



EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator™

Igniting Impact by Accelerating Health Equity-Focused Founders



Gift Opportunity Prepared for
Donor First and Last Name
by the American Heart Association

Month Year

Executive Summary

There are innovative entrepreneurs across the country who are committed to advancing health equity through their ventures. Many have personally experienced the health inequities they are trying to address. However, accessing the capital and additional resources to launch, promote and scale their businesses remains a significant challenge, with the vast majority of venture capital invested in just four states, and only 2% of all venture capital investments supporting minority-led companies.

The EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator gives equity-focused business founders the essential resources to bring their innovations to scale, advancing health equity and increasing investment in their communities.

The National EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator™ equips health equity-focused founders with essential resources including training, mentoring, visibility, networking, a platform to amplify awareness and the opportunity for funding. A catalyst for creating strong, healthy and equitable communities, the Business Accelerator provides an intensive six-week training program where founders refine their business plans, prepare to launch or scale their product or services and receive guidance from expert mentors. The program culminates in an exciting showcase, providing the opportunity to secure grant funding, as well as feedback and advice from experts, to take their business to the next level.

At a time when health care providers, payers, employers and government entities are increasingly prioritizing the use of digital solutions that focus on equity, the Business Accelerator presents new opportunities for investors to discover novel, scalable solutions that they may not have otherwise known about. The Business Accelerator is impactful on multiple levels: not only does the program increase the flow of capital to entrepreneurs working on health and community-centered solutions, but it also fosters a growing network of social change agents focused on improving health disparities.

[DONOR NAME], by supporting the EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator™, you're advancing health and hope for everyone by empowering innovative health equity founders to put their important work into action and thrive as entrepreneurs. Please join us in this exciting opportunity to drive sustainable, status-quo-breaking, solution-generating change.

The Time is Right to Invest in Health Equity

The American Heart Association has championed health equity for decades, with significant impact in establishing clinical guidelines, advocating for health care access, ensuring equitable representation in research and more. Despite these advances, there is still much work to do. Health care disparities remain a major issue for a myriad of reasons, but new and innovative solutions exist. **Many individuals and organizations committed to improving health equity have real, impactful ideas they're ready to put into action, but do not have access to the capital or visibility they need to take the next step.**

When it comes to securing the money and public awareness they need to make a substantive impact, founders of small businesses and nonprofits face some sobering realities. 80% of venture capital dollars in the U.S. are invested in just four states: California, Massachusetts, New York and Texas, leaving little funding available for founders hoping to effect change in communities in other states. Even more concerning, only 2% of all venture capital investments support minority-led companies.

However, health care providers, payers, employers and government entities are increasingly prioritizing the use of digital solutions that focus on equity, making it a prime time for venture capital investments in equity-focused businesses. **These investments can make tangible impacts to address the inequitable distribution of venture capital dollars while also providing health equity-focused entrepreneurs with the opportunity to grow their businesses.**



Amplifying Health Equity Innovations: The EmPOWERED to Serve™ Business Accelerator

The American Heart Association's **EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator™** provides essential training, funding and recognition to social and health tech founders and businesses focused on improving access to equitable health in America. The Business Accelerator challenges the founders to develop and scale solutions that change behaviors, expand access and create long-term health improvement by addressing barriers to health. The process is designed to ignite their impact by helping them create tangible business tools, present their solutions to potential investors and grow their network of decision-makers, mentors and fellow entrepreneurs.

How to Ignite Impact: Business Accelerator Edition

First, gather the innovators.

The Business Accelerator kicks off with a call for submissions, inviting entrepreneurs including founders of nonprofits and pre-seed, seed and Series A startups who are addressing key health equity gaps in their communities to apply.

Then teach them how to turn big ideas into actionable business plans.

Candidates accepted into the program are guided through a rigorous six-week curriculum designed to strengthen their business models. The curriculum focuses on refining their plans through guidance on digital marketing, customer discovery, market positioning, increasing health impact, brand experience, storytelling and fundraising to create sustainable and scalable solutions. At the end of their training, candidates produce a 3-minute brand story, a health impact moonshot statement, a pitch deck and a business model canvas.

Next, give them a chance to showcase their skills and pitch their solutions to real investors.

At the virtual finale showcase event, finalists pitch their solutions “Shark Tank-style” to a panel of influential judges and advisors to receive real-time feedback and one of three grants from the AHA to help scale their businesses. Grants are given to first and second-place winners and a fan favorite chosen by the founder’s network. The top two grant recipients are also invited to attend AHA’s flagship scientific conference, Scientific Sessions.



Finally, foster long-lasting growth, innovation and connections to ensure continued success.

After the showcase concludes, founders continue to receive critical support, with the chance to advance their brand visibility through the platforms of the American Heart Association and participating sponsors and stakeholders. They also have the opportunity for mentorship and capital investment.

By completing the Accelerator, candidates are primed to bring their innovations to scale.

A Proven Track Record

The EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator™ has a strong track record of success in empowering social entrepreneurs to grow their ventures and make a significant health impact. Accelerator alumni continue to lead projects addressing food insecurity, transportation, access to healthcare, STEM, youth education and more. **Since its inception in 2017, the program has provided \$1.33 million in grant funding and trained 166 founders.** The impact of the Accelerator extends far beyond grants and training, however. Participating businesses have secured **\$321 million in outside investments after the Accelerator and one company has been acquired by a major health care organization.** This empowers Accelerator founders and their businesses to continue to grow and scale, further improving health equity through their work and bringing additional economic mobility to their communities.



Your Leadership Support is a LIFELINE.

[DONOR NAME], the AHA EmPOWERED to Serve Business Accelerator™ is an important, action-focused approach to improving health equity and fostering innovations to support a world of longer, healthier lives for all. Your investment helps realize the promise of a health care system that safely, effectively and efficiently leverages new ideas and technology for better patient outcomes. By advancing the impact of community-centered solutions and fostering the growth of tomorrow's health-impact-focused entrepreneurs, we can make a significant difference in the well-being of all Americans.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this request.