

For Immediate Release

Entrepreneurs from Around the Country Invited to Experience New Orleans' Startup Community
Applications Open for Inaugural IDEAtour

New Orleans, LA (November 6, 2015) – IDEAtours, developed collaboratively by The Idea Village, GNO, Inc., and the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA), is a new program designed to inspire and recruit national entrepreneurs to move their companies to the New Orleans region through an exclusive, 24-hour curated experience that will expose participants to the resources, incentives, programs, and leaders of the city's entrepreneurial community. The first IDEAtours session will be **December 9-10, 2015**.

"To know New Orleans is to love New Orleans," said Michael Hecht, President and CEO of GNO, Inc. "By giving a select group of startups a curated opportunity to come to know the 'new' New Orleans, IDEAtours will help bring new, growing companies – and ultimately more jobs - to Greater New Orleans."

High-growth entrepreneurs looking to move to New Orleans are invited to apply at <http://bit.ly/IDEAtours> until **November 18th at 11:59pm CT**. Participants will be chosen by a selection committee from the three partner organizations.

New Orleans has become recognized as a nationally significant hub of entrepreneurship that offers competitive startup resources, a collaborative network and a quality of life that has become attractive to entrepreneurs. Forbes named New Orleans "America's #1 Biggest Brain Magnet," based on the city's gain in people with college educations. The city also has the #1 fastest-growing tech sector (New Geography) and was ranked among the top 10 cities for relocation (Forbes).

"We are experiencing tremendous entrepreneurial success, and startups outside of the city now want to move their businesses down here," said Tim Williamson, Co-founder and CEO of The Idea Village. "We want to provide entrepreneurs an efficient way to see the authentic, collaborative ecosystem that has developed."

"The spirit of entrepreneurship is strong in New Orleans, and we are excited to be part of an innovative approach to introducing high growth potential companies to our city," said Quentin L. Messer, Jr., President and CEO of NOLABA. "One of our most important roles is attracting the next great company to New Orleans where it can join a cadre of like-minded businesses. We are looking forward to working with our partners to make this a successful event."

For more information on the program and to access the application, please email callista@ideavillage.org or visit www.ideavillage.org.

ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE:

Founded in 2000, The Idea Village is an independent 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization based in New Orleans that provides direct service to high impact entrepreneurs, convenes the ecosystem through New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, 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.

For more information: www.ideavillage.org

ABOUT GREATER NEW ORLEANS, INC.:

GNO, Inc. is the regional economic development organization for Southeast Louisiana. The GNO, Inc. Mission is to create jobs and wealth in the Greater New Orleans community. The GNO, Inc. Vision is for the Greater New Orleans region to fulfill its potential as one of the best places in the country to grow a company, and raise a family.

For more information: www.gnoinc.org.

ABOUT NEW ORLEANS BUSINESS ALLIANCE:

The New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) is the official public-private partnership tasked with leading economic development initiatives for the city of New Orleans. NOLABA is a public-private partnership between the City of New Orleans and local private investors. Its creation resulted from a long-term effort by the business community to adopt national best practices in economic development for the growth of Orleans Parish. The 17-member Board is composed of a cross-section of New Orleans leaders, including New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and a diverse group of business professionals.

For more information: www.nolaba.org