

AR Chair McDaniel,

I'm writing to request that EWDC invest in both expanding GSE to a third summer session and in cultivating its alumni network to maximize ongoing entrepreneurship education and new business formation in the Commonwealth.

GSE highlights include over 600 alums who've started 20+ businesses and filed for multiple patents. Dozens of other alums have enrolled in entrepreneurship programs at KY colleges and universities. GSE alums represent all corners of KY and a 1:1 female to male ratio. Moreover, minority participants make up about 30% of each summer session.

With annual applications for coveted GSE slots significantly exceeding enrollment capacity, GSE is poised to **expand to a third summer session**, enabling a total of some 200 annual participants, and in doing so help many more young entrepreneurs realize their dream to build the next generation of KY businesses.

Further, we understand the importance of **cultivating GSE alumni to maximize new business development and entrepreneurship education in Kentucky**. Building upon the great success of the GSE intensive, we will launch the GSE Alumni Initiative.

The GSE Alumni Initiative will focus on expanding GSE's continuum of entrepreneurship support and education services by cultivating alumni to 1) maximize new business formation in KY and 2) continue their entrepreneurship education in KY colleges. Given the rapidly growing number of alums, GSE will hire a dedicated FT employee to lead its alumni initiative.

Examples of direct alumni support services include:

- Coaching alumni through business plan and pitch preparation, filing for LLCs, connecting to patent attorneys, and meeting capital providers.
- Working closely with Kentucky's top colleges and universities to ensure GSE alums pursue entrepreneurship majors/minors/certificates.
- Mentoring alums to participate in KY Pitch, Kentucky's largest collegiate pitch competition, enabling access to thousands of dollars of in kind and cash investment.

Taken together, GSE's alumni initiative ensures the Commonwealth's most promising young entrepreneurs continue to thrive after graduating from GSE.

We are seeking an incremental \$400,000 annual investment to expand GSE's core summer program to a third session and cultivate its rapidly growing alumni network. These resources will allow GSE to expand its team and direct programming to serve more young KY entrepreneurs - from high school through college and beyond. An incremental investment in GSE is a direct investment in Kentucky's growth and future prosperity, with a proven ROI. With our shared interest in community investment, education, and social and economic empowerment, we know that together we can shape the trajectory of Kentucky's entrepreneurial future.

Best,



Tasha Sams, Executive Director

CC: Koleman Karleski, Board Chairman