

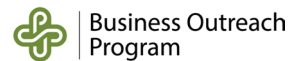
INCLUSIVE BUSINESS RESOURCE NETWORK

PROGRESS REPORT FY 2017/18



Building an Equitable Economy

OUR NETWORK OF PARTNERS



INTRODUCTION

Small businesses and the entrepreneurs who lead them need three business catalysts to fully participate and contribute to a local economy: increased access to business know-how, meaningful capital, and new markets. Assessing the availability of these core activators in our city gives us a true sense of the health of our small business ecosystem. The degree to which all entrepreneurs have equitable access indicates the level of strength, diversity, and innovation in the local economy. But for many entrepreneurs of color and women, equitable access has been historically limited and, in some cases, nonexistent.

Here in Portland, we are investing in small business leaders and innovators because it's both the right thing to do and economically smart. Our efforts have fueled an iterative process that informs our understanding of what the permanent components should be to increase access for diverse small business owners.

For the past decade, Prosper Portland developed and managed multiple programs to support minority and women entrepreneurs, some on a contract basis and others in-house.

As our portfolio of programs and partnerships grew, we recognized the need to create scaled and more meaningful impact with an authentic and intentional racial equity lens. This new approach also drove the creation of the Entrepreneurship team at Prosper Portland, new staff and investment in infrastructure to run our small business and startup programs at scale.

In January 2016 Prosper Portland launched the Inclusive Business Resource Network (IBRN) to focus on what we do well: invest in impactful systems and convene partners.

This report is the first look-back on the IBRN program, organized along the three initial program goals:

1. **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.
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. **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 of multiple industries and growth stages. Allow user feedback from both businesses and organizations to improve design of the delivery system.



We have learned that these goals reinforce each other: a community of practice that has developed trust with its members and is firmly grounded in racial equity can provide robust service to entrepreneurs. Robust service delivery helps entrepreneurs achieve the desired outcomes.

During the first year of the program (fiscal year 2017/2018) we have been both delighted by our wins and sobered by lessons learned. Collaborations between organizations have blossomed, although collaborating as a network toward shared outcomes has presented unique challenges. The IBRN is piloting a new model for measuring entrepreneurship outcomes. Without existing frameworks, the work has required a higher level of staffing, capacity to ensure accuracy and completeness of data, and ongoing testing to measure the effectiveness of the system.

In the first year of building an inclusive community of practice we have learned what it takes to prioritize relationships, outcomes and racial equity – frequent one-on-one check-ins with partners,

monthly convenings with the COP, committee work, trainings, piloting new programs, data collection and building the program infrastructure itself. We have grown as individuals and as practitioners in this journey.

We have seen partnerships lead to new market opportunities for entrepreneurs (My People's Market) and tell a fuller story of the resiliency of entrepreneurs of color (Mercatus). Clearly, we are on to something together.

This Year-One Report captures a metric-driven snapshot of our progress that is both inspiring and humbling. With much more work to do, we're eager to build upon the IBRN program's lessons, partnerships, and emerging practices to create a stronger and more inclusive small business environment here in Portland.



TORY CAMPBELL, MANAGER
Entrepreneurship and Community
Economic Development Teams



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Inclusive Business Resource Network providers act as a **Community of Practice (CoP)**, which places client-centered collaboration at the top of its values list.

Each organization recognizes its role as connector to best serve entrepreneurs. The CoP convenes monthly. Network providers share information at monthly CoP meetings and also through monthly newsletters that include announcements for program enrollments, community events and continuing education.

20+

languages spoken by CoP business advisors

63%

Share of CoP Members who are People of Color

28

Committee Meetings

11

Community of Practice (CoP) Meetings

5

Days of equity training

VALUES

As a community of practice, we value...

CLIENT-CENTERED COLLABORATION

We put the needs of the entrepreneur first.

PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

We show up for each other in a reliable and respectful way.

AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

We prize the ability to think outside the box and to be resourceful when one door closes to find another open.

We acknowledge **INTERSECTIONAL EQUITY**, the complexity of identity and individual experiences of structural and systemic oppression. We work together as a community to address those inequities and serve our entrepreneurs.

In our work with entrepreneurs, we value...

AUTHENTIC INCLUSION

where an environment can change to meet the needs of entrepreneurs rather than expecting them to change to fit dominant culture.

our role as a **CONNECTOR**, actively making connections across sectors and organizations that support the entrepreneur.

and work towards entrepreneurs' **PROSPERITY**, promoting immediate and next-generation pathways for business owners to achieve wealth and stability.

We feel **EMPATHY** for our clients, bringing compassion and understanding to the unique experiences of each individual.

THE NUMBERS

The Inclusive Business Resource Network (IBRN) is a group of sixteen organizations funded and facilitated by Prosper Portland. IBRN works collectively on systemic change to foster an inclusive entrepreneurial community in Portland. The goal of IBRN is to drastically shift outcomes for business owners who are people of color, immigrants, women, and other underrepresented minorities through collaboration, focused resources, and client service.

The Network serves a range of entrepreneurs at different stages of business growth. IBRN partners recognize that a network approach is the best way to deliver culturally responsive, comprehensive business assistance and provide underrepresented entrepreneurs with a range of services to fully address their needs.

Investment

\$3,000,000

invested by
Prosper Portland

Outputs

735 entrepreneurs served



381

participated in long-term, intensive programs

68% are people of color



3/5

entrepreneurs served are people of color



3/5

entrepreneurs served are women

Impact

\$27,527,000 total 2017 revenues*

- 7** businesses reported gross sales of **\$1,000,000+**
- 15** businesses reported gross sales of **\$500,000+**
- 62** businesses reported gross sales of **\$75,000+**

*for those who reported

100+

entrepreneurs
profited from
their business

600

jobs were
created
and/or retained





BADGES & TARGETS

Network programs focus on supporting a business from startup through growth and ensuring technical assistance leads to wealth creation. To report on outcomes, 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.

Prosper Portland rigorously vetted the badge categories and determined milestones with input from the technical assistance providers in the Network. Prosper Portland based estimated outcomes on data from previous small business programs it has managed. Program providers review the milestones for each client before completing an annual reporting checklist.

In the first full year of the program, outcomes for FY 2017/18 were lower than the annual average targets. Lessons learned in the program's first year will inform future understanding of the initial targets. In addition, some underestimates may be due to gaps in actual data collection. Recognizing the challenges of implementing a new data collection tool, Prosper Portland has hired additional staff dedicated to data collection to address these gaps in the reported data. The expectation is that over time, outcomes will more closely resemble annual averages.

BADGE		5 YEAR GOAL	ANNUAL AVG TARGET	FY 2017/18
 STRONG & STABLE	Have established a foundation for the future and receive a benefit from their business	1,000	250	64
 GROWTH	Have realized efficiencies in ordering, operating and/or production	250	50	7
 SCALE	Have a market-proven product/service and investing in the expansion of their business footprint	25	5	1
 LAUNCH	Move past concept and launch a product or technology into a new market	100	20	17

ENTREPRENEUR FEEDBACK

In December 2018, Prosper Portland distributed a satisfaction survey to 566 participating clients via email and postal mail in English, Spanish and Russian. Nearly 150 clients (148) returned the survey, a response rate of 26%.

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.

92%

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

QUALITY OF BUSINESS ADVISING

74%

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

NAVIGATING SERVICES WITHIN THE NETWORK

89%

feel more connected to a diverse business community

65%

have seen their sales increase because of the services they received

CLIENT OUTCOMES



[My advisor] has helped me so much throughout this process. She has supported me and helped guide me in the right direction. She's different from other people that have tried to help in the past because she shows that she really cares by her actions. She is always there when I need her, and she always does her best to make sure she's helping me to the best of her ability.

[My advisor] has been amazing. She held my hand through some huge ups and downs, connected me to the right people and always had faith in me.

I feel I have been successful because of the programs who stand beside me and support me in every aspect of my business, especially the legal piece. [Advisor] is with me every step of the way making sure I stay consistent. I am so thankful for him and his connection for me to the SBLC clinic. I feel truly blessed and my business will be able to greatly serve others because of it.

[Advisor] walked into our business one day and introduced herself to us. Ever since, she has been the greatest supporter our business ever had. She connected us to various other organizations and helped us get better retail space, new business and many other amazing connections.

THE LEGAL SERVICES FROM THE SBLC HAVE BEEN AMAZING!! IT'S SAVED ME SO MUCH MONEY AND I'VE LEARNED A LOT. I FEEL MY BIZ IS BETTER PROTECTED. LOVED THE TWO BIZ CLASSES I TOOK AT TIELX AND NAYA. EVERYTHING IS GREAT. I HAVE LEARNED SO MUCH.

My business probably would have failed without the support of the BOP. I'm good at what I do but running the business part was my challenge. I've received Quickbooks set-up help, marketing help, mentoring. It was easy to contact people through email and responses were within reasonable times. My business is growing (slowly) but I'll lean on the help for as long as I can.



Mathilde



Project Object



Qué Bacano!



Increase Project Cohort 2