JFFLabs Acceleration Program

Cohort: Innovative Pathways to Technology Careers

JFFLabs works with entrepreneurs and early-stage companies to incubate and accelerate new mission-aligned solutions. We are excited to announce the theme for our next cohort which will begin in October 2022.

This cohort of five companies will be selected based on the theme Innovative Pathways to Technology Careers. New technologies are constantly on the horizon, including emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, blockchain, augmented and virtual reality, and metaverse. Digitalization will be a source and driver of transformational change across all industries. This cohort will focus on innovations and companies that use emerging technology to help individuals either learn or earn.

Participants of this next cohort are rethinking the ways that people enter technology careers. It could be innovative training programs, supportive programs that help racially and ethnically diverse populations enter technology careers, or even unique ways to connect people with companies looking to hire. This cohort is for entrepreneurs who have a unique perspective on what it takes to make technology careers more diverse and inclusive.

Overview of the JFFLabs Acceleration Program:

This cohort will be part of the JFFLabs Acceleration program. The program is designed to identify entrepreneurs who will generate and validate new models and solutions to address persistent workforce, education, and learning challenges experienced by people from low-income backgrounds and people who are underrepresented in the high-wage careers, including Black and Latinx men and women of all racial backgrounds. It also helps JFFLabs identify companies on the leading edge of solutions.

By incubating entrepreneurs, JFFLabs stays engaged with the most innovative thinkers. It will also allow us to understand where to invest our efforts and investments.

Chosen companies must support economic advancement for all and address one or more of the following areas:

- Improves access to work or learning
• Promotes equity in workforce and education
• Increases career discovery, navigation, and/or readiness
• Provides new pathways for learning and skilling
• Provides opportunities to learn using immersive/augmented technologies

The JFF Acceleration program is designed to achieve the maximum acceleration for entrepreneurs. Each entrepreneur in the Accelerator program will have a customized experience depending upon the focus area, size and growth opportunities for their company. In general, each entrepreneur will move through the JFF Acceleration program in four distinct stages over the course of six to eight months. The goals of this program are to help incubate and accelerate new models, products, and capabilities. The program is designed to be intensive and rigorous. The end result of each cycle is intended to be a successful Demo Day with investors.

During the course of our first cohort, we have learned that having a common theme (but non-competing companies) allows entrepreneurs in the cohort to collaborate on solving issues facing early-stage entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs in the first cohort are sharing contacts, vendors, clients, and investors. Building strong networks is a powerful tool for an early-stage entrepreneur trying to gain traction. This model allows them to not only gain access to JFF's networks but each other's networks as well. This has proven to be a successful model that we will incorporate into future cohorts.

Cohorts:

Cohorts will move through the program together. Cohorts will meet as a Forum group once per month to report progress and to help each other to solve problems. Each monthly meeting will be tightly structured and is mandatory. These meetings will be facilitated by a member of the JFF team. Participants will leave each monthly meeting with “accountability tasks” or items that they will work on until the next Forum meeting.

Criteria for Inclusion:

• Mission-driven and aligned with JFF’s theme of Innovative Pathways to Technology.
• Companies are at early stages of maturity. They have traction and revenue and are ready to take their companies to the next level.
• Participants are willing to commit 10 to 30 hours per month to attend forum discussions, complete pre-work, build mentor relationships, and work with our communication team to develop media content to share your stories, businesses, and experiences.
• Would benefit from being introduced to the JFF ecosystem. Introductions and engagement with JFF network and ecosystem can accelerate companies' ability to scale and test efficacy in the earn to learn to work ecosystem.
• Targeting Solutions that increase access and outcomes of learn and work opportunities with historically overlooked populations.
• Entrepreneurs who are driven and excited about being a part of the JFF universe.
• Potential to affect the career trajectory of thousands of people.

**How to be considered for our next Cohort:**

For more information regarding our EIR program and to apply please visit our website at [https://info.jff.org/acceleration](https://info.jff.org/acceleration).

The deadline to apply for our Innovative Pathways to Technology Cohort is August 15.