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The Idea Village Seeks Startups with Big Ideas

Applications now open for participation in The Big Idea event to close out New Orleans Entrepreneur Week 2016

(New Orleans, LA) January 4, 2016 – Today, The Idea Village announces that applications for The Big Idea are now open. Going into its 5th year, The Big Idea is New Orleans’ largest crowd-driven pitch extravaganza, engaging over 3,300 people to provide capital to 10 of New Orleans’ hottest new startups. The culmination of New Orleans Entrepreneur Week (NOEW), presented by IBERIABANK, this year’s Big Idea will take place on Fulton Street on Friday, March 18th from 6pm – 8pm. New Orleans-based entrepreneurs are encouraged to apply at www.ideavillage.org starting today through Tuesday, January 19th at 5pm CT.

“We are looking for local founders with the next big idea to be showcased on the largest stage in the city,” said Tim Williamson, Co-founder and CEO of The Idea Village. “The best thing about this event is that the New Orleans community gets to decide who will be featured and how much funding each entrepreneur ultimately receives.”

In order to be considered for The Big Idea, companies must:

- Be organized as a for-profit venture
- Be located in the 10-parish region of the greater New Orleans region
- Be generating less than \$500,000 in revenue
- Be employing fewer than 5 full time employees

The Big Idea is open to everyone in the community. Attendees experience the entrepreneurial movement firsthand while supporting their favorite startups by allocating \$25 voting chips to those entrepreneurs’ designated collection boxes. The three entrepreneurs to collect the most chips will go on to make their pitch to a panel of celebrity judges who decide the overall winner and recipient of the \$25,000 grand prize. Last year, over 3,300 people attended the event and allocated a total of \$50,300 in funding to 12 entrepreneurs.

This year, The Idea Village is partnering with NOLA.com readers to select the 10 Big Idea participants. Twenty applicants will receive individualized profiles on NOLA.com, where readers will be able to vote on the entrepreneur(s) they think should make it to Fulton Street. The 10 companies to receive the most online votes will be unveiled on Monday, March 7th and then go on to pitch their ideas in front of thousands of spectators on March 18th. The 10 finalists will receive mentorship from previous Big Idea participants: Billy Bosch (Be Well Nutrition), Lowry Curley (AxoSim Technologies), Collin Ferguson (Where Y’Art), Erik Frank (Your Nutrition Delivered), Joe McMenemon (ChapterSpot), Tyler Ortego (ORA Estuaries), Kristen Preau (Cook Me Somethin’ Mister), and Jon Renthrope (Cajun Fire Brewing Company).

“The exposure and capital tied to winning The Big Idea in 2013 resulted in my company gaining significant traction,” said Erik Frank, Founder of Your Nutrition Delivered. “Almost three years later, Your Nutrition Delivered’s sales have grown over 500%, and I look forward to assisting the next big idea in New Orleans!”

Big Idea voting chips will be available for purchase via www.NOEW.org beginning Thursday, January 14th.

ABOUT THE IDEA VILLAGE:

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