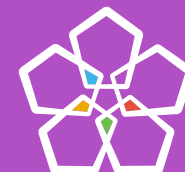


**INCLUSIVE
BUSINESS
RESOURCE
NETWORK**

PROGRESS REPORT
FY 2018/19



**PROSPER
PORTLAND**

Building an Equitable Economy

THANK YOU TO OUR NETWORK OF PARTNERS



“I am very grateful for the journey I have personally experienced. I’ve been involved with some of these resources going on three years now and think that if the organizations could collaborate efforts and resources, success would exceed goals.”

- IBRN client



“My confidence as a business owner has grown exponentially. I no longer shrivel at the idea of going to networking events. I have a fairly solid pitch and ALWAYS carry business cards.”

- IBRN client

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Portland's small businesses drive job creation, local economic growth, and viable pathways toward wealth creation for the entrepreneurs who lead them. Our work to create and improve systems that serve Portland entrepreneurs, particularly women and people of color, aims to increase their access to business knowledge, meaningful capital, new markets, and a talented and diverse workforce. As we conclude the second year of the Inclusive Business Resource Network, we have seen the building blocks for a more equitable economy taking shape and providing greater opportunity for business owners of color and women to find their footing and thrive in Portland.

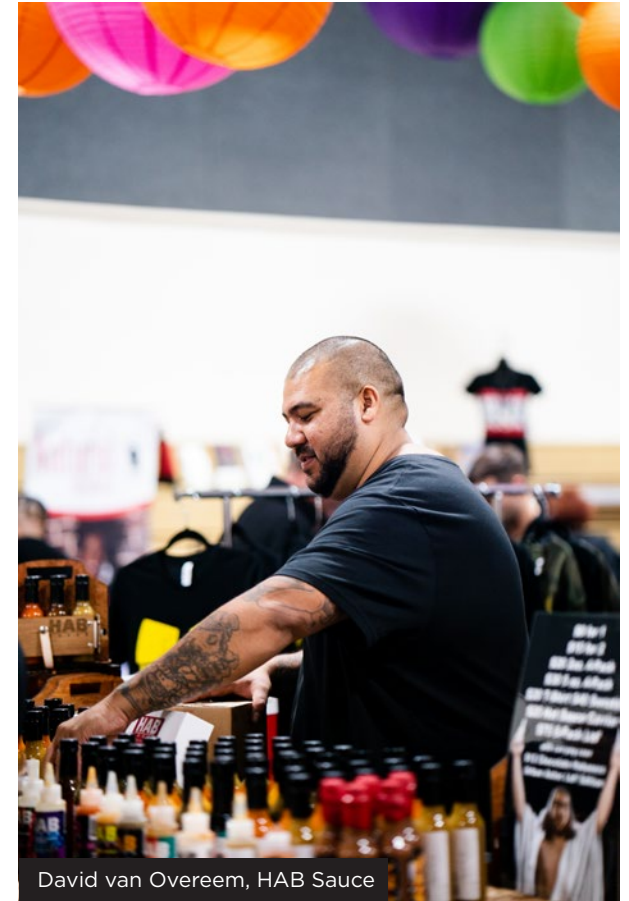
In our second year, we expanded the IBRN in both programs and number of entrepreneurs served. This fiscal year IBRN organizations served 1,043 entrepreneurs (up from 735 in FY 17/18), 72 percent of whom are people of color.

As the City of Portland's economic development agency, we make the greatest impact by stepping squarely into our role as funder, convener and connector. We recognize that culturally specific, community-led organizations know what's best for their community, and that startup and business support programs have unique insight into entrepreneurial challenges.

The day-to-day work of business advising and startup acceleration rests largely with the 17 organizations and programs that comprise the Inclusive Business Resource Network (IBRN). As a community of business support organizations centering the entrepreneur's

experience, IBRN is achieving impact by building up each organization's unique strengths. Together, we remain committed to achieving our goals:

1. **Deliver excellent service.** Coordinate services across an existing portfolio of programs and services designed for minority and female entrepreneurs, putting the needs of the entrepreneur first. Design wrap-around service support for businesses across multiple industries and growth stages. Allow user feedback from both businesses and organizations to improve design of the delivery system.
2. **Lead with outcomes.** Set ambitious goals to see more businesses owned by people of color and women grow and scale. Design a reporting system in collaboration with service providers that reports on outcomes, accommodates the diversity of growth paths for entrepreneurs and tells a more complete story of the entrepreneurial journey.
3. **Support an inclusive Community of Practice (CoP).** Create and grow a learning community across sectors for practitioners focused on serving underrepresented entrepreneurs. Develop a shared mission among a variety of organizations and a shared language for racial equity. Grow a community of thought leaders and business advisors who specialize in culturally specific and culturally responsive business support.



David van Overeem, HAB Sauce

By facilitating an infrastructure of feedback loops and outcome-driven data collection, in the past year we refined the program in collaboration with our partners. This approach allowed us to pilot new programs and secure more funding to grow program areas where need is greatest. Some examples stand out:

➤ **Digital Marketing & Tax Filing Support** - In fiscal year 17/18 our partners identified the need for more training and expertise in digital marketing and tax filing support. In 18/19 we piloted programs to both train IBRN business advisors and establish new partners to provide subject matter expertise for our entrepreneurs. Due to the success of those pilots, we secured funds in FY 19/20 from the Governor's Strategic Reserve Fund to grow the digital marketing program and from ongoing City General Fund for the tax support program.

➤ **Cannabis Business Development Program** - In fiscal year 17/18 we received a portion of the city's cannabis tax revenue to fund a new partner that provides grants and technical assistance to cannabis entrepreneurs of color. We selected Nu Leaf Project through a competitive RFP process, launched that new program in fiscal year 18/19 and have secured an additional allocation for fiscal year 19/20. We announced five 19/20 grant recipients in February 2020.

➤ **Construction Industry Support** - We executed an intergovernmental agreement with the Office of Management and Finance in January 2020 to administer the business technical assistance dollars for the Community Opportunities and Enhancements Program, which is funded by 1% of city construction projects for the purpose of supporting minority-owned construction firms and workers in construction trades.

Ultimately, our strategy and effort will be measured by the growing prevalence of success by those who dare to risk much in pursuit of their business dreams. This report provides a snapshot of where we are in our journey to reduce barriers, increase access, and build greater opportunities for all business innovators and leaders.



KIMBERLY BRANAM
Executive Director



TORY CAMPBELL
Director of Economic Development



Troy Douglass, Cultural Blends



Lee Hedgmon, The Barreled Bee



Increase Project Cohort 5

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Prosper Portland funds and convenes 17 organizations and programs as part of the Inclusive Business Resource Network (IBRN). The providers act as a Community of Practice (CoP), which places client-centered collaboration at the top of its values list. Prosper Portland convenes the CoP monthly, and topic-specific committees inform program design and CoP governance. Network providers share information, collaborate on client success and do trainings at monthly CoP meetings. Monthly newsletters include announcements for program enrollments, community events and continuing education.

Naturally, as network provider organizations and their programs change over time, new staff join the Community of Practice as others leave the network. The work of the CoP is intentionally grounded in nurturing and building relationships, so we work toward aligning members' attitudes and beliefs with the function of the CoP. We administer a regular pulse check survey to all CoP members; this year 32% of CoP members (21 out of 66) responded to the anonymous survey in paper or online format.

ENTREPRENEURIAL GROWTH

Prosper Portland's goal is to see underrepresented entrepreneurs grow their businesses

MEASURING

Prosper Portland collects data on entrepreneur outcomes to ensure accountability/program evaluation



CONVENING

Prosper Portland facilitates program best practices for partner organizations

INVESTING

Prosper Portland funds partners to provide business technical assistance

“I BELIEVE THERE HAS BEEN A GREATER LEVEL OF SATISFACTION FROM CLIENTS DUE TO THE COP COLLABORATION IN PROVIDING NEEDED SUPPORT AND SERVICES.” - COP MEMBER

When asked about the CoP's most recent accomplishments, respondents most commonly noted increased connection and collaborations between provider organizations. Providers have shared resources and co-hosted workshops on topical areas like lease negotiation and how to sell a business. Clients across their programs benefited, and live interpretation technology increased access for clients whose primary language is not English. In the future, CoP members hope that the group can provide more targeted services to achieve optimal results for clients, increase access to the network's services through better marketing, and secure additional funding.

100%

AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

"I believe collaboration amongst different organizations provides better support for business owners."

95%

AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

"Participating in this Community of Practice helps me be a better business advisor."

86%

AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

"Since my organization started participating in this Community of Practice, we have developed new and/or strengthened existing partnerships with IBRN organizations."

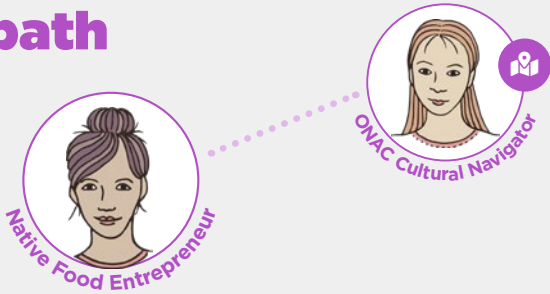
90%

AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

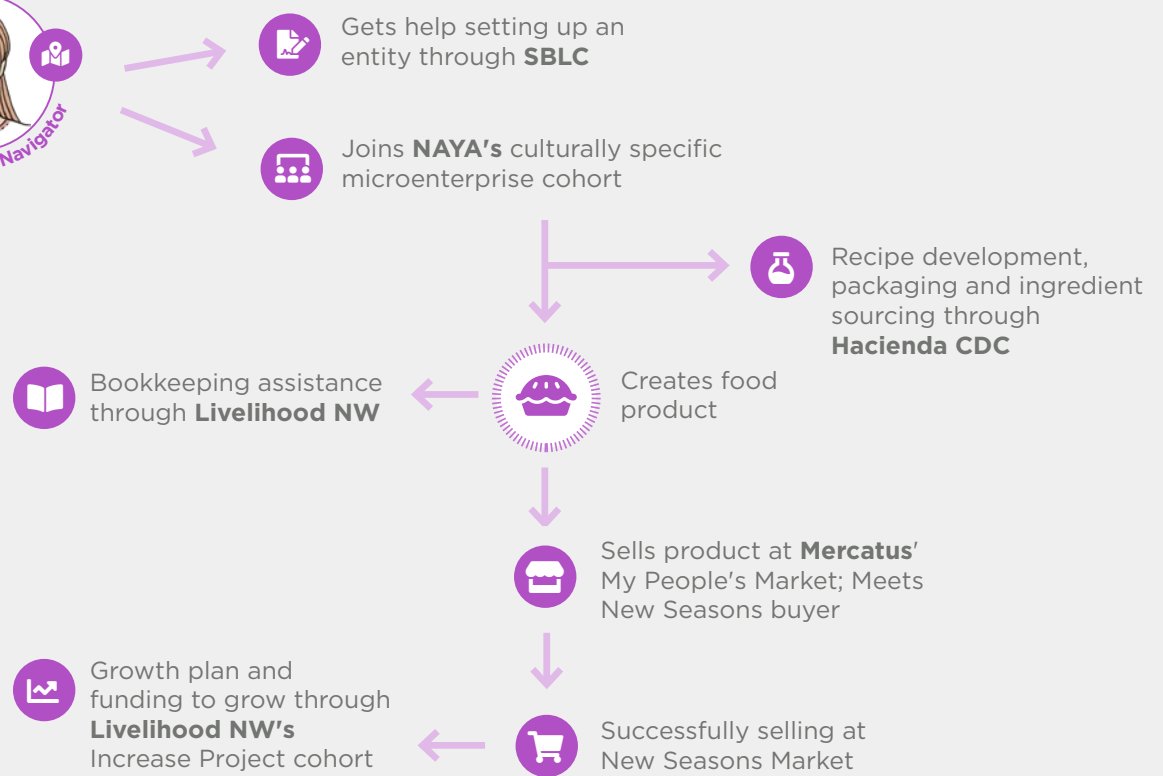
"The Community of Practice helps me center the needs of the entrepreneurs of color in my coaching approach and/or program design."

A client's path to success

A food entrepreneur meets the cultural navigator for the Native community at an ONAC event. They identify as Native American.

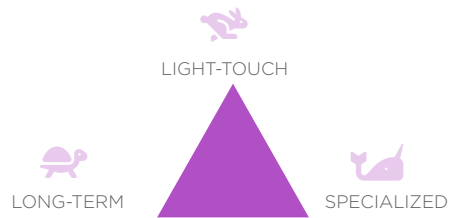


The ONAC navigator connects the entrepreneur to network partners:



THE NUMBERS

The Inclusive Business Resource Network program includes three service levels: light-touch (less intensive, between 5-10 hours annually), long-term (intensive, at least 30 hours annually), and specialized services which happen on an as-needed, referral basis (examples: legal support, digital marketing, and bookkeeping and accounting.)



This year, we doubled down on our data collection efforts by adding a full-time staff member dedicated to tracking and reporting on IBRN outcomes and providing regular group training opportunities for partner staff and one-on-one technical assistance as needed. We also reconvened the Outcomes Committee which was originally tasked with the development of the program's five-year outcomes goals. As we reach the mid-point of that outcomes period, we recognized the need for more regular feedback from providers about trends and gaps we're beginning to see in the data.

The program is seeing more light-touch clients but fewer hours of service per client than we had anticipated. The impact on those clients is one area of data collection we want to explore further. The challenge lies in asking service providers to collect data for light-touch clients they may see for only a few hours.

Outputs

1,043 entrepreneurs served



72% are People of Color



58% are Women



502

participated in long-term, intensive programs

71%
People of Color

67%
Women



656

participated in light-touch programs

76%
People of Color

51%
Women



196

participated in specialized services

74% People of Color

Impact



businesses reported gross sales of **\$1,000,000+**



businesses reported gross sales of **\$500,000+**



businesses reported gross sales of **\$75,000+**

100+ profitable businesses

640 jobs retained






504 jobs created

BADGES & TARGETS

Prosper Portland tracks outcomes for clients who are enrolled in long-term, intensive business technical assistance programming. Partner organizations use a badge system to determine progress made by business owners receiving network-wide support. Each badge category has 9-12 milestones. Clients must meet four of the possible milestones in each category to earn the respective badge. Data is collected throughout the year and analyzed at the end of the fiscal year.

The feedback from our business advisors is that the city business license process is a barrier for businesses working toward the “strong and stable” category. Many are far from the gross sales threshold which would make them non-exempt, for tax purposes, but the process for maintaining up-to-date sales records is one of the bottlenecks for the badge system. We plan on working with the Revenue Bureau to find better solutions for businesses to overcome this barrier.

We are also exploring alternative ways to capture outcomes for more clients in our system, specifically clients enrolled in the light-touch program. In the past year we’ve seen a greater use of this service level, which provides more flexible access to technical assistance and resources for entrepreneurs.

BADGE	18/19 ACTUAL	18/19 TARGET (CUMULATIVE)
 <p>STRONG & STABLE</p> <p>Have established a foundation for the future and receive a benefit from their business</p>	<p>151</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 67% POC 25% African American 26% Latinx 68% Women 14% 2 or more programs* 55% 2 or more providers** 	200
 <p>GROWTH</p> <p>Have realized efficiencies in ordering, operating and/or production</p>	<p>56</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% POC 25% African American 21% Latinx 69% Women 48% 2 or more programs* 50% 2 or more providers** 	30
 <p>SCALE</p> <p>Have a market-proven product/service and investing in the expansion of their business footprint</p>	<p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% POC 33% African American 17% Latinx 33% Women 20% 2 or more programs** 	4
 <p>LAUNCH</p> <p>Move past traded sector business concept and launch a product or technology into a new market</p>	<p>46</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% POC 33% African American 17% Latinx 80% Women 	12
<p>TOTAL BADGE COUNT</p> 	<p>259</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 67% POC 27% African American 24% Latinx 69% Women 	246

* Badge earner enrolled in more than one program

** Badge earner worked with more than one provider in the network

ENTREPRENEUR FEEDBACK

In September 2019, Prosper Portland emailed a satisfaction survey in English, Spanish and Russian to 915 participating clients. We collected 162 responses (a response rate of 18%). The purpose of the survey was to measure client outcomes and their experience with programming through the Network. The 14-question survey focused on three areas: quality of business advising, navigating services within the network, and client outcomes, which align with the overall goals of the program.



The MESO business building series helped my partner and me articulate our goals and put together our business plan. Having this roadmap has accelerated our progress with our business tremendously. The help we've received through the SBLC to connect with low-cost legal services has also been invaluable. Through the help of our lawyer, we've been able to register our LLC, create (and understand) our operating agreement, and create the contracts we've needed to begin taking on paying clients. All of this support has helped us start our business on solid footing and has aided us in entering into our partnership having done the important work of thinking through the future possibilities for our business.

Thanks to Carol connecting me to BUILT OR I was able to have my first wholesale pitch and build a relationship with local buyers.

My business has been slow to grow, I work on it part time around childcare, but if not for PIE I think I would not be in business at all. It's hard to imagine any other program creating the space to support me in my situation/with my needs.

THE INITIAL BUSINESS DIDN'T SUCCEED, BUT THE SKILLS THAT I LEARNED TAUGHT ME HOW TO RUN A BUSINESS. OUR NEWEST BUSINESS IS 4 YEARS OLD AND BRINGS IN 6 FIGURES. THE SUCCESS OF THAT BUSINESS IS DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO MESO.

I feel supported and I feel like if things get rough, someone has an idea to get us through it.

I've received legal assistance from the SBLC, a PIP Grant for store front improvement from the city, and free tax assistance, a small MESO loan and bookkeeping assistance from Livelihood NW. All of these have helped me grow my business and saved my business a significant amount of money which is essential while I continue to grow my business. I would not have known about any of these services were it not for Livelihood NW or my advisor. I'm very grateful for all of it.



Quality of Business Advising

89%

felt their business advisor respects their culture and makes them feel welcome



Navigating Services within the Network

73%

felt it was easy to access services from other organizations and service providers

80%

feel more connected to a diverse business community



Client Outcomes

57%

have seen their sales increase because of the services they received