

StartingBlock Madison: Enthusiastically supports Governor's budget

Posted on Tuesday, Feb 16, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Evers budget plan for \$100-million fund to encourage entrepreneurship enthusiastically supported by StartingBlock Madison

Madison, WI - February 15, 2021

On February 14, 2021 Governor Tony Evers announced that his 2021-2023 executive state budget will include the following highlights to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation for all Wisconsinites:

- \$100M new venture capital fund of funds with emphasis on historically underrepresented entrepreneurs
- \$8M to support entrepreneur support organizations like StartingBlock, the Doyenne Group, Capital Entrepreneurs, or the UW Law & Entrepreneurship Clinic
- \$10M to promote underrepresented entrepreneurs through direct investments
- \$200M for broadband expansion & access throughout the State a proposal to create a - \$100 million venture capital fund of funds program under the direction of the WEDC to jumpstart innovation and startup growth in Wisconsin

“At StartingBlock, we are passionate about providing opportunities for all entrepreneurs. The Governor’s budget identifies priorities that we share as an organization and we enthusiastically support this direction on behalf of the entrepreneurs we serve in Madison and throughout the state of Wisconsin,” said Nora Roughen-Schmidt, Executive Director of StartingBlock Madison.

Scott Resnick, COO of Hardin Design & Development and StartingBlock Madison

Board Member referred to the Governor's callout to BIPOC entrepreneurs and women as extraordinary. Adding, "With these investments, the State is sowing the seeds for the next generation of Wisconsin businesses to start, catalyze, and grow. We applaud these initiatives to invest in our own local entrepreneurs in every corner of the State."

"It's going to take contributions and innovation from, and support for, all kinds of entrepreneurs to jumpstart our economy. Let's be better coming out of COVID than we were going in. For too long we've had a narrow view of what an entrepreneur looks like or what kind of businesses fit that definition. *Great* ideas can come from anyone and anywhere. We are committed to broadening where we look to find them," said Mark Richardson, Co-Chair of the StartingBlock Madison Board of Directors.

Madison entrepreneur, and CEO of RehabPath, Ben Camp supports the decision by Governor Evers to offer assistance to entrepreneurial support organizations like StartingBlock. "Much of our success in the past 18 months can be traced back directly to our decision to move to StartingBlock. Through the connections made at StartingBlock we've received the majority of our investment to date, added a key consultant that has helped us more than double our monthly revenue in the past 6 months, and even made a recent full time hire of someone who had interned at another StartingBlock company. Although these connections were serendipitous, they weren't accidental. Startingblock has successfully built the infrastructure around us that made forming these types of relationships possible. "

"The Governor's budget represents a substantial investment in Wisconsin's current and future entrepreneurs as well as the support networks and resources that they rely on to be successful," said Forrest Woolworth, StartingBlock Madison Board Co-Chair and COO of PerBlue. "Entrepreneurship is a really powerful tool that creates opportunities which lead to economic empowerment for individuals and entire communities."

"There are many reasons Doyenne considered StartingBlock home and also a key strategic partner of the organization, one of the main reasons is their mission of being an entrepreneurial hub for all entrepreneurs," states Doyenne Group, Inc. Executive Director & Co-founder Heather Wentler. "Governor Evers' commitment to putting dollars into the hands of diverse entrepreneurs is addressing the pipeline issue we continually talk about as to why we don't see more growth and success coming from ventures here in our state. Wisconsin has all of the key ingredients to

be a leading state in the country for entrepreneurs to build their ventures and have access to the talent and resources required for success. By designating budget dollars into this space, Wisconsin is increasing economic prosperity for current and future business owners and our communities.”

StartingBlock Madison looks forward to working with policymakers as advocates for entrepreneurship in Wisconsin.

About StartingBlock Madison:

StartingBlock Madison is Madison’s startup hub created by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs. Our mission is to create the meaningful intersections that cultivate entrepreneurs, grow successful companies, drive innovation and build a startup community that gives back. Through collaborations with existing business leaders and partner organizations, such as Doyenne Group, gener8tor, Capital Entrepreneurs, and others, StartingBlock is helping galvanize Madison and Wisconsin into a global leader in entrepreneurship. www.startingblockmadison.org

Media Contact:

Nora Roughen-Schmidt, Executive Director
StartingBlock Madison 821 E. Washington Ave Suite 200 Madison, WI
53703 | nora@startingblockmadison.org