

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Orleans Joins Forces with 6 Other Emerging Startup Hubs in the United States

March Madness-style entrepreneur pitch competition to be held in New Orleans in April during Collision

New Orleans, LA (December 22, 2015) – Today, The Idea Village announces that New Orleans has teamed up with entrepreneurial leaders in Buffalo, Charleston, Nashville, Pittsburgh, Raleigh-Durham, and San Antonio as part of an innovative effort to showcase entrepreneurs from each community. Inspired by Steve Case’s, Co-founder of AOL and CEO of Revolution, Rise of the Rest initiative, the goal is attract investment for ventures in emerging entrepreneurial hubs across the United States and showcase the rise of entrepreneurship around the country.

Select entrepreneurs from the seven communities will participate in the [Launch Pad PITCH](#), a March Madness-style pitch competition at the global tech conference Collision, taking place in New Orleans April 25-27, 2016. Each city will create its own selection criteria and identify the top three ventures in their respective ecosystem to be showcased. After competing against each other, four companies will advance to the semifinals of the Collision PITCH competition and present to an audience of global investors. The pitch brackets will be unveiled on March 16, 2016 in New Orleans during the 8th annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW).

“Together, this cohort will illustrate that great entrepreneurial talent exists all around the country,” said Tim Williamson, Co-Founder and CEO of The Idea Village. “While I believe that the New Orleans ventures will be the last ones standing, the real winners are these communities that are working hard to create supportive ecosystems for entrepreneurs across the U.S.”

Three New Orleans ventures will be selected via nomination from local ecosystem partners 4.0 Schools, New Orleans Bioinnovation Center, New Orleans Startup Fund, PowerMoves.NOLA, Propeller, and The Idea Village. Those founders will take the stage on March 18 during NOEW’s annual Coulter IDEApitch, the premier entrepreneur showcase in New Orleans, to compete against each other – and then, 42 days later, those same individuals will represent New Orleans at Collision.

Currently, 75 percent of all venture capital is being invested in just three states, California, New York, and Massachusetts. As the surge in entrepreneurial activity and migration of talent around the country continues, investors and influencers are looking elsewhere for great entrepreneurs, and together, these seven entrepreneurial communities bring attention to the leading startups between the east coast and the west coast by collectively elevating their respective markets.

“This is the first time that these cities will join forces and compete to challenge how the world sees the U.S. startup landscape,” said Chris Schultz, Co-Founder of Launch Pad and organizer of the Launch Pad PITCH.

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

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