**INNER CITY CAPITAL CONNECTIONS**

**NOMINATION PROCESS PACKET**

*Inner City Capital Connections (ICCC)* is a tuition-free executive leadership training program that helps business owners in economically-distressed areas build capacity for sustainable growth in revenue, profitability, and employment.

We are excited to partner with you to identify and nominate business owners in your network for the ICCC program. This packet serves as a toolkit to guide you through the nomination and application process.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the ICCC team at iccc@icic.org or at (617) 238-3019.

**2019 ICCC Program Timeline**

Please see below for the schedule of the 2019 Opening Seminars. We urge you to nominate as soon as possible, no later than one month before the Opening Seminar. You are welcome to nominate for multiple cities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Opening Seminar Date</th>
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<th>Opening Seminar Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>Thursday, May 16</td>
<td>Springfield &amp; Western MA</td>
<td>Thursday, August 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 22</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 20</td>
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<td>Hartford Area, CT</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 29</td>
<td>Memphis, TN</td>
<td>Thursday, August 22</td>
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<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>Friday, June 21*</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 27*</td>
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<td>Sacramento &amp; Stockton, CA</td>
<td>Wednesday, July 10</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Wednesday, September 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Tuesday, July 16*</td>
<td>St. Louis, MO</td>
<td>Tuesday, September 24*</td>
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<td>Baltimore, MD</td>
<td>Thursday, July 25</td>
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*Dates subject to change*

**Program Qualifications**

A business must meet all of the following criteria in order to be eligible for participation in ICCC: *

- Be an independent, for-profit or non-profit corporation, partnership or proprietorship.
- Have its headquarters or more than 51% of its physical operations located in an economically-distressed area OR have more than 40% of employees residing in an economically-distressed area.
- Be past the survival stage. We typically work with businesses with annual revenues of at least $500,000.
- Have been in operation for two years or more, and past the proof-of-concept stage. ICCC does not accept start-up companies.

*On a case-by-case basis, ICCC will consider businesses that do not meet all of the specified criteria on the recommendation of a nominator.*
**NOMINATION PROCESS**

1. **Identify**
   - Nominator identifies business owners in their network, and nominates them to participate.

2. **Communicate**
   - Nominator informs business owner they have been nominated and encourages them to apply.

3. **Follow-Up**
   - ICCC follows up with nominated business owner and encourages them to apply.

4. **Application**
   - Interested business owner fills out brief online ICCC application form and schedules an interview with ICCC.

5. **Interview**
   - ICCC conducts short phone interview with business owner and makes a decision.

   **ICCC Opening Seminar**
   - Accepted business owner attends Opening Seminar, and is then considered a program participant.

   **ICCC Program Completion**
   - Business owner completes webinar series, one-on-one business coaching, and attends the National Conference.

**Important Links:**

**ICCC Website:** iccapitalconnections.org

**Nomination Form:** nominate.iccapitalconnections.org

**Application Form:** apply.iccapitalconnections.org

**2018 Impact Report:** impact.iccapitalconnections.org
WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

We have created 3 sample profiles to illustrate the various ways you can approach the recruitment process. We recognize that every organization interacts with small businesses differently, and we hope these profiles provide more context into how we can partner to best serve business owners in your network.

1. CHAMPION

Champions actively search for businesses in their networks that would benefit from the ICCC program, nominate them to participate, and encourage them to apply. They regularly follow up with their nominees throughout the application and program cycle, attend ICCC-related events, and actively promote the program.

Champions we work with include:
- Urban League Chapters
- Chambers of Commerce
- Supplier Diversity and Procurement Offices of Anchor Institutions (colleges, hospitals, etc)
- Women Business Enterprise Councils
- Minority Supplier Development Councils
- Small Business Development Centers

Examples of how champions have connected business owners to ICCC:
- Host informational events for nominees in person or online
- Personally follow up with their nominees (phone, email)
- Share information about the ICCC program in email blasts, newsletters, social media channels, and on their website
- Inform and confirm with nominees that they are attending the Opening Seminar and National Conference

2. ADVOCATE

Advocates are organizations that are unable to submit formal nominations, but want to promote the ICCC program. They share information about ICCC in their email blasts, and/or on their websites, and host informational webinars for their members. They communicate to a select group of business owners and encourage them to apply, but cannot provide these owners’ contact information to ICCC.

Advocates we work with include:
- Certain City and State Agencies
- Organizations that cannot share members’ contact information

Examples of how advocates have connected business owners to ICCC:
- Share information about the ICCC program in email blasts, newsletters, and websites to encourage applications
- Host informational webinars or events for their members
- Communicate directly with a select group of business owners and refer them to ICCC
- Connect ICCC to other organizations that can provide nominations
- Attend the Opening Seminar and National Conference

3. NETWORKER

Networkers are individuals or organizations that typically do not work with business owners and/or cannot nominate, but support ICCC by connecting us to potential nominating partners. They host informational events for potential nominating partners, and provide resources in the form of speakers/panelists, webinars, and other opportunities for small businesses.

Networkers we work with include:
- City and State Officials
- Community Development Organizations
- Banks and Financial Institutions

Examples of how networkers have connected business owners to ICCC:
- Present on panels, speak at ICCC-related events
- Host webinars for the current participants
- Share resources and opportunities relevant to participants
- Refer ICCC to organizations that can nominate businesses
- Attend the Opening Seminar and National Conference
BEST PRACTICES

Based on feedback from our nominators, we have collected some of the most effective and useful practices to increase the quality of nominations and the application conversion rate. We urge you to use these in your recruitment process.

### Identifying Businesses

1. ICCC uses multiple definitions in determining whether a business meets the geographical requirement. If you are unsure whether a business meets this criterion:
   - ICCC can pre-qualify the businesses’ addresses, and you can nominate only those who qualify
   - Skip the pre-qualifications, nominate them, and we will work to qualify them

2. We understand that your organization may not collect businesses’ revenue numbers. We recommend other metrics such as:
   - Number of years of operation (At least 2)
   - Number of full-time and part-time employees (At least 5 total)

If you don’t have this data, let us know and we will find other ways to refine your list.

### Follow-Up

1. Once you nominate a business owner, inform them that you have recommended them, encourage them to apply, and share the next steps which include a short interview.

2. We will periodically update you on the progress of your nominees, and we recommend you follow up with them to:
   - Identify any challenges they’re facing
   - Encourage them throughout the program
   - Remind them to complete our surveys

3. If a business owner has not applied, encourage them to do so, and ask if they have any questions about ICCC.

### Quality Over Quantity

1. When pulling nominations, prioritize businesses that you either personally know or believe are likely to apply. This allows us to better segment our outreach and ensure we are reaching as many interested businesses as possible.

2. If someone else in your organization will be pulling nominations, connect us with them so that we can assist them in the nomination process.

### Attend Opening Seminar

1. We encourage you to attend as much of the Opening Seminar as possible to see the program in action and meet the participants.

2. Inform your accepted nominees that you will be attending the Opening Seminar, and confirm that the accepted business owners will be attending as well.

3. As the program continues, we recommend you send your nominees a Mid-Program Check-In (we can provide the language), to remind them to participate in the webinars and coaching and attend the National Conference.
SAMPLE LANGUAGE

Based on feedback from our nominators, we have created some effective language to use when communicating with business owners. We hope this will streamline the communication process. Feel free to change the language according to your personal style. We are happy to work with you to provide any additional collaterals, email templates, and other marketing materials.

When Informing a Business Owner They’ve Been Nominated:
Dear [Business Owner],

I recently nominated you for the Inner City Capital Connections (ICCC) program, a tuition-free executive education program that provides small- and medium-sized businesses in economically-distressed areas with capacity-building education, one-on-one coaching, and connections to capital and capital providers. I believe your business has a strong growth potential, and can greatly benefit from the instruction and coaching offered by ICCC. I have attached a brief two-pager that describes the program components in more detail. Since 2005, ICCC has helped over 2,200 businesses average 160% revenue growth, create 19,907 jobs, and raise $1.92 billion in capital, and you can read more about their impact in their 2018 Impact Report.

I am thrilled to be a key nominating partner for ICCC, and I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and apply now. ICCC will follow up with you, but I urge you to apply beforehand.

If you have any questions about the program, please reach out directly to the ICCC team at iccc@icic.org or (617) 238-3019.

Best Regards,
[Nominator Name]

When Sending Email Blasts to Promote ICCC to Your Network:
Inner City Capital Connections (ICCC) is a national program designed by the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) to provides small- and medium-sized businesses in economically-distressed areas with capacity-building education, one-on-one coaching, and connections to capital and capital providers. Since 2005, ICCC has helped over 2,200 businesses average 160% revenue growth, create 19,907 jobs, and raise $1.92 billion in capital. This program is tailored to second-stage entrepreneurs with a strong growth mindset looking for additional resources to grow their businesses to the next level and get access to capital and contracting opportunities.

For more information about ICCC, refer to their two-pager and/or their 2018 Impact Report. If you are interested in participating, I encourage you to apply now. If you have any questions, please reach out directly to the ICCC team at iccc@icic.org or call (617) 238-3019.
NOMINATOR FAQS

How broadly should we publicize the program? Do you prefer targeted outreach or mass communication (e.g. social media)?
We encourage both. Depending on what your database looks like, we recommend using various forms of communication to ensure the message reaches the largest possible pool of business owners. We also suggest you invite organizations in your network to partner with ICCC to widen the pool of business owners who may be interested in our program.

Can we nominate someone without receiving an affirmative expression of interest?
Yes. We strongly recommend you inform the business owner they have been nominated, so they are aware of the program when we follow up. If a business owner expresses interest to you, encourage them to apply, and we will follow up. If they respond that they are not interested, let us know, and we will cease communication.

Can I nominate myself?
Yes. You can skip that step and apply directly at apply.iccapitalconnections.org.

What are the geographic requirements? What if I don’t know if a business falls within the accepted geography?
We use multiple definitions when qualifying businesses. We work with businesses in economically-distressed areas, inner cities, low-to-moderate income areas, and/or businesses that employ a significant portion of their workforce from these areas. If you are unsure as to whether a business is geographically qualified, nominate them and we will determine if they qualify. We can also pre-qualify your nominees’ addresses in advance so you can nominate only those who qualify.

What if I don’t know if a business owner is making at least $500,000 in annual revenue?
We ask this question in the application, so you can still nominate a business owner even if you don’t know their revenue. In the past, we have accepted business owners with less than $500,000 in annual revenue because they had a strong growth mindset, were on track to scale up, or were highly recommended by the nominator. Please refer to page 4 for additional metrics to use when nominating business owners.

How can I plan an informational webinar? What is required of me?
ICCC has a platform to host webinars, and we will manage all the logistics. We will help you create an appropriate presentation and guest list, and you will only be responsible for sending out the invitation. The informational webinars are catered towards business owners who are curious about the program, but may not be ready to apply, or nominating partners who need more information before partnering with ICCC.

Can I nominate nonprofits? How does the program apply to them?
Yes! We invite nonprofits and social enterprises to apply. Traditionally, nonprofits with a fee-based model or for-profit activities have gained the most from the program. Nonetheless, any interested nonprofit is encouraged to apply.