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## The Idea Village Announces New Ideas for its 2016 Entrepreneur Season

The 8<sup>th</sup> annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week is set for March 11-18, 2016 on Fulton Street

**New Orleans (July 1, 2015)** – Today, The Idea Village launched its annual, 9-month cycle of programs and events designed to drive entrepreneurial activity in New Orleans. The 2016 Entrepreneur Season will culminate March 11-18, 2016 with the 8<sup>th</sup> New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by IBERIABANK, on Fulton Street. Building on the momentum of the 2015 Season, this year, The Idea Village will execute initiatives to scale local participation, while growing strategic, national networks.

"Since 2000, The Idea Village has worked to position New Orleans as the hub of entrepreneurship in the South," said Tim Williamson Co-founder and CEO of The Idea Village. "For the 2016 Season, we've assembled world-class resources for anyone looking to start a business in New Orleans. In addition, we are expanding our offerings to ensure the whole community embraces the entrepreneurial mindset, and we will be inviting key national leaders to witness firsthand what makes New Orleans so special."

## Here's what's new in 2016 and how individuals can engage:

- 1. Attend innovative, NOEW-style events from September through December: New this year, we'll be hosting keynote speeches, interactive learning opportunities, roundtables, networking events, and a few surprises leading up to New Orleans Entrepreneur Week. Stay tuned to @helloNOEW and <a href="www.NOEW.org">www.NOEW.org</a> for the full calendar roll-out.
- 2. **Test an idea or tackle a pressing strategic challenge with experts:** The Idea Village is offering 100 free, one-on-one strategy sessions for local startups. These 90-minute meetings are led by seasoned entrepreneurs and business experts. **Applications are now open,** <u>learn more and apply.</u>
- 3. Apply to our 2016 accelerator programs for high-growth entrepreneurs:
  - *IDEAx:* A 12-week accelerator program for 5 local founders creating scalable businesses in New Orleans. Applications will open on July 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - DIGITAL MEDIAx: A 12-week accelerator for 5 New Orleans-based founders with innovative digital information sharing concepts readily accessible on a mobile platform, hosted in partnership with NOLA Media Group.
    Applications will open on July 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - **ENERGYx:** A 12-week accelerator program for 5 Louisiana-based oil and gas startups, hosted in partnership with the **Southeast Louisiana Entergy Initiative. Applications will open on July 15**<sup>th</sup>.
  - **CAPITALX:** A 10-week accelerator program for entrepreneurs who are actively seeking investments from local and national investors with pitch opportunities during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week. Participation is invitation-only.
- 4. Invite national networks to participate in the New Orleans entrepreneurial movement through the following initiatives:
  - IDEAtours: A two-day program for national founders thinking about moving their new ventures to New Orleans.
  - The Idea Village Investor Experience: A 24-hour, invitation-only experience for accredited investors during NOEW.
  - *The New Bienville Society:* An invitation-only immersive experience during NOEW to encourage national leaders with an indelible emotional link to New Orleans to engage in its future.
  - **Connecting Communities:** A summit engaging global entrepreneurial leaders during NOEW to share best practices, connect ecosystems, and position New Orleans as the hub of entrepreneurship in the South.
- 5. Mark your calendar for the 8<sup>th</sup> New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by IBERIABANK, March 11-18, 2016: NOEW is the annual business festival celebrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and advanced thinking in New Orleans.

Additionally, The Idea Village invites the entire community to help kick off the 2016 Entrepreneur Season with the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Entrepalooza on Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at the NOLA Brewing Tap Room. Local entrepreneurial leaders will be on hand to share their stories, and The Idea Village team will highlight select 2016 offerings. Event details will be unveiled in the coming days. Stay tuned to www.ideavillage.org and @ideavillage for real-time updates.

## **ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE:**

The Idea Village was formed in 2000 by a group of New Orleans citizens who believed entrepreneurship is a catalyst for positive change. 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. For more information: <a href="https://www.ideavillage.org">www.ideavillage.org</a>