

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

FOELLINGER FOUNDATION

BREAKTHROUGH GRANT PROJECT

The *Connected Communities* project, launched in 2019 by The Northeast Indiana Innovation Center (NIIC), will strengthen efforts in assisting under-represented business builders in Allen County, Indiana. The project is designed to use community-based entrepreneurship to catalyze talent in underserved markets and increase entrepreneurial activity. This will result in increased participation in economic prosperity and social well-being. *Connected Communities* serves potential—currently unreached—entrepreneurs.

KEY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. **Strategic Preparation**—includes advisory committee formation, staff development, Trusted Connectors training and custom content design (Trusted Connectors include libraries, local Chambers of Commerce, social service organizations, trade organizations, etc.).
2. **Strategic Implementation**—collaborate with existing Trusted Connectors to provide marketing, outreach and targeted business support for entrepreneurial growth. This includes future funding and volunteer recruitment opportunities.
3. **Strategic Assessment** – a comprehensive outcomes measurement program includes surveys, pre- and post-assessments of learning experiences, feedback sessions, focus groups, and regular client reports.

COST & REQUIREMENTS

There is no cost to Trusted Connectors/partners, client entrepreneurs and program participants. Costs have been generously funded by the Foellinger Foundation Breakthrough grant and The NIIC. Program participants will be selected from Allen County, Indiana residents.

SERVICES

Examples of several experiences provided through *Connected Communities*:

- Connection & Orientation Start-up Training (for Trusted Connectors)
- One-on-One Coaching Sessions (includes cohort and in-person)
- Training Workshops and Resource Connections
- Capital Connectivity Training & Advising (key to microfinancing)
- NIIC Navigator® Online Training and Support



The Connected Communities program is funded in part through a grant from the Foellinger Foundation. | foellinger.org



Additional funding and resources are provided by host organization The NIIC. | theniic.org

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