

# The Loop Lab



## THE LOOP LAB

**FOUNDED:** 2017

**CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET:** \$507,000

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### Investment Opportunity

The Loop Lab seeks an investment of \$1.8 million over the next two years to triple the number of apprenticeships for the BIPOC community within the tech and creative industries, and to triple the number of students served. Funds will be used to invest in staff and infrastructure, offer more on-line learning as well as on-the-job training, paid employment, and apprenticeship opportunities for students.

**The Loop Lab (TLL)** is a nonprofit social enterprise committed to workforce development through training young women and people of color in Greater Boston to join the media arts and AV industries. This segment of the Massachusetts job market is projected to see 14% growth in the next decade.

Founded in 2017, TLL is committed to addressing the 31% of young adults in Greater Boston who are living in poverty. Black, brown, and immigrant families are struggling to attain decent work, stable housing, and a reliable paycheck. While communities in Greater Boston report nearly \$8 billion/year in wages paid to professionals, the largest share of the BIPOC labor workforce is not a part of that number, being employed almost exclusively in jobs like security and maintenance. In addition, only those who already have financial stability can pursue the types of unpaid internships that prepare young people for success after high school. That's why The Loop Lab was created.

TLL employs its students while generating over one-third of total revenue through the in-house Media Production Studio, which specializes in digital storytelling through audio and video. Each year TLL pays out \$100k to program alumnae in wages while they are building their resumes, earning industry-approved credentials and learning long-lasting skills.

### Two-Year Goals

- Increase FTE's from 4 to 8, including program and production coordinators and development staff
- Triple the number of AV, creative tech, and media arts partners from 12 to 36
- Triple the number of individual donors
- Increase students enrolled in the apprenticeship programs from 10 to 30 annually
- Strategically expand TLL's footprint outside of Greater Boston

### Ways to Invest

#### FINANCIAL

- \$50,000 funds one student at TLL Media Arts Apprenticeship for one full year
- \$20,000 funds a higher education scholarship for one student
- \$15,000 funds virtual high school media class for 15 students
- \$5,000 funds a 3-minute PR video
- \$3,000 funds new technology for one student for one year

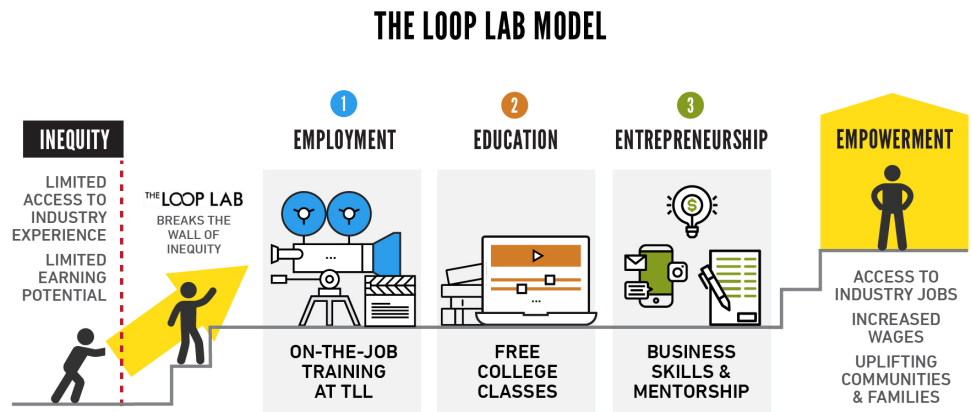
#### IN-KIND

- Space to operate exploratory high school STEAM programming
- Vehicle for production studio
- Website, social media, and marketing assistance
- Access to professional level video workstations
- Marketing and communication services

## Leadership & Governance

Co-Founder and Executive Director Christopher Hope, Certified Technology Specialist, received his BA from Tufts University and MDiv from Harvard Divinity School. With expertise in both workforce development and the AV industry, he is dedicated to creating opportunities and intersections between communities of color and the tech/digital economies. The Loop Lab's Boards (Advisory, Directors) are made up of 12 diverse members of AV/media industry professionals and higher education professionals. Cooperation between the Boards and the Executive Director, in an atmosphere of trust, respect, and responsibility, is the basis for managing The Loop Lab.

## THE LOOP LAB'S MODEL: PAVING THE PATH TO ECONOMIC EQUITY



## EDUCATION + EMPLOYMENT + ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In order to be effective, a program has to be trusted and results-driven, and TLL is both. With a state of the art studio in Kendall Square that will open its doors in June of 2021, students will be able to take advantage of TLL's scalable and replicable three stage model:

**Education.** With a 22-week educational program as the cornerstone, TLL students (18-26 yrs. old) meet four days a week to learn core audio and video skills. These hands-on classes include traditional classroom time, site visits, and individual and group projects that touch on all aspects of AV core competencies. TLL's program is accredited with both Lesley University's College of Arts & Design and the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology.

**Employment.** TLL's income-generating Media Production Studio employs its students, so they can have on-the-job experience and earn income while being part of TLL programs. Upon program completion, students are placed in apprenticeship programs with one of TLL's partners, including organizations such as WBUR, Audible, and the City of Cambridge. Once the students complete their apprenticeships, many students are offered full-time positions with these partners.

**Entrepreneurship.** TLL invests in the long-term future of its students by integrating entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum. This is done through ongoing classes for alums, high touch relationship building with staff and mentors, wraparound services, and pastoral care. Topics include hard and soft business skills such as client relationship management, interview and resume coaching, networking, contract negotiation, product pitching, and business plan development.

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**The Loop Lab is a Swiss Army knife of creative problem solving!**

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ARTPLACE AMERICA



TLL apprentice and recent grad John Ravenell on a video shoot filming Boston College Wind Ensemble, 2021



**Amazon Audible partners with The Loop Lab’s students on their final video projects, with employees working alongside students to storyboard a narrative. These films have been praised by the City of Cambridge. This is the best possible outcome for this work and is proof of the importance of lifting these voices.**



**JAN SMITH,**

**Audible, Senior Voice User Interface Designer**

### Key Investors

- AVIXA
- BARR FOUNDATION
- THE BOSTON FOUNDATION
- CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
- CLERMONT FOUNDATION
- LESLEY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN
- MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

### Partners

- AMAZON AUDIBLE
- BIOMED REALTY
- CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
- GOOGLE

## EQUITY + EQUALITY => EMPOWERMENT

Since The Loop Lab was launched in 2017, 100% of apprentice students have increased their yearly salaries by 92% from what they earned prior to enrolling in TLL’s programs. Each student in TLL dedicates 350 education hours per semester to developing their creative entrepreneurship skills.

The Loop Lab staff and alumnae work together through TLL’s income-generating Media Production Studio producing video projects for clients that include American Repertory Theatre, Silkroad Ensemble, The Boston Foundation, and Celebrity Series of Boston. Assisting in the development and execution of the creative projects, The Loop Lab’s staff, students, and alumnae work directly with clients, drive creative vision and execution, and are responsible for delivering high-value content in real-world situations.

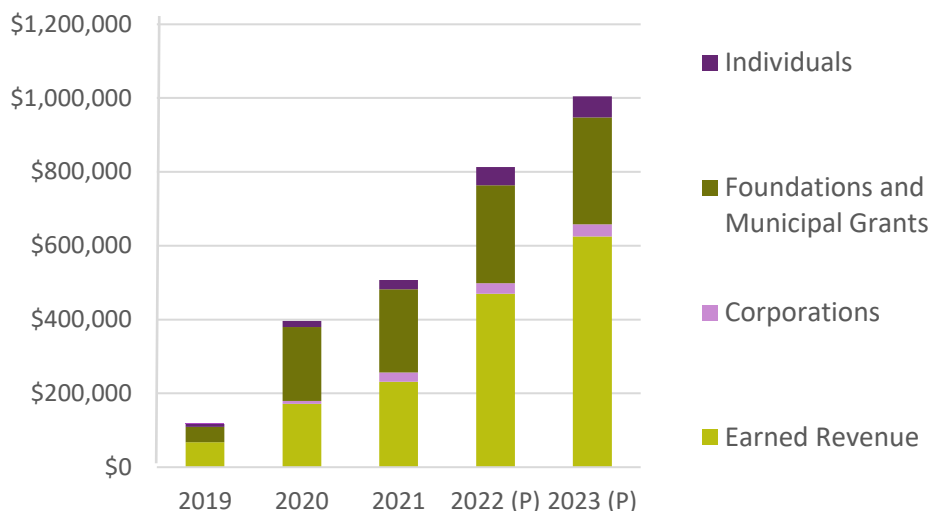
All TLL students’ responsibilities require real-time, collaborative problem-solving techniques that are vital skill-building opportunities as they prepare students’ for their careers as creative professionals, AV technicians, and business owners. The Loop Lab’s leadership works with participants to ensure their success through regular mentorship, training, and professional partnerships.

75% of The Loop Lab’s alums have continued their engagement as mentors, teachers, collaborators, and champions of TLL work, as they and their families have directly benefited from TLL’s positive impact on their lives and they are inspired to help the next generation.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Loop Lab has experienced tremendous growth as it quickly pivoted during the COVID-19 pandemic by offering safe and creative solutions for both its students and a rapidly growing base of clients. With the primary source of funding coming from foundations, TLL’s earned income revenue has tripled from 2019 to 2020. TLL’s Executive Director and Board of Directors are well-poised to deepen and develop this stream of income and the opportunities it represents.

### Revenue by Source



## Success Story:

### Katie Medrano–Escobar Class of 2020, Media Arts

Raised in both Somerville and Cambridge, Katie is a first generation El Salvadoran American who made a life-changing decision when she joined the 2020 Loop Lab Media Arts Program cohort.

The Media Arts Program gave her the room to delve into her creative ability while providing her with vital peer support, crucial hands-on training to develop a new skill set, and professional and experiential opportunities, all within an uplifting and supportive environment. Katie’s work with TLL’s client, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, resulted in her helping to create three video productions.

Buoyed by the support of Matt Malikowski, TLL’s Program Manager, Katie’s confidence and motivation grew significantly. Katie now sees “endless possibilities” for her future. Through the Loop Lab, she works full-time as a video professional and is a resource for her community and people of color, providing affordable video and recording services. Please see a moving Audible production by Katie on TLL’s website, “A Dialog with Audible: More Than My Skin.” [www.thelooplab.org/katie](http://www.thelooplab.org/katie)



Photo credit: Katie Medrano-Escobar, 2021

## PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that The Loop Lab tracks to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, capture lessons learned and adjust strategy as necessary.

	FY 2021	FY 2022 (P)	FY 2023 (P)
<b>PROGRAM PERFORMANCE</b>			
Students completing TLL programs	50	65	75
TLL students enrolled in higher education	20%	25%	35%
Students who self-report greater ability to navigate the creative arts and AV job markets	100%	100%	100%
Increase in yearly salary of TLL students	92%	95%	98%
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING</b>			
Number of staff members	4 FTE	6 FTE	8 FTE
Increase in earned revenue from total revenue	46%	58%	62%
Number of organizational partnerships	30	45	65
Total Revenue	\$507,000	\$813,600	\$1,004,845

## SOCIAL IMPACT

The Loop Lab works with 18 to 26 year-old members of the BIPOC community using workforce development strategies to help them get the technical skills they need to secure jobs in the AV and tech fields. Through their pre- and post-program surveys and follow-up, TLL has gathered the following social impact indicators:

INDICATOR	2021
% of students who report increase in agency, determination, and economic security	100%
# of minority-owned businesses created by alumnae	2
% of students who report greater self-efficacy in life skills	75%
\$ invested in students as paid work through apprenticeship and studio program	\$75,000