

# The Idea Village

## Chief Executive Officer

March 2017



<b>Position</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Company</b>	The Idea Village
<b>Location</b>	New Orleans, Louisiana
<b>Reporting Relationship</b>	The position reports to the Board of Directors
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ideavillage.org">www.ideavillage.org</a>

## Company Background

The Idea Village is an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to building a thriving New Orleans through entrepreneurship by supporting high-impact entrepreneurs, convening the community through New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), catalyzing new initiatives that address key opportunities and gaps in the ecosystem, and promoting New Orleans as a hub of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Founded in 2000, The Idea Village was built on a belief in the power of entrepreneurship to transform communities. Launched with just \$10,000 for a business plan contest, the organization has secured more than \$25 million in donations and has invested those funds to conceive, develop, and coordinate a collaborative, inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem that identifies, supports, and retains entrepreneurial talent in New Orleans.

This investment has provided direct support to more than 5,854 entrepreneurs by allocating 88,096 consulting hours and \$3 million in seed capital; 218 of these entrepreneurs have been selected into The Idea Village's core accelerators, and this portfolio has collectively secured \$109 million in private capital, has created more than 2,928 jobs for the community, and has generated greater than \$170 million in annual revenue, resulting in \$200 million in annual economic impact for the New Orleans regional economy.

The Idea Village has established themselves as a globally-recognized leader in developing place-based entrepreneurial ecosystems and New Orleans is now in the top 10% of best cities to start a business in the country (WalletHub), with startup activity 64% above the national average (The Data Center).

The company has been called America's #1 Biggest Brain Magnet (Forbes) and 1 of the 20 Hottest Startup Hubs in America (The Kauffman Foundation). In addition to supporting 5,854+ entrepreneurs by engaging thousands, The Idea Village has played an integral role in catalyzing the city's entrepreneurial movement as well as successfully elevating New Orleans' reputation as a destination for business innovation.

Governed by a 21-person Board of Directors, The Idea Village advances the entrepreneurial ecosystem through the three below key initiatives:

- IDEAVILLAGEx™ is a suite of programs that provides New Orleans-based entrepreneurial talent with consulting, mentorship, professional resources, and access to capital. Offerings include four intensive 12-week accelerator programs, 60-minute strategy sessions, and educational workshops. IDEAVILLAGEx cultivates entrepreneurial leadership and supports early-stage companies to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of New Orleans.
- New Orleans Entrepreneur Week™ is a weeklong festival that engages the broader community to celebrate innovation, entrepreneurship, and advanced thinking in New Orleans. NOEW is a platform to convene the entrepreneurial ecosystem and promote New Orleans as a hub of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- IDEALab is an initiative that identifies community issues, specific gaps, or emerging opportunities and catalyzes new programming to advance entrepreneurship in New Orleans (e.g., The New Bienville Society, an initiative focused on identifying national leaders with emotional links to New Orleans to engage in its future). Past programs include the Water Challenge & Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge, among others.

## Position Background

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO has overall strategic and operational responsibility for The Idea Village's staff, its programs/initiatives, and the execution of its mission. Specifically, s/he ensures that The Idea Village's finances, operations, fundraising, marketing, human resources, technology, and programmatic offerings are effectively implemented across the organization. S/he will focus on advancing the New Orleans entrepreneurial movement by expanding and linking networks, identifying critical gaps, engaging strategic partners, and securing reliable funding.

In addition, the CEO is responsible for carrying out the following responsibilities in an effective and professional manner:

- Provide leadership, vision, and strategy to ensure the continued development and management of a professional and efficient organization as well as The Idea Village's reputation as a globally recognized leader in developing place-based entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- Provide leadership in setting The Idea Village's long and short-range goals and strategies consistent with the Board.
- Maintain a close working relationship with the Board, cultivating a strong and transparent working relationship and ensuring open communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic, and impact performance against goals.
- Lead a team of five direct reports including the Director of Finance, the Director of Development, The Director of Entrepreneur Services, The Director of External Affairs and the Executive Producer of New Orleans Entrepreneur Week.
- Develop a strong team-oriented and collaborative work environment within the organization, and work to ensure the continued development of the organization.
- Serve as the primary spokesman for and representative of The Idea Village, actively engaging and energizing The Idea Village employees, board members, partnering organizations, and funders.
- Continue to build The Idea Village's extensive local and national network of resources (investors, media, professionals, etc.) and strategic partners as well as strong relationships with peer organizations.
- Be able to drive the organization to enable opportunities. Be able to identify future potential resources for The Idea Village. Understand business trends that impact entrepreneurial ecosystems and the trends that affect funding and programs upon which The Idea Village can capitalize.
- Recommend, review and evaluate fund raising strategies as well as pursue new funding.
- Oversee the financial status of the organization including the development of long and short-range financial plans, monitoring the budget and ensuring sound financial controls are in place, and setting financial priorities accurately to ensure the organization is operating in a manner that supports the needs of the program.
- Prepare an annual budget for submission to the Board.

## Experience & Qualifications

The CEO will be a proven thought leader who is passionate and thoroughly committed to The Idea Village's mission and New Orleans. All candidates should have proven leadership and relationship management experience. Concrete demonstrable experience and other qualifications include:

- At least 8 to 10 years of management experience; track record of effectively leading a performance and outcomes based organization and staff.
- Prior CEO experience is helpful but not required. If no CEO experience, will have to have worked at the leadership level in a dynamic organization.
- Direct experience in a start-up/entrepreneurial environment would be ideal.
- Non-profit experience is helpful but not required.
- Must be strategic, engaging, and have a vision.
- Must be able to inspire trust and build confidence and credibility at all levels of the organization and across internal and external constituencies.
- Must have high integrity, credibility and be mission driven.
- Strong commitment to the professional development of staff; successful track record of recruiting, leading, and retaining a diverse team.
- Outstanding presentation and communication skills and the experience and proclivity to be an effective spokesperson, relationship builder, fundraiser, and face of the organization.
- Strong marketing, public relations, and fundraising experience with the ability to engage a wide range of stakeholders and cultures.
- Must have the skill to sell. Sales and marketing experience would be helpful.
- Ability to work effectively in collaboration with diverse groups of people. Must be a team player and a team builder.
- Action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable, and innovative approach to organizational planning.
- Must be flexible, agile, and be able to work in a fast and fluid environment.
- Must be unpretentious and adept at collaborating with others. Strong interpersonal skills are needed.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong business and financial acumen.

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