New River Valley Nonprofit Accelerator
Expand your capacity or your nonprofit program idea.

With inspiration from the business start-up community, The Community Foundation of the New River Valley has teamed up with The Spark Mill to offer six to eight organizations with a nonprofit accelerator experience in 2019.

What is a nonprofit accelerator and why participate?

Let's face it, nonprofits are different. There is always a greater good at play that guides expansion and capacity. It is easy to get so focused on the day-to-day act of serving that we often lose sight of our organization's greater mission and vision. Accelerators are similar to incubators, but they focus on growing established organizations rather than launching new ones. They are meant for non-profit organizations interested in expanding capacity, scaling up, increasing their sustainability, testing a nonprofit program idea, re-examining a long-standing program, and/or transforming a program model. This accelerator will provide the time, expertise and space necessary to reflect, change and act.

The Participant's Journey

This accelerator experience includes a four-month program designed to advance the growth and impact of participating organizations through consulting, mentoring, and peer learning.

Here is the process:

1. This accelerator will start with a 2-day training to support capacity building in four areas:
    - Clarity of your organization or program model
    - Clarity of your 'story'
    - Board engagement and strengthening
    - Planning and strategy

The workshop will be facilitated by The Spark Mill and include regional entrepreneurs who will provide additional support and guidance. Participants will be guided through creative exercises to refine strategy through business model and board road mapping, storytelling and more. You will walk away with a 30, 60, and 90-day action plan to support your identified goals.

2. Your team will then be matched with an experienced local coach/mentor who can help address any challenges or obstacles as you work to implement your plan.
3. Your team will reconvene for a two-hour participant roundtable midway through the process to share insights, trouble-shoot challenges, and learn from one another's experiences.
4. The accelerator will conclude with a 'demo' day where you will be able to practice telling your organization's story and share any lessons learned, accomplishments and next steps to a broader group of potential community partners and funders. And of course, we will celebrate all your hard work!

The Requirements

Participant organizations selected to become a part of our accelerator will:

- Have established 501(c)(3) status
- Not be in crisis
- Make the time needed to take full advantage of this opportunity
- Be flexible and open to change
- Be ready and willing to have their ideas challenged
- Be able to create a team of 4-6 people including the executive director, key staff, and board leadership
- Agree to participate in all aspects of the accelerator (training, coaching, roundtable and demo day).
- Be willing to commit $250 towards their participation.

Key Dates

Capacity Building Intensive: January, 23-24th 2019

Demo Day: Wednesday, May 8th 2019

Who is The Spark Mill?

The Spark Mill is a Richmond-based strategic planning and nonprofit consulting firm. They are experts at helping companies and organizations of all sizes make leaps, manage transitions, and plot transformative futures. For more information: thesparkmill.com

Application Questions

1. **Organizational Overview:** Please describe the mission and goals of your organization and the nature of services you currently provide.

2. **Organization Effectiveness:** How do you measure success for your organization?

3. **Growth:** What does growth look like for your organization in the next 3-5 years?

4. **Funding:** Please describe your general strategy for sustaining and/or growing your organization in the next 3-5 years.

5. **Challenges:** Please describe your three greatest 'pains' right now.

6. **Change:** If you had a fairy godmother who was willing to grant your organization three wishes, what changes would you choose to make to your organization's operations?

7. **Expectations**: What are you hoping to get out of this experience?

8. **Please include names, titles, and email addresses for your proposed accelerator 'team'.**

9. **Do you commit to providing $250 to support your team's participation?** Yes, No

10. **Does your team commit to participating in all organized sessions?** Yes, No

To complete the application:
https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=cfnrv&