



# Local and National Research Update

Cleveland Convening  
June 2016

# Forward Cities Local Research Products

- All available at <http://www.forwardcities.org/resources/>
- Cleveland State University
  - The Forward Cities Cleveland Experience: Overview and Analysis
- Data Driven Detroit
  - Forward Cities North End/New Center District
  - Small Business and Entrepreneurial Support Programs in North End/New Center
- City of Durham Neighborhood Services
  - Entrepreneurship Support Organizations in Durham
  - Overview of Current Data Work for the Durham Innovation Council
- New Orleans
  - Catalyzing Entrepreneurship Assets, Gaps, and Interventions for Areas Beyond the New Orleans Renaissance



# Forward Cities National Research Brief


- Description of program goals and structure
- Overview of Forward Cities convenings
- Innovation Council leadership and responsibilities
- Focus neighborhoods and corridors
- Short-term outcomes as of September 2015
- Recommendations for Forward Cities and similar cross-city initiatives

## Short-term outcomes

- Deepen focus on supporting minority entrepreneurs and underserved neighborhoods
- Increase funding for supporting entrepreneurship and small businesses
- Strengthen relationships among entrepreneurship support organizations within cities
- Foster learning across cities about inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship

## Deepen focus on supporting minority entrepreneurs and underserved neighborhoods

- Aligned with and reinforced some existing interest in supporting minority businesses
- Expanded the table to new players helping the cause
- Fostered a common language and understanding of “inclusive innovation”
- Highlighted strategies tailored for individual neighborhoods



*“Now, there’s a larger picture focusing on underserved people, neighborhoods. There were individual people talking about their own focus before, now [they are] looking at it with that lens.”*




## Increase funding for supporting entrepreneurship and small businesses

- Motivated initial participation by council members
- Catalyzed examples in all sites of additional donor interest or funding commitments

## Strengthen relationships among entrepreneurship support organizations within cities

- Provided opportunity to break from routine, build rapport with other council members
- Created councils that serve as “coordinating tables” for different sectors to work on common goals
- Fostered improved relationships that most believed will continue





*“Forward Cities has been huge. This group wouldn’t have come together on our own to have that conversation.”*

*“We might have been on different sides before,  
but now see shared interests.”*

## Foster learning across cities about inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship

- Offered chance for new learning that helped attract council members
- Provided opportunity to learn about innovative approaches and real-world experiences from four cities
- Enabled connections with new colleagues that can be tapped when needed
- Resulted in little cross-city interaction between convenings as of September

## Recommendations for Forward Cities

- Encourage councils' to develop concrete goals and timeline
- Facilitate more frequent cross-site connections
- Encourage performance management and evaluation of entrepreneurship support programs

## Recommendations for future initiatives

- Build upon lessons from Forward Cities to review structure, roles, timelines
- Identify types of cities that can most benefit from initiative
- Recognize tension between nationally structured program of work and local priorities and flexibility

# Forward Cities Research Plans for 2016

- Talk to many of you here in Cleveland!
- Interviews with Innovation Council members (July/August)
- Analysis of interviews and other materials (September)
- Draft report (October)
- Final report released (December)



# Thank You!

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