Best practices for incubators and accelerators
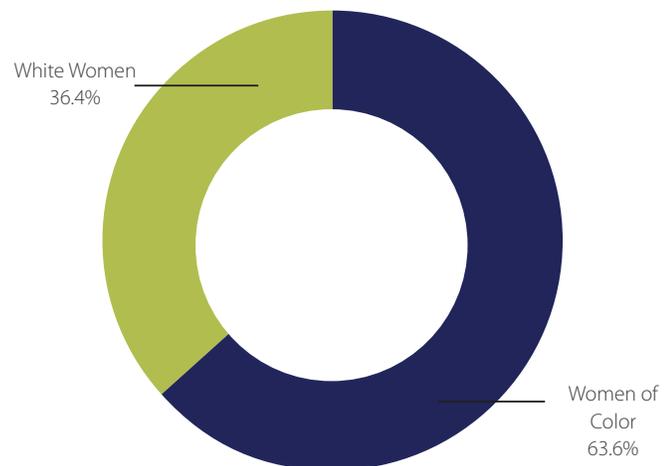## Cultivating inclusive STEM entrepreneurship support programs

GRAND CHALLENGES SERIES

Despite evidence that diversity is good for science and business, gender and racial gaps remain in STEM entrepreneurship. Best practices for incubators and accelerators by the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) STEM to Market (S2M) empower entrepreneurship support organizations to effectively incorporate inclusion into their outreach, programming, and activities.
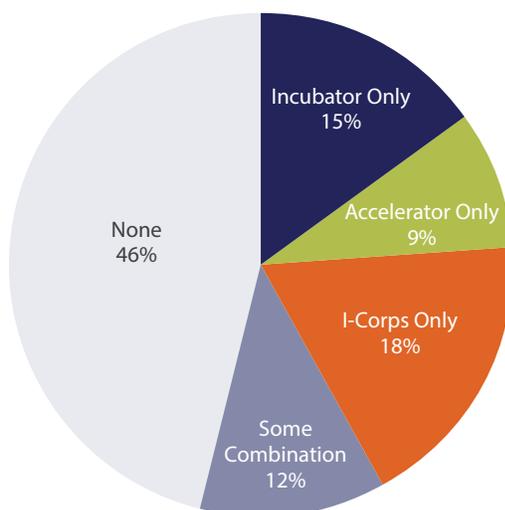
Broaden your outreach activities.

Entrepreneurship support organizations often mistakenly attribute low diversity in their founder enrollment to a "pipeline" problem. Our report shows a wealth of startup innovation is created by marginalized STEM entrepreneurs. Incubators and accelerators must be willing to recruit and support them.

Racial Diversity of S2M: The AWIS Accelerator

White Women
36.4%

Women of Color
63.6%

Women from prior support programs report negative experiences

Incubator Only
15%

Accelerator Only
9%

I-Corps Only
18%

Some Combination
12%

None
46%

Offer inclusive programming.

Traditional boot camps and residency programs often exclude marginalized entrepreneurs. Programs need retooling to offer entrepreneurs flexibility, holistic support, and preparation to navigate bias.

AWIS
ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

www.awis.org

Use AWIS STEM to Market tools to:

1. Take a closer look at your network to identify gaps and expand your outreach and recruitment activities.

2. Connect with organizations who support a diversity of founders.

3. Pay attention to diversity in your advertising and application materials and disseminate them broadly.

4. Remove "weed out" philosophy from your programming.

5. Offer additional support when entrepreneurs encounter difficulty.

6. Provide entrepreneurs with a wide range of choices for responding to bias when they encounter it.

S2M STEM TO MARKET **AWIS** ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

STEM to Market is a two-part program that galvanizes inclusive and productive STEM entrepreneurship ecosystems. To download the full report, visit https://www.awis.org/revolutionizing-the-stem-entrepreneurship-ecosystem-report/

Meet the entrepreneur

I am Dr. Narcrisha Norman, aerospace engineer, recipient of the 2018-2019 US Fulbright Scholar Award, founder and Chief Technology Officer of STEM—Time ROC, LLC, and a member of the Washington DC Cohort of S2M: The AWIS Accelerator. Through STEM-Time, I developed software that specializes in the analysis of large physics-based data sets and has been applauded by NASA for its ingenuity. S2M supports me in balancing product and company development carefully with my professional responsibilities as assistant professor and program chair at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. For me, a key component of the AWIS Accelerator is the holistic support and accountability provided by the S2M team and my peer working group. When a conflict prevented me from participating in my cohort's workshop, S2M's flexibility allowed me to attend the Chicago meeting, which led to increased output in my company's development.

Join or partner with AWIS today!

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