

GET Cities Doubles Down: Distributes Nearly \$2M Over 2 Years to Fuel Tech Equity Working Group Pilots In Chicago

GET Cities reaffirms commitment to partner organizations through a second round of grant distribution to three Tech Equity Working Group (TEWG) pilot spinout

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES, March 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- GET (Gender Equity in Tech) Cities and their [Tech Equity Working Group](#) (TEWG) have recently awarded \$855,000 in grants to 6 recipients who aim to foster equity, inclusivity, and opportunity in the tech sector in Chicago.

"We are excited about the transformative potential these grants hold for Chicago's tech landscape. The partnerships with MATTER, 1871, mHUB, BLCK VC, P33, and the Kaplan Institute at Illinois Tech represent a shared commitment to advancing inclusivity and equity in technology. By joining forces, we are not only fostering innovation but also creating tangible opportunities for tech talent. These collaborations underscore our collective dedication to building a more inclusive and accessible tech ecosystem in Chicago, where everyone has the chance to thrive and contribute," said Elle Ramel, Director for [GET Cities](#) Chicago.

The funds, which total just under \$1 million, were allocated to the following pilots:

Touring Investor In Residence
By 1871, MATTER & mHub

1871, MATTER, and mHUB are thrilled to receive grants to further the success of their collaborative Touring Investor in Residence (IIR) pilot, aimed at providing invaluable guidance to founders as they navigate fundraising and ecosystem resources. The pilot currently offers investors in residence and entrepreneurs in residence.

The pilot, which builds on programmatic collaboration developed by the three organizations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, involved the collective hiring of a shared IIR who provided unbiased advice to entrepreneurs at 1871, MATTER, and mHUB. Focusing on historically excluded founders initially, the program extended its reach to broader founder communities that were investor-ready, fostering a culture of collaboration and support.

The success of the pilot has paved the way for each organization to continue scaling the project:

1871 will enhance their commitment to founders ready to explore institutional funding with a more supportive infrastructure. This includes extending the IIR pilot in-house and embedding resources to support formal pitch practice in their offering to meet the objective. This new development fortifies 1871's entrepreneurial landscape by ensuring startups have access to comprehensive resources essential for sustainable development and success, empowering startups to navigate fundraising successfully.

MATTER plans to introduce a new healthcare executive-in-residence to further support founders in defining their value propositions and designing solutions. This initiative aligns with MATTER's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, with a focus on underrepresented founders, and will continue to contribute to Chicago's vibrant innovation ecosystem.

mHUB is expanding availability of its Product Expert in Residence (Product EIR), to enrich startup advising with technical expertise in both hardtech and software, establishing a dynamic resource for founders' growth across the ecosystem. This insight will complement the advice available through the other experts in residence at both MATTER and 1871, emphasizing the relationship between business viability and product feasibility/customer discovery and paired with additional resources to shorten founders' paths to commercialization.

Learn more about 1871 at: www.1871.com

Learn more about MATTER at: www.matter.health

Learn more about mHUB at: www.mhubchicago.com

Emerging Fund Managers

By BLCK VC & P33

BLCK VC and P33, two leading organizations committed to fostering equity and inclusion in the venture capital ecosystem, are both recipients of the GET Cities grant disbursement. This collaboration aims to address the historic exclusion of Black fund managers and women, trans, and non-binary emerging fund managers in the Midwest's venture capital landscape.

BLCK VC, a distinguished 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 2017, is dedicated to increasing the presence of Black investors in the VC ecosystem. Their Fund Forward initiative, which has a goal of mobilizing \$1 billion toward Black-led venture funds by 2030, takes a bold step in crafting an inclusive U.S. innovation and investment ecosystem. BLCK VC plans to support Black General Partners (GPs) in the Midwest, fostering connections to LPs, providing knowledge-sharing platforms, and enhancing back-office operations.

P33, a transformative force in Chicago's tech and innovation landscape, is undertaking the Velocity Initiative to address the exclusion of people of color and women fund managers in the United States. This fund is designed to invest in emerging fund managers, particularly women,

trans, and non-binary GPs, at the Pre-Seed and Seed stages. The goal is to catalyze inclusive capital, accelerate first closes, and build more meaningful assets under management.

Both organizations leverage BLCK VC's expertise in supporting Black investors and P33's mission to transform Chicago into a tier-one tech hub. The "Emerging GP/LP" program unites these organizations to address the funding gap and provide essential support to overlooked fund managers in the Midwest.

Learn more about BLCK VC at: www.blckvc.org

Learn more about P33 at: www.p33chicago.com

Elevate Tech Talent for Startups

By Kaplan Institute at Illinois Tech

Illinois Tech's Kaplan Institute is excited to build on the success of its inaugural pilot program, launched in March 2023, which aims to foster impactful collaborations between diverse tech talent and startups in Chicago. Co-led by Kaplan Institute's Niharika Hanglem and Longjump's Tina Hrabak the 2023 pilot was a part of the Tech Equity Working Group, which has successfully facilitated opportunities for tech talent to engage with Chicago-based startups with the support of GET Cities. The pilot laid the groundwork for the 2024 Elevate Tech Talent for Startups program.

The Elevate Tech Talent for Startups program is a collaboration between the Kaplan Institute and Illinois Tech's Office of Career Services with a mission to cultivate impactful alliances between diverse tech talent and Chicago-based startups. This program addresses a critical need among our student community, particularly those unfamiliar with the dynamic opportunities to experience innovation and entrepreneurship in Chicago's robust startup ecosystem. Many Illinois Tech students, including a significant number of first-gen students, often gravitate towards conventional career paths with larger tech corporations.

The aim of the program is to ignite a transformational shift in mindset. By spotlighting the vast potential of startups, as well as to instill an entrepreneurial spirit among students, positioning them as future leaders in the tech sector. Leveraging Chicago's vibrant Tech and Innovation ecosystem, the program will offer personalized mentorship from industry leaders. Through an immersive cohort-based internship program, tech talent will get hands-on startup experience and create successful career pathways in the ever-evolving tech landscape.

The Kaplan Institute is committed to advancing equity in tech entrepreneurship and innovation, providing lasting value for our students, and fostering a diverse and inclusive tech landscape in Chicago. This success marks a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to create opportunities and empower underrepresented voices in the technology sector.

Learn more at: www.iit.edu/kaplan

To learn more about the 5 pilots that scaled under the initial \$1M disbursement, visit: <http://techequityworkinggroup.com>

As GET Cities celebrates the allocation of grants, it is evident that this collective commitment to partnership remains the cornerstone of progress in the tech equity space. Collaboration with esteemed partners amplifies the overall impact and showcases the importance of unified action in fostering inclusivity and opportunity. Through strategic alliances and shared visions, GET Cities, the Tech Equity Working Group, and their partners work to catalyze meaningful change, empower voices, and shape the future of the tech industry.

About GET Cities

GET Cities is a national initiative designed to accelerate the power and influence of historically excluded people and places in tech through ecosystem alignment and activation to build a more equitable and vibrant economy. GET Cities launched in 2020, powered by SecondMuse Foundation, with catalytic funding from Pivotal Ventures and in partnership with Break Through Tech.

To learn more or get involved with GET Cities, visit their website at <https://www.getcities.org>

About SecondMuse Foundation

SecondMuse Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that advocates for a different approach for building inclusive and resilient societies and economies, which is referred to as relational wealth. It draws learning from the experiences of our partners, other organizations and communities around the world to advance the approach to a larger audience. The Foundation contributes to thought leadership, field building, and the creation of public goods on relational wealth. We seek to empower a community of practitioners and influence funders to better understand relational wealth and how it can be harnessed to benefit all people and the planet.

To learn more about SecondMuse Foundation, visit www.secondmusefoundation.org

About the Tech Equity Working Group

Tech Equity Working Group (TEWG), powered by GET Cities Chicago, is an alliance of 24 accelerators, incubators, funds, and mission-aligned ecosystem supporters designing city-wide solutions and collective infrastructure to address gender and racial inequities for tech founders in Chicago.

To learn more about Tech Equity Working Group, visit www.techequityworkinggroup.com

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