



UNITE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

Social innovation refers to new products, services, and ways of working that meet social needs and strengthen our community. The entrepreneurs behind these ideas recognize opportunity; they figure out what isn't working and design new ways to solve problems. Launched in 2013, United Way's GroundFloor is a mentor-driven social innovation fund and impact accelerator program that invests money and resources in promising social ventures focused on solutions that address challenges facing education, financial stability, and health.

THE CHALLENGE

GroundFloor brings critical resources – funding, mentorship, and community connections – to entrepreneurs who tackle the challenges facing North Texas by accelerating the growth and stability of their innovative ventures. With that in mind, GroundFloor is unique in three key ways:



INNOVATION

GroundFloor enables new or existing organizations to apply for funding for groundbreaking ventures that place social impact at the heart of their business model.



TIMEFRAME

The open, competitive application process is completed quickly, saving precious time and resources that are scarce for an early stage venture.



FELLOWS

Recipients of funding may be both non-profit and for-profit organizations, intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial ventures.

OUR WORK

Drawing on the strength of United Way of Metropolitan Dallas and supporters from across the community, GroundFloor provides a three-pronged investment approach:



Financial capital for seed and early-stage ventures



Human capital from our world-class mentors, representing leaders in business, academia, public policy, and the social sector



Social capital through connections to more than 1,000 corporate leaders and more than 100 local service providers

For more on how United Way is on the frontline of making a difference, visit unitedwaydallas.org/social-innovation

RESULTS MATTER

Since 2013, eight GroundFloor fellows received \$610K in seed funding, which was leveraged to secure an additional \$2 million in investor funding! Each GroundFloor fellow also received more than 50 hours of mentoring. Here are a few GroundFloor successes:



Café Momentum is a restaurant that serves as a post-release paid internship for juvenile offenders. It reduces recidivism and creates long-term sustainable employment.



SafeNight is a mobile app used to connect organizations that provide a safe haven for victims of family violence and human trafficking with donors to pay for hotel rooms.



Dallas Teacher Residency equips aspiring inner-city teachers with 1,000 hours of classroom training with a mentor and a master's degree before placing them in high-needs schools.



LiftFund gives entrepreneurs who are unable to secure funding through traditional avenues, access to capital using unconventional metrics.

CAFÉ MOMENTUM'S STORY

GroundFloor has invested financial, human and social capital in the development of Café Momentum. And they've leveraged those resources to develop relationships with additional corporate partners and community leaders who have made further investments in Café Momentum.

Café Momentum's program teaches critical skills that allow youth to apply what they have been taught in pre-release programs in a safe, real-world environment of nurturing accountability. During the internship program, at-risk young men rotate through every aspect of a restaurant from waiting tables to washing dishes, while working side-by-side with established chefs.

Post-release programs for adjudicated teens are rare, at best. Because of its focused approach on a specific demographic, Café Momentum is able to specialize its programs to meet the needs of a population with many barriers to re-entry and community reintegration.

The closest substitute is generally limited to probation officers and government funded programs; i.e. welfare. For 50% of this population, long-term state rehabilitation measures will land them back behind bars. Without Café Momentum, and social entrepreneurs like its founder Chad Houser who is driven to solve problems that will make people's lives better, many may resort to returning to a life of crime.



GET INVOLVED

Behind all our work, there are people like you who get involved in big and small – but significant – ways to ensure a better future for their family and their community. Your involvement is our most powerful resource. With you on our team, we can reach our goal of a better future for North Texas.



APPLY



INVEST



BECOME A MENTOR