



SO YOU WANT TO BE
AN ENTREPRENEUR?

IMPACT REPORT 2021

PHILLY
STARTUP
LEADERS

PREPARED BY

Al Bell, Impact Analyst

Beth Lawrence, Director of Programs & Events

Isabelle Kent, Executive Director



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About Philly Startup Leaders

WHAT WE DO

Philly Startup Leaders began 15 years ago to support early-stage entrepreneurs by creating community, centralizing resources and information, and address areas of opportunity through innovation.

Our mission is **to help current and future Founders succeed in Philadelphia and beyond**. We envision Philadelphia to be a place where everyone can achieve their entrepreneurial potential as part of a collaborative and innovative startup community.

OUR GOALS:

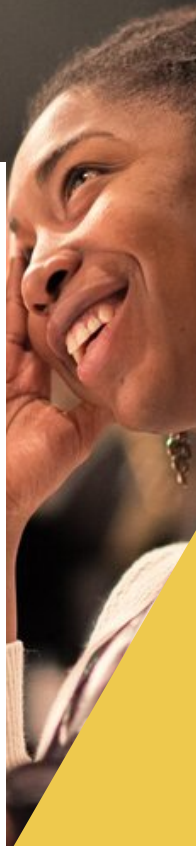
- Increase the number of entrepreneurs in Philadelphia
- Grow the number of startups positively impacted by the community
- Help create a positive perception of Philadelphia's startup ecosystem

Philly Startup Leaders is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

OUR VALUES:

- **Collaboration:** We care about progress, not credit. PSL is committed to working collaboratively with other organizations in our community, and we will always prioritize results over recognition.
- **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:** We believe that every Philadelphian should have the opportunity to participate in our city's growing startup ecosystem, and will proactively invest to create such opportunities. Our events, programming, and content will be designed and executed inclusively, and those involved will be representative of the city in which we live.
- **Transparency:** Our community has a right to know who leads PSL, how we are governed, and how to provide feedback that can shape our decisions. We will be transparent, accessible, and receptive to feedback.
- **Focus:** While there are countless ways to give back and create value in our city, we will focus our resources on one: The PSL Mission. Our skills make us uniquely positioned to create value in this area, and that focus will increase our chances of success.

Learn more at phillystartupleaders.org



About Philly Startup Leaders

WHO WE ARE



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

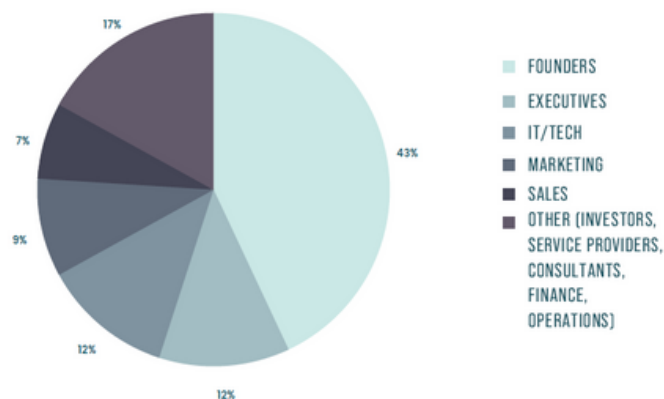
- Jennifer Maher, Board Chair
- Rudy J. Ellis, Board President
- AJ Bruno
- Aurora Archer
- Kiera Smalls
- Mark Switaj
- Tiffanie Stanard
- Anna Greenwald
- Keenan Corrigan
- Melissa Lee
- Mikal Harden

OUR INTERNAL TEAM

- Isabelle Kent, Executive Director
- Beth Lawrence, Director of Programs & Events
- Michelle Berkoben, Financial Advisor

OUR COMMUNITY

Our community is comprised of over 12,000+ members across our channels, including 120+ Founded in Philly (FIP) Accelerator Alumni. Our members are entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, solopreneurs, executives, mentors, professionals, startup team members, investors, community partners, service providers, and generous supporters.



About Philly Startup Leaders

WHAT WE OFFER

OUR PROGRAMS

PSL supports early-stage entrepreneurs through networking, mentorship, accessible education, industry insights, grant funding, and more! Our focus is not only to meet diverse founders where they are and to create access and visibility into scalable, proprietary, and unique entrepreneurship, but also to connect them to the world. We offer an array of community engagement platforms, conferences, events, and programs to aid in that mission.

OUR COMMUNITY CHANNELS

- **PSL Connect:** our community platform housing our startup, mentor, coworking space, and investor directories; events calendar; partner programs and accelerators; job board; industry chat groups; and milestone updates so founders can find who and what they need to grow.
- **CXO & Community List Serves:** these Google Groups get founders and community members peer-sourced answers fast
- **PSL Slack:** real-time discussions for the community and with service providers
- **Newsletter:** Monthly highlights of community happenings and wins

OUR EVENTS & PROGRAMS

- **Welcome Wagon:** monthly casual networking event for newcomers to Philly's entrepreneurial ecosystem
- **Founded In Philly:** Industry and stage-specific accelerators for new founders
- **Idea-stage Workshops:** Weekend workshops to train entrepreneurial folks to ideate, validate, and iterate their way to a viable business
- **Office Hours:** get small-group consulting for growth challenges
- **Entrepreneur Expo:** Greater Philadelphia's largest startup showcase
- **Founder Factory:** peer & expert-led panels and workshops for scalability





UNDERSERVED FOUNDER FUND

In June 2020, Philly was among the many communities in the nation having critical discussions about race, equity, and the future of America. Our former Executive Director, Kiera Smalls, sent a Tweet heard 'round the city calling on investors to put their money up to support the Black innovators in our own backyard. That tweet raised \$500k to go toward non-equity grants for early-stage founders graduating from FIP programs to get BIPOC founders a powerful injection of capital to meet important product, growth, and organizational milestones against a formal seed round. In this report, we'll explore the 2nd year of allocations for idea-and MVP-stage founders. In 2021, Black and Latinx founders still received less than 3% of a record \$128.3 billion in VC funding nationwide.

last year's

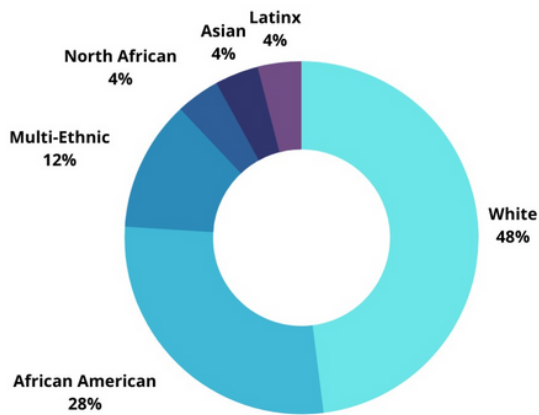
ACCELERATOR DEMOGRAPHICS

The Founded In Philly (FIP) Accelerators are 12-week education and development programs that equips early-stage startup founders with the knowledge and tools needed to start and grow their businesses, through experienced speakers, personalized mentors, office hours, pitch prep support, and functional extracurriculars in areas like legal and finance.

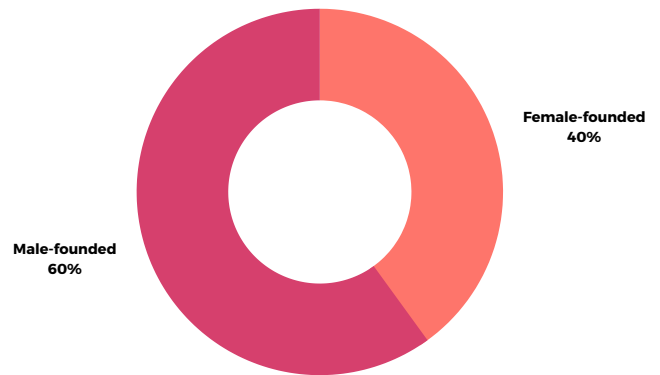
40%
Female-founded

52%
BIPOC-founded

Racial & Ethnic Demographics



Gender Demographics



We served 30 founders through two programs - Idea-stage FIP I and MVP-stage FIP II - with 25 graduates. The data in this report is collected from pre- and post-program services. All demographic data is self-reported and does not represent the demographic data for any founders who chose not to disclose.

In 2021, our founders identified as 60% male and 40% female. Founders identified at 48% white, 28% Black, 4% Latina, 4% Asian, 4% North African or Middle Eastern, and 12% identified as more than one race or ethnicity. Our surveys are only completed by one founder and do not account for demographics of cofounders.

Roughly 50% of startups had two founders, while less than 10% had 3 or more founders. With one exception, all founding teams were homogeneous by gender.

Defining

UNDER-REPRESENTED FOUNDERS

We define an Underrepresented founder as one that falls into a demographic that presently and historically has been prevented from participating equitably economically and in positions of power. This includes founders identifying by race, ethnicity, gender, orientation, disability, neurodiversity, or economically underserved. Student, immigrant, and veteran status are also collected when applicable.

One of our findings was that some members did not feel safe to disclose identifying information given the innovation industry's historic marginalization of certain groups, particularly by gender, orientation, disability, neurodiversity, immigration status, or economic access.

Until systems and biases change, it is impossible to have complete demographic data. For that reason, we anticipate that our grant allocations will move away from requiring self-disclosures as a prerequisite for funding.

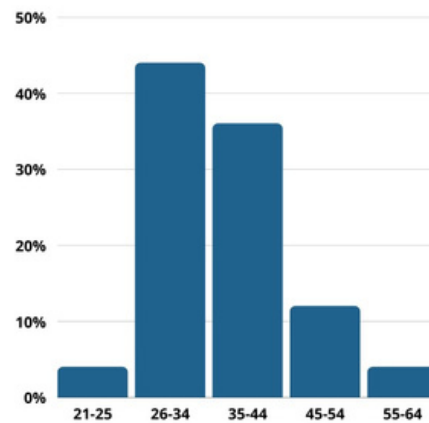
The majority of companies completing the program had been around between 1-3 years. The average number of full-time employees our startups had at graduation were 1-2, including the founder themselves.

Of 25 founders, 22 are still in operation as of March 2022. Of the (3) no longer in operation, (1) is starting a new company. Pivots aren't uncommon - startups like Lula Delivery and Tribaja both came through FIP with different ideas or brands than we know today!

44%
Age 22-24

40%
Sole Founder

Age Demographics



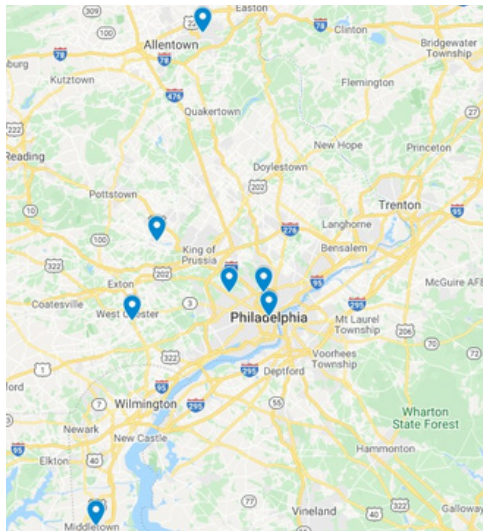
(2) founders identified as low-income individuals, (1) founder was a Veteran, and at least (1) was a member of the LGBT+ community. The remaining participants chose not to answer. In 2020, (3) founders identified as LGBT+, (5) low-income individuals, (2) students, and (1) veteran. The majority of the participants in 2020 chose not to answer.

Our highest population by age identified themselves as between the ages of 25-34 at 44%, followed by 35-44 at 36%.

Local in a remote year

GREATER PHILADELPHIA FOUNDERS

According to Wikipedia, an annual report is a comprehensive report on a company's activities throughout the preceding year. Annual reports are intended to give shareholders and other interested people information about the company's activities and financial performance.



73%

HQed in Philly

23%

HQed in the region

Startups by Region

While Philly Startup Leaders has a stronghold in the City of Philadelphia, we also serve founders in the Great Philadelphia Region, including Delaware, South Jersey, and Pennsylvania suburbs.

- 73% of last year's startups are headquartered in Philly proper
- 23% are in the Greater Philadelphia Region
- (1) startup was HQed in Wilmington, DE but their founder resided in Philly

The map to the left shows all of the cities with PSL startup headquarters.

Startups

BY INDUSTRY

Last year, our accelerators were industry-agnostic. 20% of our founders are in Health and Wellness, 20% in Education, 10% are in Knowledge Marketplaces, 10% in Human Resource Technology, 10% in Sports Technology. The remaining categories of Robotics, Ecommerce, Cleaning, Hospitality, Consumer Products, and Software as a Service are all 5%.

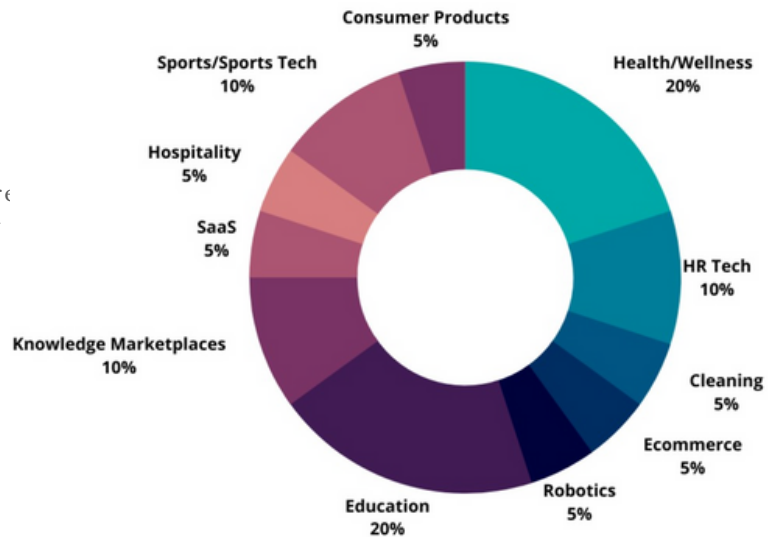
Other industries that the Founders self-described themselves as are; Home Decor, Nonprofit, Parenting, the Arts, and various consumer technology fields.

This year, we will focus on developing centers of excellence around emerging industries with active roots in the region so that we can offer more targeted speakers, mentors, and investors. This will also help our founders share their domain expertise with each other as they grow, and offers more opportunity for collaborative strategic partnerships.

72%
B2B or B2B2C offerings

28%
B2C or D2C offerings

Industry Breakdown



**Founded in Philly 2021 Alumni
Still in Operations**

- Sage
- Rego
- Just Parent
- The Field
- Keep.id
- Grumbl.es
- Food Collective
- SnapRefund
- Asimblee
- Your Care Collective
- OnTrac

- Adalia Clean
- gigU
- Mission Athletics
- Journal My Health
- Proud Ounces
- Steminist Squad
- Tergeo Technologies
- EmpathED
- ShotCaller
- Envision2BWell
- Plynth

Local & Global

JOBS CREATED

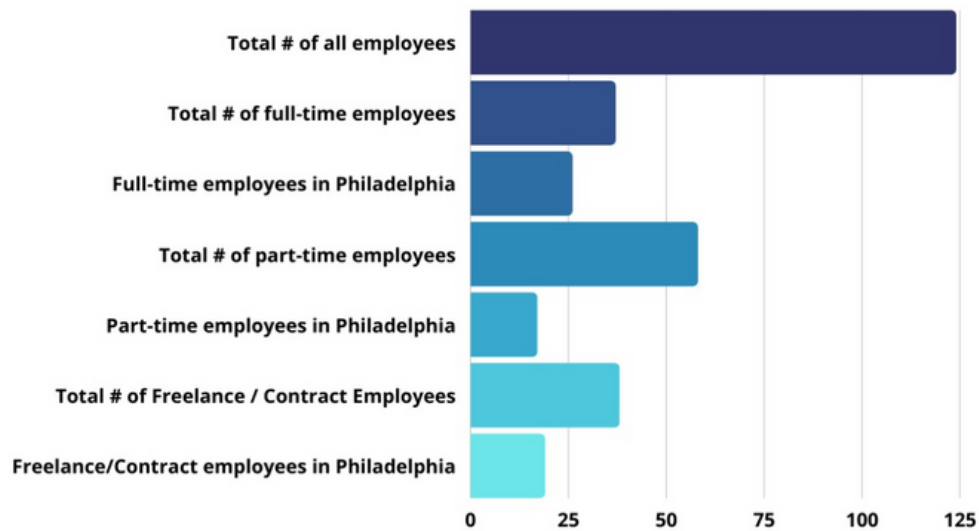
Given that we primarily serve **pre-launch idea- or MVP-stage startups**, we're thoroughly impressed by how quickly our startups scaled their teams! FIP Founders created 124 jobs, of which about 50% were in the Philadelphia Region, and 50% of which were full-time.

These jobs are predominately in professional sectors in tech or consumer brands.

124
Jobs Created

50%
Full-time

Employment Type



Founded in Philly Founders also created jobs across the US:

- Fairfax, VA
- Houston, TX
- Atlanta, GA
- Dallas, TX
- Boston, MA
- Chicago, IL
- Los Angeles, CA
- Minneapolis, MN
- Brooklyn, NY
- Seattle, WA

And globally in:

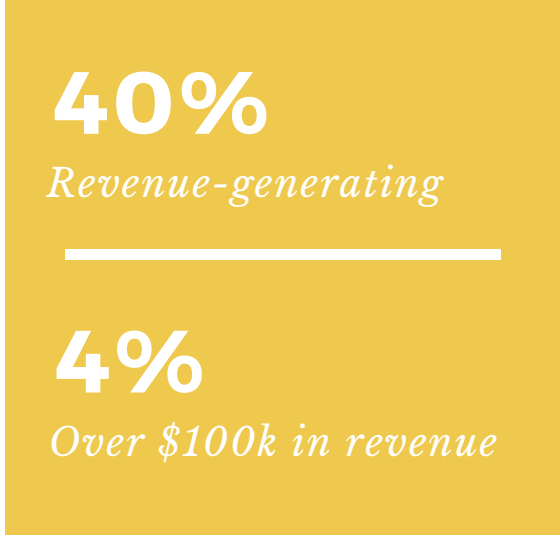
- India
- Bangladesh
- Brazil
- Canada

Post-Graduation

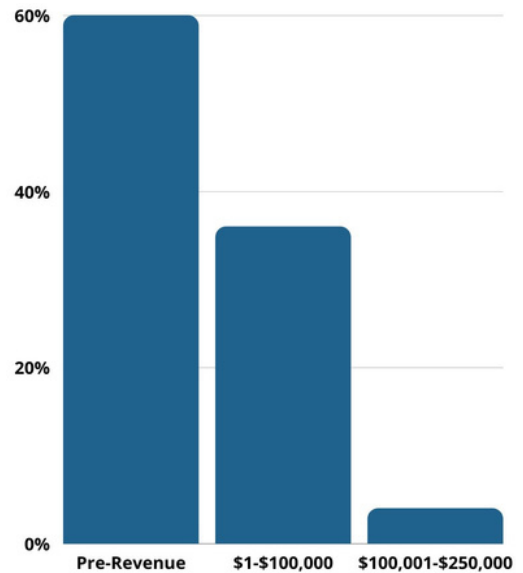
REVENUE STAGES

According to PSL’s post-program survey, 60% of the graduated companies were pre-revenue, 36% were making \$1-\$100,000. This data represents disclosures through the end of last year; most founders have not disclosed updates since. Of note, one of the Accelerators PSL ran last year was meant for idea-stage Founders.

Revenue is one of the hardest metrics to track as startups which are fundraising or simply in growth-mode rarely publicly disclose their financials.



Revenue Stage



Raising

INVESTMENT & FUNDING GROWTH

Collectively, the founders who graduated from our program in 2021 raised **\$837,250** in recorded funding. Of those seeking funding, half have not yet received any. A few founders who weren't seeking funding did gain investment through non-institutional channels.

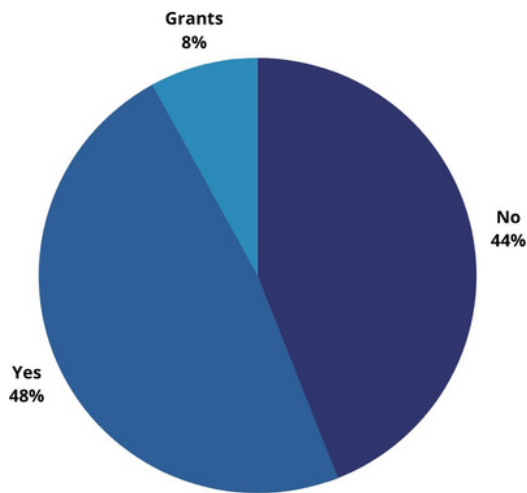
The majority of the funding was Philadelphia-based, with the exception of (3) founders who received investment from Delaware, Minnesota, and California.

Notably, one of the accelerators was idea-stage.

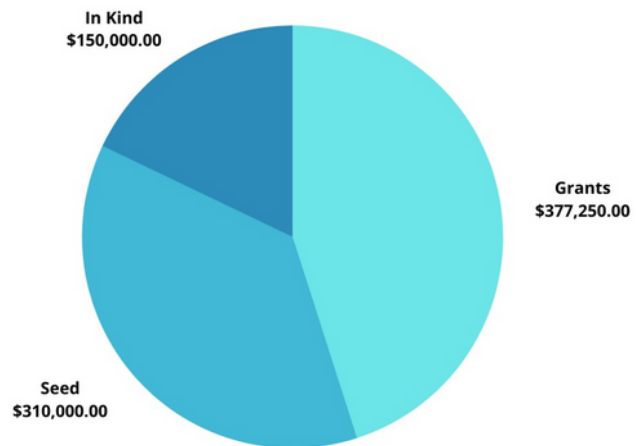
\$837,250
in Funding Raised

44%
were not fundraising

Seeking Funding



Funding Allocations



Funding News from Previous Cohorts:

Other notable funding news includes some significant gains by Founders who went through our program, such as FIP Series I '20 Alum **Lula Delivery raised \$5.5 million** in 2021.

Of the 25 graduated founders, at the time of their graduation, (12) of them were seeking funding, and (2) founders were only seeking grants.

PSL Rated a

POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

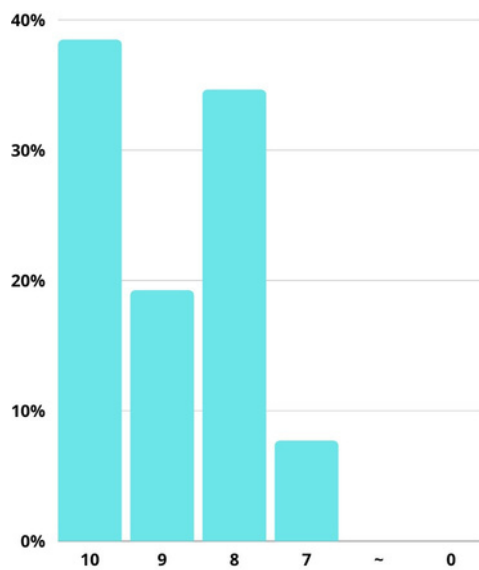
We strive to deliver real value to our startup founders, and last year, we succeed!

According to post-program surveys, all graduating founders found value in a long-term relationship with PSL and stated that PSL contributed to their startups' growth.

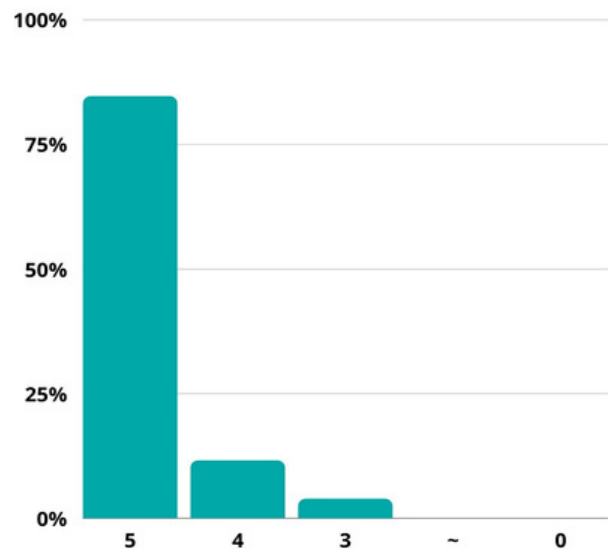
100%
Rated PSL as Valuable

38%
10 out of 10 review

Rating PSL on Startup Impact



Likelihood of Post-program Continuation



FIP 2021 Alumni went on to participate or pitch in programs and competitions like:

- PACT MentorMatch
- Techstars
- Black Talent Pitch
- One Million Cups
- Lunar StartupsCompetition
- Cox Enterprises
- Twin Cities Startup
- Rowan University Accelerator
- WeekNew Venture
- Bucks Built
- Delaware EDGE Competition

PSL has made positive growth on all of the companies in the FIP Accelerator with **38% rate PSL as 10 out of 10!**

All the Founders said they are more likely to continue their startup journeys due to PSL's support.

Post-program

COMMUNITY VALUE

Not only do did 100% of FIP Alumni say that they'd recommend PSL accelerators to a friend, 66% were "extremely likely" to do so!

What's more, 93% of founders rated PSL a 5 out of 5 in PSL's value for maintaining a long-term relationship, 7% gave PSL a 4 out of 5.

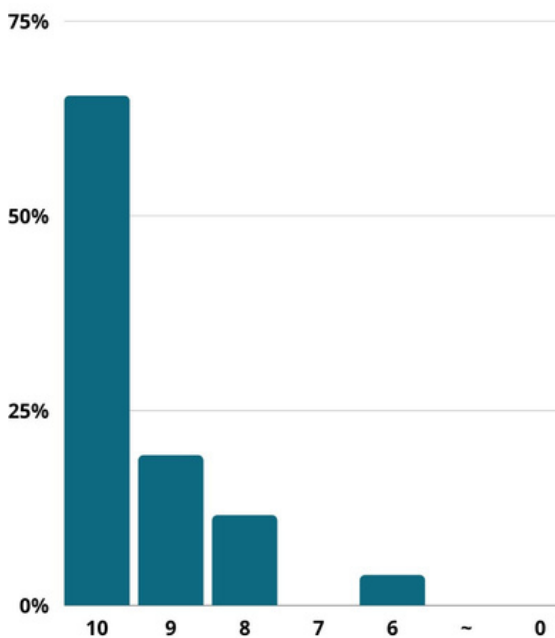
100%

Would Recommend

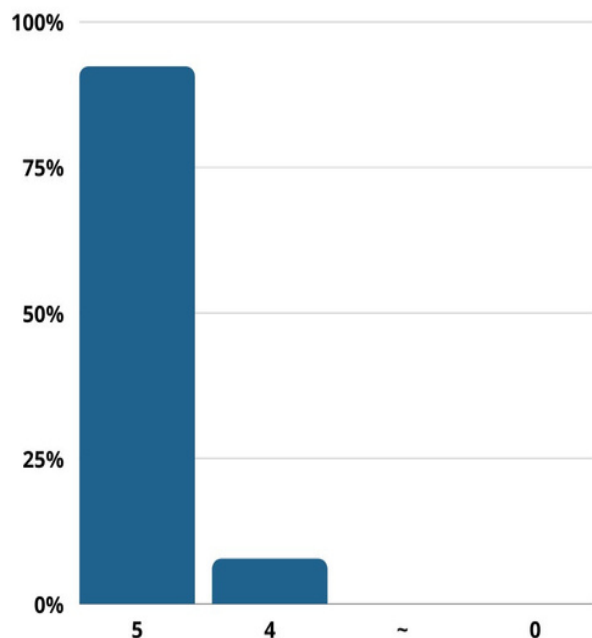
93%

Find long-term PSL relationships valuable

Would Recommend PSL to a Friend



Value of Maintaining PSL Relationship



Founded In Philly Alumni

TESTIMONIALS



“Despite the COVID-19 impact, Founded in Philly has given me the confidence and tools I needed to navigate starting a business when it seems like the odds were all stacked against me. As a Black woman, mother, and working professional, I had my fears and longed for a community that wanted to understand and support my dreams - Founded in Philly understood, empathized, & gave me a great foundation that I can use for all the dreams I plan to make a successful reality! Lastly, Founded in Philly planted a seed that I plan to pass on to other budding entrepreneurs.”

-Carrol Franklyn, Founder of gigU



“It absolutely helped move us forward in our business and helped us focus on finalizing our big whys, our value proposition, and honing in on what we want to offer and do - before we had too many ideas and directions, and this process helped us focus and zoom in.”

-Jen Herczeg, Founder of Food Collective

Founded In Philly Alumni

TESTIMONIALS



"The community and mentorship have been outstanding. As a solo entrepreneur, it really helped me—both in my business and mentally/emotionally. Being alongside other founders who are going through the same challenges you are, makes a big difference. And the expertise and feedback from the speakers and mentors were especially helpful in guiding the direction of Plynth."
-Jono Matusky, Founder of Plynth.

"The program has exposed me to an amazing group of mentors and coaches, along with a huge network of supporters and friends from my cohort. We're all in this together and the support I received and have provided to my fellow founders feels like it's just starting. It's rewarding to have founding conversations with people in similar startup states or just a bit ahead of me."

-Peter Yeargin, Founder of Sage



"Being part of Founded in Philly helped during this time because it offered a support base of well-connected, bright startup leaders to network with and grow our business through throughout the past 5 months. Additionally, reaching out to other founders in the program and offering any help we could provide, and even just making pleasant connections, was always a pleasure."

-Cody Eddings, Founder of SnapRefund



Founded In Philly Alumni

TESTIMONIALS

I feel very much reconnected back to the city I left 20 years ago. I know feel confident to work with businesses & share my story in a way that demonstrates the value delivered & the community (PSL) that supported me. I am now directly connected to Rowan University students/faculty, the Ben Franklin Tech team, the feel like a "family member" of the local startup scene. To simplify, so many "maybe look this way, instead of that way" has helped me reshape & redirect my time to the things that matter most."

-Michael Hunter Dansbury,
Founder of ShotCaller



JOURNAL
my **HEALTH**

"I knew when I applied to be part of Founded in Philly it was going to be a good use of my time, but I did not know how valuable it would be in the end. As I am sure you understand, starting a new business has so many facets, not just the creation of the product or service. You can get stuck in the day-to-day weeds of - company formation, setting up a website, responding to customer requests- that sometimes you don't have the time to deep dive into a topic which always leads to unlocking a new idea or creating a new insight. I know I will be carrying these insights along with me, as well as the practical information and tips, as I go down this startup path. You should both be really proud of this program and the impact it will have on our region"

- Tracey Welson-Rossman, Founder of Journal My Health and former PSL Board Member

*Overall***COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

Our accelerators are certainly one of our best known offerings. However, our community value comes from the peer engagement and mentoring that happens amongst our 12,000+ members every day.

Last year was anything but typical for our organization and our community, we saw a boom of new founds and engagement. Members of the PSL community brought their curiosity online.

*2022***WHAT'S NEXT?**

We're excited to get back out into the world in the Great Reopening! We know with every economic downturn, there's an age of innovation and opportunity. So we're sure this will be a year for the books!

We're doubling down on what worked for our community, renewing our commitment to equitable entrepreneurship by focusing on how we can dismantle systemic barriers to entry to entrepreneurship for our diverse city, exploring new partnerships that center diversity, updating our directories with the most relevant information, rolling out 4 new industry-specific accelerators, and hopefully launching our travel fund to bring Philly startups and community leaders to trade shows and conferences all over the world so they can tell the story of our community to attract new business, talent, and investment. Entrepreneur Expo and in-person networking events are returning too.

72*Average Slack Posts per Day***131***Peer-sourced questions posted in Founders & CXOs List Serve***#2**

SEO Ranking

41*Virtual Events***4***In-person events*

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a red turtleneck, is speaking on a stage. She is holding a small black device in her right hand and gesturing with her left hand. Behind her is a large blue screen displaying the text "America needs more entrepreneurs." in white. The background is a warm, orange-brown color.

America needs more
entrepreneurs.

**WE DID ALL THAT DURING
A PANDEMIC.**

**IMAGINE WHAT WE CAN DO
TOGETHER THIS YEAR!**

**THANK YOU, COMMUNITY, FOR OUR CONTINUED
SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY. THIS IS ALL MADE POSSIBLE
BY DONORS, SPONSORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND ADVOCATES
LIKE YOU.**

Visit phillystartupleaders.org to get involved!
