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Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces Winners of the Future of Work Accelerator Open Innovation Challenge

09/13/2021

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today announced winners selected for the New Jersey Future of Work Accelerator program - the result of a national call for applications for innovations designed to promote worker rights, worker safety, and lifelong learning. The selected participants will now start a 9-month program to help them start, grow, or scale their projects in New Jersey.

A panel of expert judges selected 19 winners in a highly competitive process. Judges evaluated applications on a number of criteria including existing or planned commitment to invest in New Jersey, the ingenuity of the proposed concept, the level of social impact on vulnerable workers, and the potential for sustainable growth.

“I’m proud to announce the first-ever cohort of the Future of Work Accelerator program, and I’m eager to see them apply their creativity, dedication, and innovative approaches to help New Jerseyans thrive,” **said Governor Murphy**. “To the participants, congratulations and the best of luck as you hone and supercharge your work through the Accelerator. This announcement is an important milestone as we continue the work to make New Jersey a hotbed for equitable innovation. ”

“These innovators are taking on incredible challenges and the Accelerator is here to help,” **said Beth Simone Noveck, Chief Innovation Officer for the State of New Jersey**. “This is an opportunity for participants to sharpen their skills through masterclass sessions, connect with peer innovators, and receive personalized coaching to help them implement their initiatives and achieve the greatest impact. I look forward to working with this cohort and helping them meet the challenges of the future of work head on.”

“At a time when economic security is central to so many, we are excited to support this diverse cohort of innovators focused on helping workers and their families navigate the future and prosper,” **said Sean Kline, RSA US Future of Work Director**. “We are also excited to see this cohort inspire others and help us envision a future that works for all.”

“The Workers Lab is proud to support the New Jersey Future of Work Accelerator and congratulates every winner,” **said Adrian Haro, Chief Executive Officer of The Workers Lab**. “As an organization that gives new ideas for and with workers a chance to succeed, we are so excited to see the tremendous innovations and level of competition among the applicants. We look forward to seeing the impact made by the winners.”

2021 Future of Work Accelerator Inaugural Class

A-Plus Apprentice (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/a-plus>)

The Center for Innovation in Worker Organizations CIWO at Rutgers (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/rutgers-ciwo>)

Centro Community Partners (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/centro-community-partners>)

Drivers Seat Cooperative (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/drivers-seat-cooperative>)

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FreeWorld (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/freeworld>)

Hopeworks Camden (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/hopeworks-camden>)

Makerhoods Inc. (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/makerhoods>)

Make the Road New Jersey (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/make-the-road-new-jersey>)

Newark Movement for Economic Equity (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/njmep>)

New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program

([https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/nn25lf/j83xrcb/jsj70r__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!YUsX7gpcTJI-wjzPgPdgoi9czmSo-QdmVsPfgX8Y_SUFcn04R8wPI_rgZ-wyssp3hQAAykGXC\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/nn25lf/j83xrcb/jsj70r__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!YUsX7gpcTJI-wjzPgPdgoi9czmSo-QdmVsPfgX8Y_SUFcn04R8wPI_rgZ-wyssp3hQAAykGXC$))

The Scholars Program (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/the-scholars-program>)

Shimmy Technologies Inc. (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/shimmy-technologies>)

Startup Tribes (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/startup-tribes>)

STEERus INC (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/steerus>)

Toucan App Inc. (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/toucan>)

Ultronauts Academy (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/ultronauts-inc>)

Viva Translate (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/viva-translate>)

Workers Benefit Fund (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/workers-benefit-fund>)

Year Up (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/participants/year-up>)

About the Accelerator

The Accelerator is an initiative of the New Jersey State Future of Work Task Force, a broader effort to prepare workers and businesses for the future of work. Through the Accelerator, participants will receive custom coaching, curated connections to national experts, introductions to funders and peers, and will have the opportunity to pilot worker-centric programs and practices in New Jersey.

The Accelerator is open to startups, entrepreneurs, non-profits, public sector institutions and employees, unions, and grassroots organizations interested in promoting innovative solutions.

The Future of Work Accelerator will focus on innovations that address the following themes:

- Improving employment opportunities for workers via lifelong learning and re-skilling initiatives, improved career and/or training guidance, or other such innovations.
- Offering greater economic security and resilience through financial innovations like portable benefits solutions, crowdfunding initiatives, etc.
- Strengthening worker voice, ownership, and power.
- Enhancing employer practices (e.g., workplace safety innovations, hazard pay, portable benefits, hiring and recruitment technology)
- Improving job opportunities, inclusion, and financial support systems for disadvantaged groups/demographics (e.g. day laborers, immigrants, the elderly, rural workers, misclassified workers in the gig economy, minorities, etc.)

More detailed information is available on the New Jersey Future of Work Accelerator (<https://accelerator.fow.nj.gov/>) website.

Governor Phil Murphy

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