



ventures

Building businesses, changing lives

# Policy Agenda

2018 - 2019

## Equity in Entrepreneurship

Ventures entrepreneurs face significant barriers on their path to business ownership. For the last 25 years, Ventures has demonstrated that entrepreneurs with limited resources—including women, people of color, immigrants, and other underserved communities—can thrive with a robust ecosystem of support. Strategic investments and personalized support can empower microbusiness owners from all backgrounds to achieve their dreams of financial stability.



Through our Equity in Entrepreneurship campaign, we hope to achieve our vision of a nation in which all individuals who seek to succeed as small business owners have access to the tools and resources that they need to do so.

### Technical Assistance

- > Increased funding for programs that provide training, coaching and incubation opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs
- > Increased funding for programs that provide access to capital for micro-entrepreneurs, including support for technical assistance providers

### Procurement Reform

- > Passage of Initiative 1000 and other efforts to amend or repeal Washington State's Initiative 200
- > Additional support at all levels of government for effective small business procurement programs

### Economic Security

- > Funding and implementation of the Working Families Tax Credit
- > Healthcare reform that reduces premium costs for low-income Washingtonians without placing undue burdens on small business owners
- > Increased funding for state and federal matched savings programs and Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)

## Food Justice

Approximately 30% of Ventures entrepreneurs own or operate a food-based business, and Ventures provides training, coaching, incubation, and access to capital for hundreds of food entrepreneurs annually. Starting and growing a food business with limited resources, a lack of a robust business network, and limited English skills places an undue burden on the entrepreneurs that we serve.

Many Ventures entrepreneurs persist and thrive despite these barriers—but policymakers can and should facilitate access to market opportunities and pursue policies that reduce barriers for underserved entrepreneurs.



These policy priorities will drive broad-based economic growth and foster diversity, innovation, and equity in the edible economy.

### Access to Markets

- > Streamlined public health permitting processes through public-private partnerships
- > Legislation to ensure reciprocity for fire safety permits and plan reviews for mobile food vendors in different cities and counties

### Home Cooking

- > Implementation of an expanded policy framework for home food preparation and sales, specifically targeted at supporting entrepreneurs with limited resources



Ventures is a Seattle-based nonprofit that empowers aspiring entrepreneurs with limited resources and unlimited potential. We provide access to business training, capital, coaching, and hands-on learning opportunities for entrepreneurs. We serve those in our community for whom traditional business development services are out of reach, with a focus on women, people of color, immigrants, and individuals with low income. Our ultimate goal is to support individuals to increase their income potential, achieve long-term financial stability, provide for their families, and enrich their communities through small business ownership.

## Our Core Values

- > **Community:** We work with a spirit of teamwork and collaboration, while always supporting entrepreneurs with compassion.
- > **Client Success:** We let clients' needs govern our decisions and interactions, with the ultimate goal of clients' business development.
- > **Empowerment:** We trust each other's expertise and leadership abilities, while providing entrepreneurs with the tools they need to achieve their own success.
- > **Integrity:** We operate sustainably and responsibly, while promoting ethically strong small business development.
- > **Diversity:** We respect each other's different backgrounds, strengths, and work styles, while adapting programs to serve a diversity of business types and cultural backgrounds.
- > **Innovation:** We appreciate and welcome new ideas, while encouraging entrepreneurs to think outside the box.