programs are highly competitive in an effort to identify the most capable entrepreneurs. Of the 218 entrepreneurs that have been selected to date, 83 percent are still in business and 91 percent are still located in New Orleans. Collectively, this portfolio of entrepreneurs has raised more than \$109 million in private capital, created more than 2,928 jobs, and is generating \$170 million in annual revenue.

The 2017 accelerators include:

- **IDEAx:** A 12-week program for 5 local founders creating scalable businesses in New Orleans. The program will culminate in a Demo Day in December, where participants will pitch The Idea Village network of mentors, investors, and professionals. [Learn more and apply here.](#)
- **DIGITALMEDIAX:** A 12-week program for up to 5 New Orleans-based founders with innovative digital information-sharing concepts, hosted in partnership with **NOLA Media Group**. The program will culminate in a Demo Day in December, where the winner will receive \$1,000 in cash, free office space at NOLA Media Group’s One Canal Place newsroom from January until March 2017, and a networking trip to New York City sponsored by Advance Local. [Learn more and apply here.](#)
- **ENERGYx:** A 12-week program for up to 5 Louisiana-based oil and gas startups, hosted in partnership with the **Southeast Louisiana Energy Initiative**. Select participants will present their businesses to a panel of industry leaders for a \$50,000 grant during NOEW 2017. [Learn more and apply here.](#)
- **CAPITALx:** A 10-week program for entrepreneurs who are actively seeking investments from local and national investors with pitch opportunities during NOEW. **Participation is invitation-only.**

**Applications for IDEAx, DIGITALMEDIAX, and ENERGYx are now open via [www.ideavillage.org](http://www.ideavillage.org) and will close at 11:59pm CT on Friday, August 5.** All applicants will be notified of their selection no later than August 27.

4. **Mark your calendar for the 9th annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by IBERIABANK, scheduled for March 19-24, 2017:** NOEW is the annual business festival celebrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and new thinking in New Orleans.

“The Idea Village helped our early stage start-up gain some serious footing here in New Orleans. From access to professional services and mentors to amazing networking events and media pushes, our brand recognition has become so much stronger. The IDEAx program was exactly what we needed to help navigate some of the daunting yet critically important tasks associated with growing a business, including legal contracts, insurance clauses, accounting, and taxes,” said Rupa Mohan, co-founder and CEO of The Sweat Social.

Information sessions will be hosted at The Idea Village office (located at 515 Girod Street) on Wednesday, July 13 from 9:30 am to 10:30 am; Thursday, July 21 from 12 pm to 1 pm; and Tuesday, August 2 from 9:30 am to 10:30 am to help interested individuals navigate the 2017 program offerings, with a specific focus on the accelerator application process. To learn more, visit [www.ideavillage.org](http://www.ideavillage.org).

**ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE:**

The Idea Village was formed in 2000 by a group of New Orleans citizens who believed in the power of entrepreneurship to transform the community. The Idea Village is an independent 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization that provides direct service to high impact entrepreneurs, convenes the ecosystem through NOEW, and supports initiatives that strengthen our entrepreneurial infrastructure. The Idea Village received a Gold Excellence award from the International Economic Development Council for our Entrepreneur Season model in 2012 and we were recognized as a top-three entrepreneurship ecosystem developer in 2014 by the Global Innovation Summit. Alumni include: 4D Supplements, Acrew, Advanced Polymer Monitoring Technologies, Audiosocket, BeneFit, Better Day Health, Be Well Nutrition, Bioceptive, Bluebag, Cajun Fire Brewing Company, ChapterSpot, Cordina, Culturalyst, CultureConnect, DoC Mapping, Dinner Lab, Ducky, eTax Credit Exchange, , Gradsquare, Grok+Banter, Gustofy, IMOTO Photo, iSeatz, Juggle, KREWE du optic, Lucid, Huka Entertainment, Jack & Jake’s, Kickboard, LifeCity, Locally.com, Maritant, MobileQubes, Munivestor, MyMix Nutrition, Naked Pizza, NOLA Brewing Company, NOLAcajun.com, NOLA Couture, NOVate Medical Technologies, NuMe Health, OBOCS, The Occasional Wife, Pupular, Quarrio, The Remedy Room, Scandy, Spa Workshop, StaffInsight, The Sweat Social, Torsh, TOURED, Tutti Dynamics, Welcome to College, Your Nutrition Delivered, and zlien.

For more information, please visit [www.ideavillage.org](http://www.ideavillage.org).