

# Social Innovator Accelerator Applicant Guide

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS THROUGH JULY 12, 2017

The Social Innovation Forum believes that social innovation is critical to ensuring that our public and private resources are leveraged in the most effective ways to address social problems. Yet, it is often difficult for emerging innovations to receive the recognition and support they need to develop and spread their impact. ***The Social Innovation Forum provides a unique opportunity for innovative nonprofits to gain visibility, expand their networks, and build capacity.***

For our 2017-2018 Social Innovator Accelerator, we will select one nonprofit Social Innovator for each of our eight “social issue tracks.”

## 2017-2018 SOCIAL ISSUE TRACKS AND SPONSORING PARTNERS

*Barr Foundation, the Boston Foundation, the Devonshire Foundation, and the Margaret Stewart Lindsay Foundation*

### [Addressing Homelessness in Massachusetts](#)

Track Partner: Highland Street Foundation

### [Advancing Education in New Bedford](#)

Track Partner: Schrafft Charitable Trust

### [Anything Goes: Innovative, Effective, and Sustainable Approaches to Our Region’s Toughest Social Issues](#)

Track Partner: Boston Open Impact

### [Breaking the Cycle of Incarceration](#)

Track Partner: Stifler Family Foundation

### [Establishing Financial Education as a Building Block for Success](#)

Track Partner: MassMutual Foundation

### [Improving Access to Healthy Living](#)

Track Partner: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

### [Promoting Successful Advancement and Integration for Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum-Seekers\\*](#)

Track Partner: Immigrant and Refugee Funder Collaborative

### [Supporting Accessibility and Opportunities for Young People with Disabilities](#)

Track Partner: Liberty Mutual Insurance

*\* Please note that this year in addition to selecting one Innovator for the “Promoting Successful Advancement and Integration for Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum-Seekers” track, the Social Innovation Forum will invite 6-8 nonprofit organizations from the applicant pool to participate in the **Capacity Camp**, a condensed version of the Accelerator, which will take place between February and April 2018. Participation in this program will not disqualify any nonprofit from applying to the SIF Accelerator in the future. Please see the “About the Capacity Camp” section for more information.*

## BENEFITS TO SOCIAL INNOVATORS

**Each Social Innovator receives access to cash and benefits valued at more than \$150,000:**

- Five months of consulting services focused on enhancing the organization's ability to articulate the social problem it is addressing, its innovative approach, and its social impact. The consulting engagement culminates in the development of the following materials designed for funder/investor audiences:
  - Written investment prospectus
  - Five-minute pitch (with PowerPoint slides)
- Five months of executive coaching
- \$10,000 cash upon completion of the consulting engagement
- Showcasing via numerous events, including a spring Showcase (**May 14, 2018**) that annually attracts more than 350 business leaders, institutional funders, and individual philanthropists
- Networking and relationship-building support
- Graphic design services
- Presentation coaching
- Additional support from SIF's in-kind partners (e.g., legal, graphic design, PR, technology)
- \$2,500 capacity building grant in 2019

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**The Social Innovation Forum's nonprofit tracks are open to programs and organizations that:**

- Are a registered 501(c)(3) or use a fiscal agent that is a 501(c)(3) unless otherwise noted in the track description
- Address a specific social need as described in at least one of our [social issue tracks](#)
- Are working in the greater Boston area, unless otherwise noted in the track description
- Have been operating for at least one cycle (usually a year) and have a proven concept
- Have a minimum of 1.5 FTEs (full-time equivalents — counting full and part-time staff, not volunteers)
- Have an annual operating budget of \$100,000–\$2 million\*
- Are at an inflection point in their growth and development

*\*Note: Organizations with budgets greater than \$2 million are welcome to submit an application for a specific program/initiative that has a total budget of less than that amount. In these cases, the entire application must refer to the program/initiative, not the parent organization. Please note that the "Anything Goes" track is only open to standalone organizations. Please see the "Anything Goes" track description for more information.*

## HOW TO APPLY

**To submit an application, follow these three steps:**

1. Read through this Applicant Guide to determine whether or not your organization is a good "fit" for the Social Innovator Accelerator and for at least one of our social issue tracks.  
*Note: The "Anything Goes" track is open to organizations that do not fit any of this year's other 7 tracks.*
2. Self-nominate or be nominated via our [online nomination form](#). After nomination, the program or organization leader will receive an email with a link to the application and further instructions within one business day.
3. Complete the online application. **First round applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until Wednesday, July 12, at 5:00 pm.** Early submissions are *strongly* encouraged.

Starting on August 4, we will invite a select number of organizations to submit second round application materials. These second round materials will be due on **Monday, August 28, 2017.**



To learn more about our application process and what it means to be a Social Innovator, please attend our upcoming information session:

### **SOCIAL INNOVATOR INFORMATION SESSIONS**

**Wednesday, June 21, 8:30–10:00 am**

**Thursday, June 22, 8:30–10:00 am**

One Congress Street, Floor 11, Suite 113, Boston, MA

*If you are applying for the “Advancing Education in New Bedford” track, please join the information session in New Bedford on the following date:*

**Tuesday, June 27, 12–1:30 pm**

Coalition for Buzzards Bay, New Bedford

To RSVP and receive directions, please email [team@socialinnovationforum.org](mailto:team@socialinnovationforum.org)

### **ABOUT THE CAPACITY CAMP**

The Social Innovation Forum will invite 6-8 nonprofit organizations from the applicant pool on the “Promoting Successful Advancement and Integration for Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum-Seekers” track to participate in the Capacity Camp, a condensed version of the Accelerator, which will take place between February and April 2018. The program will consist of six half-day sessions designed to build participants’ organizational capacity, providing them with a set of valuable tools that will help them move their organizations to the next stage of development. Session topics will mirror key content from the Social Innovator Accelerator, including communication and messaging, performance measurement, fundraising, and governance. Experienced business and nonprofit leaders from the Social Innovation Forum community will join SIF staff to deliver content and provide pro-bono services to participants, including one-on-one coaching and advising.

Program participants will be supported in developing, practicing, and refining a brief presentation, or a “pitch,” to describe their organization’s programs, accomplishments, and aspirations. They will also develop PowerPoint slides to accompany their pitch and a two-page written prospectus. The Capacity Camp program will conclude with an event in April where participants will present their pitches in front of an audience interested in their work.

The same eligibility criteria will apply to all of the first and second round applicants. If you are ONLY interested in being considered for the Capacity Camp program, please let us know by sending an email to [team@socialinnovationforum.org](mailto:team@socialinnovationforum.org). In this email, also provide a brief explanation of why you would like to only be considered for the Capacity Camp.

## Timeline and Commitments

### SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process begins on **Thursday, July 13**, upon receipt of the first round applications and ends on **Friday, December 1, 2017** when we will call all of the finalists to let them know if they have been chosen to participate in this year's program.

- **July:** The Social Innovation Forum staff and track partners review first round applications to check that applicants meet our basic eligibility requirements and are a good “fit” for at least one of our social issue tracks. Starting on August 4, we will invite a select number of organizations to submit second round materials.
- **August and September:** A second round information session will be held on **Wednesday, August 16** and second round applications are due on **Monday, August 28**. In September, a diverse evaluation committee composed of 10 to 15 issue-area experts, including business professionals, foundation staff, academics, government officials, and others, will read and score the applications for each social issue track. The Social Innovation Forum will moderate an in-person committee meeting and collect written comments from the evaluators for each track.
- **October and November:** For each social issue track, we will invite four to six organizations (finalists) to attend a half-day interview session with a panel of evaluators. These sessions will take place between **October 9 and November 3**.
- **November:** In November, the Social Innovation Forum will conduct due diligence on the finalists, including site visits and follow-up as needed.
- **December:** The 2018 Social Innovators will be notified of their selection on **Friday, December 1**. The new Innovators will then be publicly announced at an evening reception at the beginning of December (date TBD).

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR SOCIAL INNOVATORS

The 2017–2018 Social Innovation Forum calendar is outlined below for planning purposes (Dates and events are subject to change). Those invited to submit a second round application will receive a more detailed calendar in early August.

| DATE                          | EVENT  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Week of June 5, 2017          | RFP released   |
| June 21, 22, and 27, 2017     | First round information sessions for applicants                            |
| Wednesday, July 12, 2017      | First round applications due   |
| Week following August 4, 2017 | Second round invitations issued  |
| Wednesday, August 16, 2017    | Second round information session   |
| Monday, August 28, 2017       | Second round applications due  |
| October 9 – November 3, 2017  | Finalist interviews (one half-day session per social issue track)          |
| Friday, December 1, 2017      | Finalists are informed of their status                                     |
| Early December, 2017          | 2018 Social Innovators welcomed at an evening reception                    |
| Wednesday, December 13, 2017  | 2018 Social Innovators attend orientation session                          |
| December 2017 – April 2018    | Working sessions with SIF consultants and in-kind partners                 |
| Early April, 2018             | Panel Presentations (a one-hour practice run of the Showcase presentation) |
| May 14, 2018                  | The 15 <sup>th</sup> Annual Social Innovator Showcase                      |

### TIME COMMITMENT REQUIRED OF SOCIAL INNOVATORS

In order to take full advantage of the consulting, coaching, and other services that the Social Innovation Forum provides, Social Innovators should expect to commit on average six to eight hours per week for five months (December 2017 to April 2018). Starting in June 2018, Innovators will check in with the Social Innovation Forum staff once per quarter regarding performance measurement and will begin to work with their executive coaches. The Innovators will also have continued access to the Social Innovation Forum’s network and to our in-kind partners. From June 2018 to September 2018, we ask that the Innovators set aside a few hours per month for the following activities: a one-time debrief interview, a one-time group closure meeting, and preparation for the quarterly check-ins and executive coaching.

### OTHER COMMITMENTS REQUIRED OF SOCIAL INNOVATORS

In choosing Social Innovators, we look for leaders who are committed to partnering with us and who will be active participants in all meetings and events. Media release and other commitments of the process are outlined in our [Statement of Agreement](#). In order to submit an application for the Social Innovation Forum, nonprofit leaders *must* accept the terms of this agreement.

## 2017–2018 Social Issue Tracks

### ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS IN MASSACHUSETTS

#### Track Partner: Highland Street Foundation

The physically dangerous, socially alienating, and psychologically debilitating experience of homelessness is one that devastates people from all walks of life. People find themselves homeless due to a wide range of challenges, including unemployment, physical and mental health conditions, domestic violence, and family separation. Many times homelessness occurs as a result of systemic failures in health care, education, criminal justice, the economy, and the housing market.<sup>1</sup> While recent progress has been made to reduce the number of homeless people in Massachusetts, homelessness rose by 29.6% in the Commonwealth between 2007 and 2016, while national rates decreased during that same time period.<sup>2</sup> Data from a January 2016 report showed nearly 20,000 homeless people in Massachusetts, including more than 13,000 people in families with children, 374 unaccompanied youth, and 949 veterans.<sup>3</sup>



GRANTING SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS

Research has shown that, in addition to providing stability, access to decent and affordable housing can reduce health and other risks associated with homelessness. Preventive measures, including job placement and medical services can also mitigate the negative effects of homelessness.<sup>4</sup> Mental health services provide a critical resource as well, particularly for homeless children, who are significantly more likely to have mental health problems compared to their low-income, housed peers.<sup>5</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations and programs that address homelessness by supporting vulnerable populations and helping them meet their health and housing needs. Programming may include preventative care, advocacy, resource provision, and efforts to facilitate the transition of homeless youth, adults, and families into permanent homes.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2015/10/08/homelessness-in-boston-alejandro-ramirez>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2016-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2016-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/snapshot\\_of\\_homelessness](http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/snapshot_of_homelessness)

<sup>5</sup> <http://center4si.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Research-Digest-Homelessness-15-16.pdf>

## ADVANCING EDUCATION IN NEW BEDFORD

### Track Partner: Schrafft Charitable Trust

During the 19th century, New Bedford was a booming economic hub and home to one of the world's most vibrant whaling ports. In the 20th century, however, the city began to decline due to a drop in the whaling industry, relocation of manufacturers, and a failure of industry owners to invest in new technology. New Bedford is still recovering from the effects of this decline and continues to face problems associated with poverty and unemployment. Compared to Massachusetts as a whole, which had a per capita income of \$36,895, New Bedford's per capita income was only \$21,665 in 2015.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the US Census Bureau reported that 23.4% of the population of New Bedford was living below the poverty line.<sup>7</sup> For youth, the poverty rate was even higher at 34.1%.<sup>8</sup>

Poverty is closely associated with lower levels of educational attainment. According to a report by the Brookings Institute, the median lifetime earnings for those with bachelor's degrees are twice that of those with high school diplomas,<sup>9</sup> and those without high school diplomas earn significantly less. In New Bedford, students are dropping out of high school at a rate nearly three times the Massachusetts average (Massachusetts' dropout rate is 10%; New Bedford's is 28%).<sup>10</sup> Additionally, only 16% of those who graduate high school move on to receive their bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>11</sup>

Strategic and consistent investment in education and related services can help close the achievement gap in New Bedford and reduce exposure to the many negative aspects of poverty. With higher educational attainment, residents of New Bedford can secure stable jobs, avoid poverty, and contribute to the economic vitality of the city. For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks programs and organizations that provide opportunities for people in New Bedford to obtain skills and resources that allow them to further their education and widen employment options leading to improved economic outcomes. We are particularly interested in organizations providing education, training, mentoring, and general support to K-12 students (in school or out of school) to help advance educational achievement. Nonprofit organizations providing adult education services are also welcome to apply.

## Schrafft Charitable Trust

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<sup>6</sup> <http://southcoastindicators.org/economy/poverty/>

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.brookings.edu/research/eight-economic-facts-on-higher-education/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.towncharts.com/Massachusetts/Education/New-Bedford-city-MA-Education-data.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.towncharts.com/Massachusetts/Education/New-Bedford-city-MA-Education-data.html>



## ANYTHING GOES: INNOVATIVE, EFFECTIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACHES TO OUR REGION'S TOUGHEST SOCIAL ISSUES

### Track Partner: Boston Open Impact

Over its 14-year history, the Social Innovation Forum has focused on variety of individual tracks targeting specific social issues.

## BOSTON OPEN IMPACT

While this approach has allowed the Social Innovation Forum to build a diverse portfolio of 82 Social Innovators, many innovative, effective organizations could not apply to the Social Innovation Forum because they did not fit with our social issue tracks in a given year. The “Anything Goes” track provides an opportunity for any organization in greater Boston’s robust nonprofit landscape that meets SIF’s eligibility requirements to apply to become a Social Innovator.

The local nonprofit sector is constantly evolving as new organizations crop up and existing organizations expand and improve their work. While there are countless models for social impact, today’s most effective organizations have several key characteristics in common. High-performing organizations are laser-focused on their missions, committed to financial sustainability, and diligent about collecting and using performance data to continuously improve their work. These best practices hold true across a wide range of organizations – and across different neighborhoods, social issues, and stages of organizational development.

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks nonprofit organizations that possess the characteristics mentioned above and are improving conditions and expanding opportunities for residents of greater Boston. The Social Innovation Forum will heavily favor applicants that have unique potential for high impact and sustainability and that can articulate concrete and well-reasoned plans to expand, replicate, or otherwise increase their social impact.

*This track will only accept applications from standalone organizations with budgets under \$2 million. Organizations with a fiscal sponsor will be considered. However, local branches of national programs are not eligible for this track.*

## BREAKING THE CYCLE OF INCARCERATION

### Track Partner: Stifler Family Foundation

The United States is home to only 5% of the world's population, but has more than 20% of the world's prison population, making the United States the world's largest jailer.<sup>12</sup> From 1978 to 2014, our prison population rose over 400%, due in part to the "War on Drugs" laws which led to a substantial increase in the number of people, particularly people of color, incarcerated.<sup>13</sup> Currently the total prison population in Massachusetts, both men and women, is approximately 9,000.<sup>14</sup> Although the incarceration rate is decreasing from previous years, nearly 40% of prisoners who are released return to prison within three years, indicating that the system continues to fall short.<sup>15</sup>



In order to reduce recidivism, the incarcerated population needs to be more adequately supported and have ample access to programs that help with re-entry after prison. Critical services such as training classes, counseling, and substance abuse treatment are not always available or accessible to those who need them. For the group of offenders released in Massachusetts between July 2014 and March 2015, about 1 in 5 needing substance abuse treatment and almost 2 in 5 needing violence reduction treatment did not receive these services because the programs were either at capacity or not available at all.<sup>16</sup> For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations that deliver innovative and effective approaches to reducing recidivism. Applicants' methods could focus on, but are not limited to, prevention services, employment, life skills training, addiction services, mental health and counseling services, reconnection to family, and/or advocacy and policy services.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.aclu.org/prison-crisis>

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.sentencingproject.org/the-facts/#detail?state1Option=U.S.%20Total&state2Option=Massachusetts>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.masslive.com/politics/index.ssf/2015/08/massachusetts\\_seeks\\_national\\_h.html](http://www.masslive.com/politics/index.ssf/2015/08/massachusetts_seeks_national_h.html)

<sup>16</sup> Massachusetts Department of Correction. July-March Gap Analysis Report. (2015). Pgs. 3, 4

## ESTABLISHING FINANCIAL EDUCATION AS A BUILDING BLOCK FOR SUCCESS

### Track Partner: MassMutual Foundation

Financial capability is defined by the National Financial Educators Council as “the combination of attitude, knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy needed to make and exercise money management decisions that best fit the circumstances of one’s life.”<sup>17</sup> It entails a basic understanding of financial choices and existing financial services along with access to tools for future planning and informed spending. Financial capability is an important component of economic stability and opportunity. The lack of financial capability often leads to poor financial decisions – taking on debt, paying high or unnecessary fees, and failing to save for the future. Many Americans experience this reality. In 2016, approximately 30% of Americans, or 77 million people, reported not paying their bills on time and 56% reported not keeping a budget. Additionally, in 2015, 18% of individuals reported that over the past year their household spent more than their income.<sup>18</sup>



Although research demonstrates the importance of introducing financial education to youth, this is not always prioritized in schools or after-school programs. Massachusetts, for example, lags behind other states in personal finance education and does not implement a standard curriculum or testing in grades K-12.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, many youth do not learn financial basics at home. In fact, only 43% of parents feel prepared to discuss money with their children.<sup>20</sup> Equipping young people with the tools to make better financial choices will enable them to change the way they see their financial and economic circumstances. This is particularly important for youth who live in underserved areas with scarce economic resources, as they are more likely to experience the negative effects of economic instability.

For this track the Social Innovation Forum seeks programs or organizations that are running innovative, holistic, and community-inclusive solutions geared towards helping people to effectively make informed financial decisions and become stewards of their financial future. This can include, but is not limited to, organizations advancing programs, advocacy, coalitions, and/or products or services that seek to build financial capability.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.financialeducatorsCouncil.org/financial-capability-definition/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.usfinancialcapability.org/results.php?region=US>

<sup>19</sup> <http://councilforeconed.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/sos-16-final.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://everfi.com/finlitmonthsurvey/>

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTHY LIVING

### Track Partner: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

America is facing a health crisis. Poor nutrition, lack of exercise, and decreasing engagement with the natural environment are contributing to record rates of obesity and chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. In Massachusetts, thousands of residents face barriers which prevent access to healthy lifestyles and environments. Fresh produce and nutritious food are often unaffordable or inaccessible, and as a result individuals turn to cheap, less healthy options that are readily available at local convenience stores and fast food restaurants. Busy schedules and lack of access to fitness facilities and outdoor green spaces also limit residents' physical activity. Despite being considered one of the healthiest states, more than 20% of adults and 23% of adolescents in Massachusetts reported that they do not participate in any regular physical activity.<sup>21</sup> These factors contribute to the high annual medical costs associated with obesity among adults, which are estimated at \$3.5 billion in Massachusetts<sup>22</sup> and \$190.2 billion nationally.<sup>23</sup>



Research shows that maintaining a balanced, healthy lifestyle positively impacts health outcomes. Regular physical activity, along with a nutritious diet, is proven to lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.<sup>24</sup> In addition to providing the mental benefits of being outside, easy access to the natural environment has been shown to produce a 48% increase in the frequency of physical activity among adults.<sup>25</sup> Despite these benefits, Americans on average spend only 7% of their time outdoors.<sup>26</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations working to help Massachusetts residents maintain healthy lifestyles by increasing healthy eating, exercise, and access to nature. Organizations considered for this track could include those that promote healthy living through fitness, food access and education, and/or outdoor environments. Organizations that address the inter-connectedness of healthy eating, active lifestyles, and outdoor experiences are particularly encouraged to apply.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/stateprograms/fundedstates/pdf/massachusetts-state-profile.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/community-health/mass-in-motion/obesity-stats/>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.healthycommunitieshealthyfuture.org/learn-the-facts/economic-costs-of-obesity/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm#ReduceCardiovascularDisease>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/pa-ajpm-evrev.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.bluecrossma.com/visitor/annual-report/annual-report-2016/?section=in-the-community>

## PROMOTING SUCCESSFUL ADVANCEMENT AND INTEGRATION FOR IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

**Track Partner: Immigrant and Refugee Funder Collaborative (Ansara Family Foundation, Barr Foundation, The Clowes Fund, The Hyams Foundation, Landry Family Foundation, Macomber Family Fund, Suhrbier Family Fund, John H. and Naomi Tomfohrde Foundation)**

Immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers represent a significant percentage of the United States population and contribute greatly to the country's economic and cultural landscape. In Massachusetts, the foreign-born population represents roughly 1 in 6 residents of the state with steady growth each year.<sup>27</sup> This translates to over one million immigrants, which is more than the total populations of San Francisco, Denver, Washington, D.C., and other major cities.<sup>28</sup> Since 2011, more than 10,000 refugees have come to Massachusetts to escape danger in their homelands, carrying with them both assets and challenges related to resettlement.<sup>29</sup> The immigrant population plays a critical role in the Boston economy as consumers, business owners, employees, and tax payers. For example, 22 percent of employees in professional, scientific, and technical industries, 56 percent of employees in hotels and motels, 53 percent of employees in home health, and 29 percent of employees in hospitals are immigrants.<sup>30</sup>



Immigrant and Refugee  
Funder Collaborative

Despite being such a substantial part of our society's fabric, immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers often do not have access to adequate support for successful integration and advancement. Defined by Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees as "a dynamic, two-way process in which newcomers and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities,"<sup>31</sup> immigrant integration includes issues associated with health care, education, employment, language, and citizenship. Without guidance, navigating these issues can be challenging. For example, while citizenship promotes stable communities and social benefits, the process of obtaining citizenship is confusing and expensive, keeping numerous immigrants from embarking on the naturalization process.

The Migration Policy Institute calls immigrant integration "one of the most overlooked issues in American governance."<sup>32</sup> In order to have a fair, just, and fully functioning society, resources need to be allocated to the immigrant and refugee populations so they can successfully build healthy and productive lives for themselves and their families and participate thoroughly in their communities.

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations or programs that promote successful integration and advancement for immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. We are interested in a range of applicants, including but not limited to those providing workforce development, economic opportunity, education and tutoring, advocacy, legal services, civic engagement, and/or promoting physical and mental health. We also are interested in nonprofits that show a history of collaboration with other organizations to provide the most effective service. Organizations with immigrant leadership are strongly encouraged to apply.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/new-americans-massachusetts>

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/cdc/refugee/arrivals-2011-2015.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> <https://jvs-boston.org/images/pdf/Osterman%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, 2008

<sup>32</sup> Michael Fix, "Immigrant Integration and Comprehensive Immigration Reform: An Overview" *Securing the Future: US Immigrant Integration Policy, A Reader*, ed. Michael Fix (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2007) iii.

## SUPPORTING ACCESSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

### Track Partner: Liberty Mutual Insurance

According to a Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission report, 11.6% of the Massachusetts population were living with a disability in 2014,<sup>33</sup> including cognitive, ambulatory, hearing, vision, and self-care disabilities. People with disabilities bring many assets to our community, yet they face challenges in many areas, such as education, economic self-sufficiency, and health, that can prevent them from reaching their full potential. The employment level for people living with disabilities is 34.4%, as compared to 79% for those without disabilities.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, 23.7% of people with disabilities have less than a high school degree, while only 7.1% of those who do not have a disability have less than a high school degree.<sup>35</sup>



The transition to adulthood is a particularly critical time for young people living with disabilities. Studies have shown that student-focused life skills training improves transition-related outcomes for disabled people, including employment, post-secondary education, and enjoyment of life.<sup>36</sup> Parental and family training also increases successful transitions to adulthood by helping families set expectations and provide support accordingly. For example, young people with a disability who are expected by their parent to gain employment are 32 times more likely to become employed than those who are not.<sup>37</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations or programs that work to eliminate isolation, increase integration, promote practical skills, and expand employment and life opportunities for youth and young adults (ages 14-25) living with disabilities. This can include organizations focused explicitly on serving individuals with disabilities as well as organizations working to adapt programming to ensure accessibility to individuals of all abilities. To be eligible for this track, organizations should be based in Boston and/or serve a population that is at least 75% Boston residents.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/mrc/mrc-disability-fact-sheet-2016.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/mrc/mrc-disability-fact-sheet-2016.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> [http://disabilityplanningdata.com/site/state\\_population\\_table.php?state=massachusetts&Submit=Submit](http://disabilityplanningdata.com/site/state_population_table.php?state=massachusetts&Submit=Submit)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17875457>

<sup>37</sup> [http://cfi.ucp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/UCP\\_2015\\_CaseforInclusion\\_FINAL.pdf](http://cfi.ucp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/UCP_2015_CaseforInclusion_FINAL.pdf) page25

## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHAT IS THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM?

The Social Innovation Forum (SIF) brings together nonprofits, philanthropy, government, and business to support the spread of emerging social innovations in greater Boston. SIF creates positive social change in greater Boston by:

- Engaging and informing funders and investors so they can direct resources most effectively
- Educating and supporting leaders of nonprofit organizations and social impact businesses so they can deliver the most effective solutions to social issues
- Making connections and building relationships across diverse communities so people can help each other generate significant social change



The Social Innovator Accelerator provides a unique opportunity for innovative nonprofit organizations to gain visibility, expand their networks, and build capacity. Each year, we partner with leading local funders to identify and support a small cohort of Social Innovators. Our search and selection process lasts six months and involves two rounds of written applications, in-person interviews, and other forms of due diligence. This process brings together a range of stakeholders, including SIF staff, track partners, and an evaluation committee made up of more than 90 business, government, and foundation leaders.

Our unique approach, working with both funders and practitioners, creates a “Social Impact Community” that is informed, connected, and engaged in the pursuit of positive social change and measurable results. Thus, our direct work is leveraged to create broader impact throughout the community.

### WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM'S RESULTS?

To date, the Social Innovation Forum has directed more than \$28 million in cash and in-kind services to help more than 100 portfolio organizations -- both nonprofits and social impact businesses -- accelerate their growth and amplify their impact. Our rigorous selection process brings together more than 2,600 philanthropists, foundation staff, and business professionals who support these innovative, effective approaches to address important social issues. On average, our nonprofit Social Innovators more than double their revenue four years after engaging with SIF and experience average annual revenue growth that is 10x the Massachusetts nonprofit average.

### HOW DO YOU DEFINE SOCIAL INNOVATION?

Although much debate surrounds the precise definition of social innovation, at its core, the term encapsulates a drive toward progress in the way society addresses social issues. As we define it at the Social Innovation Forum, social innovation is the process of finding, testing, and honing potentially transformative approaches to solving persistent social problems.

The Social Innovation Forum believes that social innovation often starts with an individual idea, but it takes a vast community of stakeholders to spread the ideas that are demonstrating results. Nonprofits, foundations, businesses, and government agencies are most successful in creating lasting social impact when they work together to advance social innovations through the stages of early development, proliferation, proven outcomes, and widespread impact.

## MUST AN ORGANIZATION BE RECOMMENDED BY A MEMBER OF THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE IN ORDER TO APPLY?

No, not at all! Organizations are welcome to nominate themselves via our [online nomination form](#). However, please read through the track descriptions and eligibility requirements closely before doing so. Also, note that the online nomination form is not a first round application. We make no distinction between applicants that self-nominate and applicants that are nominated by others.

### NOMINATION COMMITTEE AS OF JUNE 1, 2017

|   |  |
|---|--|
| JEANETTE ANDRE, THE LENNY ZAKIM FUND                  | JOHN SUHRBIER, SUHRBIER FAMILY FUND                        |
| JENNIFER ARONSON, THE BOSTON FOUNDATION               | TAMAR KOTELCHUK, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK                      |
| MARI BARERRA, BARRERA CONSULTING                      | LAURA KURZOCK, EASTERN BANK                                |
| ELLEN BASS, BLACK MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE                | BARRIE LANDRY, LANDRY FAMILY FOUNDATION                    |
| SUSAN BENFORD, THE PHILANTHROPY CONNECTION            | MELISSA MACDONNELL, LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE               |
| GRACE BIRD, MACOMBER FAMILY FUND                      | KRISTEN MCCORMACK, BOSTON UNIVERSITY                       |
| TREF BORDEN, FISH FAMILY FOUNDATION                   | CAROLINE MURPHY, FOUNDATION OF METROWEST                   |
| MEGAN BRIGGS REILLY, THE CLOWES FUND, INC             | MAURA MURPHY, JOHN H. AND H. NAOMI TOMFOHRDE FOUNDATION    |
| NAOKA CAREY, CITIZENS FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE            | DAN MINNICH, WAYPOINT ADVENTURE                            |
| STEPHEN CHAN, THE BOSTON FOUNDATION                   | REBECCA MILLER, THE PHILANTHROPY CONNECTION                |
| SHELLY CHIGIER, BESS FOUNDATION                       | SUSAN MONAHAN, JOHN H. AND H. NAOMI TOMFOHRDE FOUNDATION   |
| YOLANDA COENTRO, INSTITUTE FOR NONPROFIT PRACTICE     | CAROLE PARRISH, JE & ZB BUTLER FOUNDATION                  |
| DAVID COHEN, DOC WAYNE YOUTH SERVICES, INC.           | TREVOR POLLACK, BARR FOUNDATION                            |
| YASMIN CRUZ, JOHN HANCOCK                             | DENISE PORCHÉ, ISLAND FOUNDATION                           |
| LUCY DARRAGH, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS | MO REED-MCNALLY, MASSMUTUAL FOUNDATION                     |
| COLLEEN DAWICKI, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK                 | CAROLYN ROSENTHAL, GOODWIN                                 |
| TIZIANA DEARING, BOSTON COLLEGE                       | CAELI RUBENS, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS      |
| VILAS DHAR, NEXT MILE PROJECT                         | KLARE SHAW, LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE                       |
| ELIZABETH DOBRSKA, TUGG                               | MOLLY STIFLER, STIFLER FAMILY FOUNDATION                   |
| MARLA FELCHER, THE PHILANTHROPY CONNECTION            | CHRIS SWISTRO, WOMENADE                                    |
| JUDE GOLDMAN, THE LENNY ZAKIM FUND                    | AMY SHOREY, GMA FOUNDATIONS                                |
| MICHAEL GOODMAN, UMASS DARTMOUTH                      | YVONNE TANG, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS       |
| PHIL HALL, GMA FOUNDATIONS                            | NAHIR TORRES, THE HYAMS FOUNDATION                         |
| AMY HAMPE, SMITH FAMILY FOUNDATION                    | JOHN VASCONCELLOS, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SOUTHEASTERN MA |
| DEBBIE JOHNSTON, BUILDING BLOCKS CHARITABLE FUND      |  |
| JUSTIN KANG, CITY AWAKE                               |  |
| RHIANA KOHL, MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION   |  |

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO APPLY AS A PROGRAM OR INITIATIVE WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION?

Yes. Any program or initiative with an operating budget between \$100,000 and \$2 million may apply with the exception of “Anything Goes” track (Please see “Anything Goes” track descriptions for details). In these cases, the program director as well as a representative from the parent organization must be committed to participating in Social Innovation Forum meetings and events. In addition, the entire application must refer to the program, *not* the parent organization (budget numbers, performance metrics, etc.).

## IF APPLYING TO MORE THAN ONE SOCIAL ISSUE TRACK, MUST AN ORGANIZATION SUBMIT MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION?

**In general, yes.** Each track has its own set of evaluators who are experts on that particular social issue. While a fair amount of information may be copied and pasted from one application to the next, we ask that multiple-track applicants tailor their answers to some of the more thoughtful, paragraph-response questions to demonstrate their “fit” with each of those tracks. Our evaluators like to see that applicants have thought about how their organizations address specific social issues and what makes them innovators in those spaces.

**For the “Anything Goes” track, no.** Organizations that apply for other social issue tracks will not be considered for the “Anything Goes” track.



### **WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR THOSE WHO APPLIED DURING A PREVIOUS CYCLE OF THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM AND WERE NOT SELECTED?**

The application itself changes from year to year. In order for us to have consistent information across applicants, we insist that all applicants for this year's cycle complete a 2017–2018 application. However, it is often possible to copy and paste responses from a previous application into corresponding sections of the current year's application. To assist you, we are happy to provide copies of your past application(s) upon request.

### **WHAT IS THE SOCIAL INNOVATOR SHOWCASE?**

**The Social Innovator Showcase** is focused on highlighting the Social Innovators to potential investors, as well as sparking conversations on the best approaches to developing and spreading innovation. More than 350 business, government, and philanthropic leaders from greater Boston attend the event, in addition to the nonprofit leaders presenting their work. The 15th annual Social Innovator Showcase will be held on May 14, 2018, at the MIT Media Lab.



## WHO SUPPORTS THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM?

### **Social Innovation Forum Lead Sponsors**

- Barr Foundation
- The Devonshire Foundation
- Margaret Stewart Lindsay Foundation
- The Boston Foundation

### **2018 Social Issue Track Partners**

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- Boston Open Impact
  - Andy Offit
  - Bob and Amy Rands
  - Elizabeth and Dan Jick
  - Ellen and Steve Segal
  - Jeff and Kim Kushner
- Highland Street Foundation
- Immigrant and Refugee Funder Collaborative
  - Ansara Family Foundation
  - Barr Foundation
  - The Clowes Fund
  - The Hyams Foundation
  - Landry Family Foundation
  - Macomber Family Fund
  - Suhrbier Family Fund
  - John H. and H. Naomi Tomfohrde Foundation
- Liberty Mutual Insurance
- MassMutual Foundation
- Schrafft Charitable Trust
- Stifler Family Foundation

### **2017 Social Issue Track Partners**

- Bess Foundation
- Boston Open Impact
  - Andy Offit
  - Bob and Amy Rands
  - Elizabeth and Dan Jick
  - Ellen and Steve Segal
  - Jeff and Kim Kushner
- Building Blocks Charitable Fund
- Gisela B. Hogan Foundation
- Highland Street Foundation
- Jon Shevell Children's Fund
- Schrafft Charitable Trust

### **Lead Benefactors**

- Anonymous
- The Charlotte Foundation
- Tony and Susanah Howland
- Andy and Suzanne Offit
- Rands Foundation
- Root Cause
- Mark and Marie Schwartz
- Stifler Family Foundation

### **Lead Angel Investors**

- Anonymous
- Michael Carmen and Pam Lederer
- Frieze Family Foundation
- Josephine and Louise Crane Foundation
- Doug and Audrey Miller
- Reynders McVeigh Capital Management, LLC

### **Angel Investors**

- Anonymous (2)
- Forest Foundation
- Jordan and Julie Hitch
- Molly and Peter Karlson
- Jordan and Jean Krasnow
- Anmol Mehra
- Microsoft Corporation
- Schrafft Charitable Trust
- Steven and Ellen Segal
- Thomas Anthony Pappas Charitable Foundation
- Howard Wolk

### **Contributing Investors**

- Jeff Alexander and Jocelyn Bailin
- Ryan Dings and Kate Rigby
- Matthew and Rachel Doeringer
- Jonathan Hecht and Lora Sabin
- David Howse
- Alison Poorvu Jaffee and Dan Jaffee
- Amy Musinsky
- Stephanie Dodson Cornell and James Cornell Family Foundation
- Victoria Wang

### **In-Kind Partners**

- Analysis Group
- The Ariel Group
- DPA Communications
- Echo & Co
- Edgework Consulting
- Goodwin
- Microsoft New England Research & Development Center
- Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group
- Opus Design
- PROMUS+ Consulting
- William James College (MSPP)

## WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about the application process, please do not hesitate to contact Tanya Inwald, Nonprofit Accelerator Director at Social Innovation Forum, at [team@socialinnovationforum.org](mailto:team@socialinnovationforum.org) or at 617.492.2305.

