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Evaluating the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Stockton, California

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**EVALUATING THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM
IN STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA**

By

Angelina Abella

A Thesis Quality Research Project
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master's Degree
in

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act
CAPER	Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
EDSAP	Economic Development Strategic Action Plan
EDSP	Economic Development Strategic Plan
ESO	Entrepreneur Support Organization
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
NOFA	Notice of Funding Availability
SBDC	Small Business Development Center

BACKGROUND

In any community, entrepreneurs and small business owners play an important role in the fabric of the community. The concept of “community wealth-building” is the idea that cooperatives, Community Development Financial Institutes (CDFIs), impact investors, and local governments, can “...strengthen locally-rooted and locally-held businesses and investing vehicles...” (Field, 2015, n.p.). It is believed that keeping businesses local results in “...more local tax revenue, more local business activity and more local employment” (Field, 2015, n.p.).

Therefore, supporting an entrepreneur may contribute to the overall quality of life of the community by supporting them, their families, and their employees. This can be especially important to communities that depend on small businesses, for example, communities like Stockton, California.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Stockton and determine whether or not the city possesses the elements of a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem, as defined by the Kauffman Foundation; identifying the services provided by existing entrepreneur support organizations; examining the entrepreneurs’ experience participating in the entrepreneur programs; and analyzing the City of Stockton’s role in Stockton’s overall entrepreneurial ecosystem.

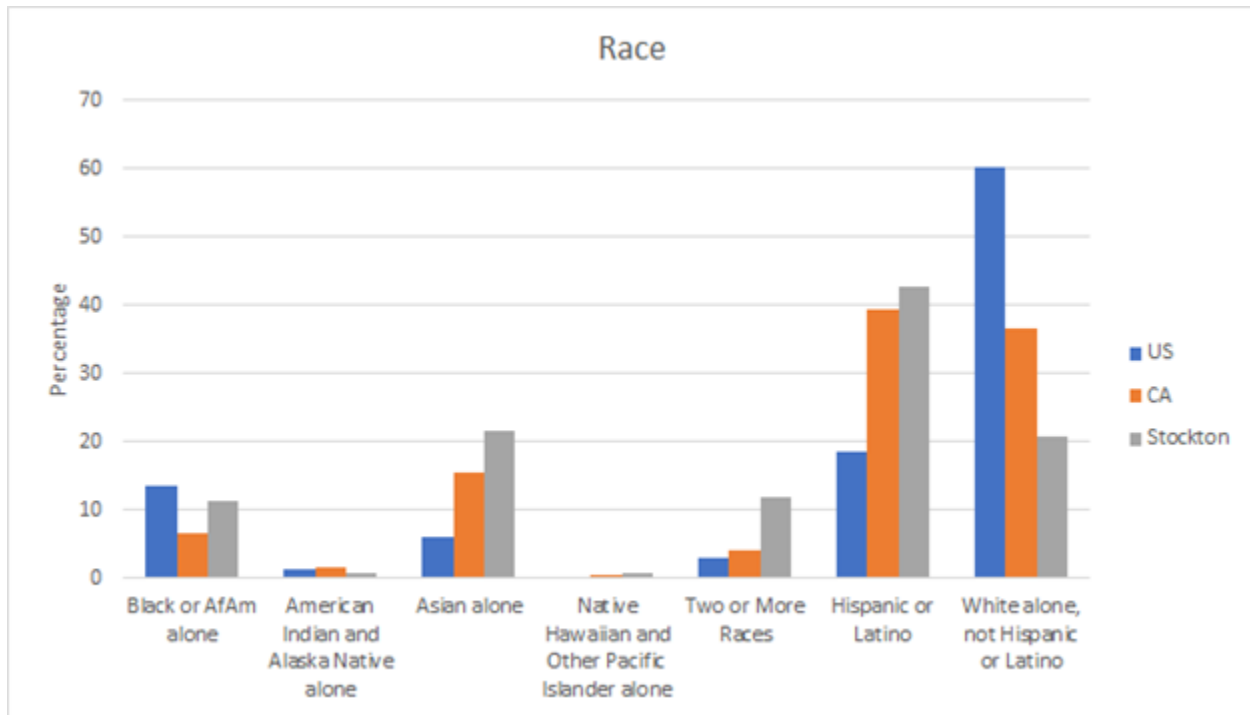
Stockton, California

The City of Stockton is the largest city in the central valley and the 13th largest city in California with a population of more than 310,000 (City of Stockton, 2020a). In 2020, Stockton was named the most diverse city in America for cities with a population of over 300,000 because of the likelihood that no two randomly selected people would be of the same race (*U.S. News and World Report*, 2020). The U.S. Census data also demonstrates Stockton’s diversity

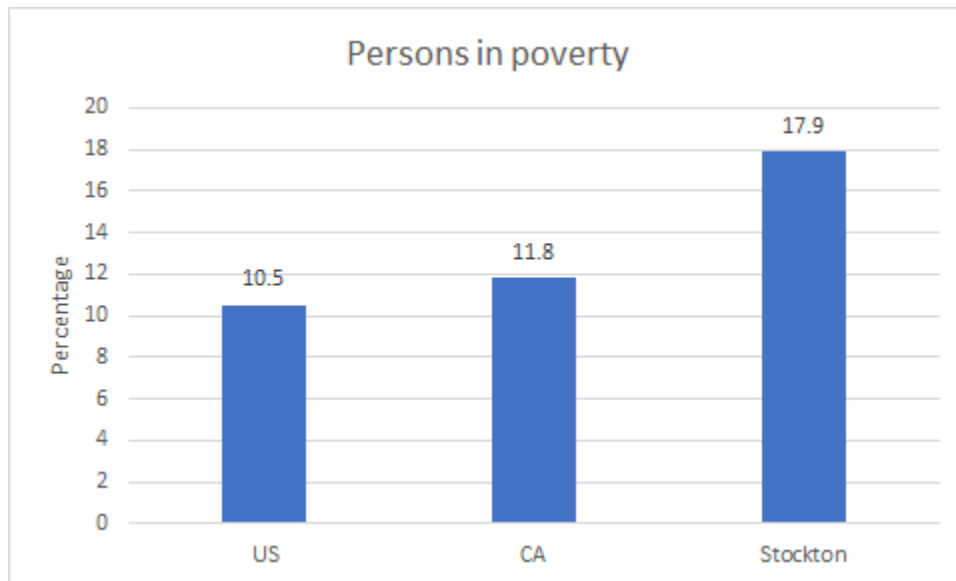
compared to that of California and the entire country, as shown in Figure 1 (U.S. Census QuickFacts Stockton, 2021a).

Figure 1

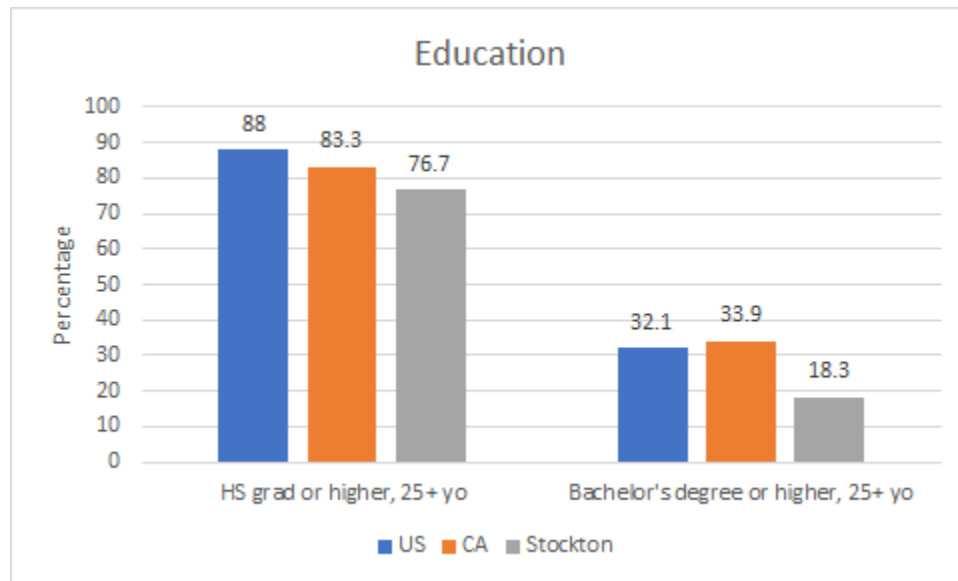
Race



Stockton has a median age of 32 years old, with a median income of approximately \$55,000, which is lower than the state and national average (U.S. Census QuickFacts, 2021a). It also has a higher poverty rate, with the U.S. average being 10.5%, the state being 11.8%, and the city having an average of 17.9% of its residents living in poverty, as shown in Figure 2 (U.S. Census QuickFacts, 2021a).

Figure 2*Persons in Poverty*

Stockton also has a lower rate of educational attainment than the national and state average. Only 18% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 32.1% at the national level and almost 34% at the state level, as shown in Figure 3 (U.S. Census QuickFacts, 2021a). Regardless of its educational attainment, nearly 64% of the city's 8,179 business establishments consist of small businesses and microenterprises with only five employees or less (City of Stockton, n.d.a).

Figure 3*Educational Attainment*

In Stockton, there are a number of organizations and higher education institutions offering programs and services for local entrepreneurs and the small business sector.

Additionally, the City of Stockton offers a competitive funding opportunity to support these Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs), so that they may continue providing their services (City of Stockton, 2021). In 2020, the City of Stockton allocated additional funds in order to offer funding directly to entrepreneurs as well in an effort to provide more direct assistance to entrepreneurs (City of Stockton, 2021).

With public funding being allocated annually to support entrepreneurs, this study evaluated the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Stockton and how the City of Stockton can play a more integral role in bridging the gaps between ESOs. Although numerous entrepreneur resources are available in the city, additional benefits can be created by harnessing a more holistic and cohesive perspective on how the resources intersect and interact. Further, evaluating the current programs and services that are being offered and understanding the entrepreneurs'

experience and outcomes can help the local organizations become aware of areas for collaboration and improvements. In addition, it can potentially encourage a greater role for local government agencies to provide sustainability, and additional resources for local entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial ecosystem as a whole.

Entrepreneurial support at the federal level in the United States

The impact that entrepreneurs have on a community and the importance of supporting local entrepreneurs resulted in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) identifying microenterprises as an eligible activity under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlements (HUD Exchange, n.d.). Any agency that receives a CDBG entitlement has the option of developing economic development programs that assist microenterprises and microenterprise development through grants, loans, technical assistance, and general assistance to the owner(s) of the microenterprise/persons developing a microenterprise, among other forms of assistance (HUD Exchange, n.d.). HUD's CDBG regulations define a microenterprise as "...a commercial enterprise that has five or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the enterprise." (HUD Exchange, n.d., p. 2). It also permits assistance to "persons developing a microenterprise", which is defined as "persons who have expressed interest in and who are, ... actively working toward developing businesses, each of which is expected to be a microenterprise at the time it is formed" (HUD Exchange, n.d., p.2).

Entrepreneurial support at the state level in the State of California

The State of California also recognizes the significance of supporting entrepreneurs in order to assist with economic growth. As a result of the Great Recession in early 2008, and with California having the third highest unemployment rate in the nation at the time, totaling nearly 2.2 million Californians without work, the state legislature passed a law that created a small

business advocate, who was charged with creating a program that supports entrepreneurship as a form of economic development and job creation (A.B. 32, 2011).

Additional efforts also included the state adopting a policy in 2011 that allowed the Governor's Office to establish the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) that focuses on attracting development, supporting existing businesses, and providing support to small businesses (A.B. 29, 2011).

A few years later in 2016, the California State Assembly recognized the impact that the University of California system could have on entrepreneurship, and passed Assembly Bill No. 2664 (AB 2664), which authorized an allocation of nearly \$2.2 million to each of the ten selected University of California campuses, so that "...funds will only be used for the costs of activities that support the expansion or acceleration of economic development in the state and that private funds that at least match the amount of state funds will also be used on those activities." (A.B. 2664, 2016).

The ten University of California campuses that were awarded are UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC Los Angeles, UC Merced, UC Riverside, UC San Diego, UC San Francisco, UC Santa Barbara, and UC Santa Cruz, for services including business training, mentorship, proof-of-concept grants, work space, laboratory space, and equipment (A.B. 2664, 2016). The funding proved to be beneficial to all UC campuses, as they continued to operate and even expand their entrepreneurial programs, so much so that the University of California requested additional funding in 2020 to continue to strengthen the universities' innovation and entrepreneurship hubs (University of California, 2020).

Entrepreneurial support at the county level in San Joaquin County

Entrepreneurship is a focus at the regional level as well. In 2019, San Joaquin County, where Stockton is located, adopted its 2019-2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which listed seven areas that laid out the framework for a set of goals and action plan to achieve economic resiliency for the entire county (San Joaquin County Economic Development Association, 2019).

One of the seven key areas identified in the CEDS was small business, with a focus on improving the entrepreneurial environment and support system (San Joaquin County Economic Development Association, 2019). The action items that were identified to help achieve this goal were business and kitchen incubators' entrepreneur challenges, workshops, access to capital, employee outreach and recruitment, and supporting women entrepreneurs (San Joaquin County Economic Development Association, 2019).

Entrepreneurial support at the local level in Stockton, California

At the local level, the City of Stockton identified entrepreneurship as a key component of its economy in its first economic development strategic plan in 2015, and decided to support the sector through the use of its CDBG entitlements (City of Stockton, 2015). The city has received CDBG entitlements for decades and has historically used the funds for affordable housing programs, low-income homeowner assistance, and other economic development programs for small businesses, such as a microloan program and various grant programs. In 2015, the city added an economic development program to its Annual CDBG Action Plan for its use of funds and established an annual Entrepreneurship Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability (City of Stockton, 2017a).

Entrepreneurship as a City of Stockton Objective

In 2015, the city adopted its first Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) with a goal to “...expand employment and investment in core local businesses/industries...” (City of Stockton, 2015, p. 3). One of the EDSP’s core initiatives was to support active entrepreneurial programs by working collaboratively with local organizations, creating another opportunity to access financial capital for entrepreneurs, and serving as a clearinghouse for entrepreneurial support programs and resources (City of Stockton, 2015).

As a result of the adopted EDSP, the city established an Entrepreneurship Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), which first launched in 2016, offering a competitive funding opportunity for Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs) that offered supportive services and/or resources to new and expanding small businesses and entrepreneurs.

In its first year, the city allocated \$80,000 of its CDBG entitlement and awarded six organizations, which assisted more than 40 small businesses and entrepreneurs within the July 2016 through June 2017 fiscal year (City of Stockton, 2017b). In fiscal year 2017-2018, the Entrepreneurship Grant Program provided financial assistance to six ESOs that provided assistance to 475 small businesses and entrepreneurs (City of Stockton, 2018). In fiscal year 2018-2019, the Entrepreneurship Grant was distributed among five local organizations, which provided assistance to 186 small businesses and entrepreneurs (City of Stockton, 2019). The funding for the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA for fiscal years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 were combined to offer a total of \$200,000, of which \$160,000 was dedicated to ESOs, as in previous years, and for the first time the City allocated \$40,000 available directly to “innovative and creative” entrepreneurs (City of Stockton, n.d.b). As a result, the city awarded

five ESOs that assisted 229 small businesses/entrepreneurs and provided direct funding to eight microenterprises (City of Stockton, 2020b).

The City of Stockton was allocated more than \$78 million from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in June 2021 (City of Stockton, 2021a). Of the \$78 million, the Stockton City Council allocated nearly \$8.87 million to Small Business Support & Economic Recovery "...to provide general financial relief, support our restaurants and their outdoor dining needs... and also support the Economic Development Strategic Action Plan, as it will have a heavy focus on pandemic recovery planning and strategies." (City of Stockton, 2022a, p. 7). \$450,000 of those funds were dedicated to the Entrepreneurship Support Project Plan, with the goal of providing additional funding to the existing Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA. Additionally, \$1.8 million was allocated to the Business Attraction & Expansion Incentives Project Plan to "... create a streamlined process to incentivize the relocation or expansion of businesses in Stockton... [and] to procure data tools and technical support ... for both business attraction and expansion efforts, as well as other ARPA and general economic development initiatives." (City of Stockton, 2022a, p. 76).

Furthermore, in December 2021 the Stockton City Council adopted a new Economic Development Strategic Action Plan that suggested one of Stockton's "Investment Areas" should "Create [an] Innovation Hub to build [the] next generation of entrepreneurs" and identified four potential initiatives (City of Stockton, 2021b, p. 10):

- Invest in Stockton Innovation Accelerator that will provide workspace, trainings, and mentorship support for Stockton entrepreneurial ventures.
- Create local Innovation Challenge for entrepreneurs to submit proposals to address a key Stockton Challenge.

- Establish annual entrepreneurship summit and awards program.
- Support new ventures for aspiring horticultural and agricultural entrepreneurs through city-wide incentives (i.e., accelerator residence) and grant programs.

The decisions made by the Stockton City Council reflect their focus on supporting local entrepreneurs and existing small businesses.

Entrepreneurship as a Community Objective

In addition to the local and regional governments goals and objectives as listed in the economic development strategic plans, various non-profits and other organizations have also made an effort to create and/or expand supportive services for local entrepreneurs, as well, through technical assistance, accelerator programs, access to capital, and co-working/incubation spaces.

Examples of the organizations awarded through the city's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA include a local co-working space and four non-profit organizations offering business consulting services (City of Stockton, 2019). Two organizations were provided funding to continue their efforts in offering one-on-one technical assistance to entrepreneurs, two other organizations were provided funding to continue providing mentorship and other programs specifically for minority entrepreneurs, and the co-working space received funding to provide subsidized memberships with access to office space and curriculum as part of its scholarship program (City of Stockton, 2019).

Additional programs and services may be available in the community that have not received funding from the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA or may not even need to seek additional funding, but those ESOs are still available as an additional resource to entrepreneurs. This research identified the ESOs that have and have not received funding from

the city's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA and examined how they all fit into the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Defined

The range of institutions and organizations that are providing resources and assistance to local entrepreneurs varies as much as the services themselves. Together, these organizations create a network that could be termed as an “entrepreneurial ecosystem”.

An article in the *Harvard Business Review* stated, “There is no one driver of an entrepreneurship ecosystem because by definition an ecosystem is a dynamic, self-regulating network of many different types of actors. In every entrepreneurship hotspot, there are important connectors and influencers who may not be entrepreneurs themselves” (Isenberg, 2014, n.p.).

Furthermore, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (Kauffman Foundation) is an organization that publishes annual reports that highlight the activity of entrepreneurship throughout the country on a national, state, and metropolitan level. It also hosts an annual entrepreneurship conference, known as the ESHIP Summit, and published its Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0 in 2019. The playbook defines a thriving entrepreneurship ecosystem as having the following key elements:

- Entrepreneurs who aspire to start and grow new businesses, and the people who support entrepreneurs.
- Talent that can help companies grow.
- People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.
- Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.
- Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.

- Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.
- Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.
- Culture that is rich in social capital - collaboration, cooperation, trust, reciprocity, and a focus on the common good - makes the ecosystem come alive by connecting all the elements together. (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2019, n.p.)

As the ecosystem elements demonstrate, although the entrepreneurs play a critical role in the ecosystem, a large part of creating a successful ecosystem for them to thrive in is creating an environment and network that encourages and supports entrepreneurs to pursue their dreams by providing them with the knowledge and resources to succeed - that cohesive approach is what creates an “entrepreneurial ecosystem.”

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business Incubators and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Background

According to the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) in the U.S., the term ‘business incubator’ refers to “...an interactive development process where the aim is to encourage people to start their own business and to support start-up companies in the development of innovative products...” (Aernoudt, 2004, p. 127). This development process and supportive services typically include guidance and mentorship, access to new markets, and financial resources.

A 2015 study identified incubators as “...offer[ing] a physical space and a support network (from technology park staff or other tenant companies) to enable a start-up to successfully grow...” and an affiliation with a technology park and incubator that could enhance a start-up’s visibility for potential investors and/or strategic acquirers (Cumming, 2015, p. 456).

Similarly, but on a more granular scale, an ecosystem consists of a number of resources, including incubators, as part of its network. From a more scientific perspective, an “ecosystem” is defined by an area within a specific boundary where different species cohabit together, independent of each other but still sharing and absorbing the resources within the ecosystem in order to flourish (Audretsch, et al., 2019). The same theory can be applied to entrepreneurial ecosystems. An entrepreneurial ecosystem would consist of multi-firm, multi-product markets and would encourage the entities within the ecosystem to work together cooperatively to support the ecosystem, as opposed to being driven by competition and individual profit maximization (Audretsch, et al. 2019).

Entrepreneurial ecosystems contribute to the economic, technological, and societal impacts of a community. Ecosystems can impact a local economy by contributing to a region’s

vibrancy, sustainability, and viability, and create a competitive advantage for individuals. The technological impacts refer to the ecosystem's influence on supporting a community's drive toward creativity and change. The societal impacts pertain to not only the new products and services that are a result of the entrepreneurs within the ecosystem, but also the overall social benefits of the non-monetary outcomes that are gained from participating in the ecosystem (Audretsch, et al., 2019).

Economic Development and Entrepreneurship: Data and Economic Impacts

A study conducted by Neumeyer, Santos, and Morris (2018a) identified four different types of entrepreneurial ventures - "aggressive or high-growth, managed-growth, lifestyle, and survival" - all of which require different types of assistance and resources. These entrepreneurial ventures also provide a different level of societal benefits (Morris, et al. 2015). Although high-growth ventures create the most societal economic impact, all of the entrepreneurial ventures offer an important role to the overall economy by creating an environment that encourages its residents to pursue their interests, no matter what kind of venture (Morris, et al. 2015).

As previously discussed, the Kauffman Foundation provides annual reports that highlight entrepreneurship activity across the country on a national, state, and metropolitan level. The annual Kauffman Index of Entrepreneurship Series "...focuses primarily on entrepreneurial outputs - the actual results of entrepreneurial activity - such as new companies, business density, and growth rates" (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2017, p. 2). The report identifies three components in evaluating entrepreneurial outputs: 1) "Startup Activity", which focuses on "...new business creation, market opportunity, and startup density..."; 2) "Main Street Entrepreneurship", which "...measures business ownership and density of established, local small businesses..."; and 3) "Growth Entrepreneurship", which "...focuses on the growth of

entrepreneurial businesses, as measured by growth in both revenue and employment” (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2017, p. 4).

The most recent Kauffman Index Startup Activity: Metropolitan Area and City Trends determined that the five major metropolitan areas with the highest startup activity were Miami, Austin, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Las Vegas in 2017. This was determined by a three-pronged approach: 1) The rate of new entrepreneurs, 2) The opportunity share of new entrepreneurs, and 3) Startup Density to help determine the growth of entrepreneurs in the area (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2017). These areas looked at the rate at which adults started a business, whether or not they saw a market of opportunity and were previously employed, and the overall growth of these businesses through hiring additional employees (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2017).

Human Capital and Impact Investing

Diversity and Representation

One of the most essential parts of an entrepreneurial ecosystem are the people that are going to use the services and participate in the overall ecosystem. Ensuring that the resources are available to entrepreneurs that live in the community, and that the participants reflect the population that live in the community, are important parts of ensuring that any entrepreneur of any socioeconomic background can receive services to help them succeed. O'Brien and Conney (2019) identified that women and ethnic minorities are among an under-represented group in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Women were reported to lack entrepreneurial skills and have a fear of failure, while ethnic minority groups faced social and economic disadvantages that prevented them from participating in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (O'Brien and Conney, 2019). The

youth, unemployed persons, and people with disabilities were also identified as underrepresented in these ecosystems (O'Brien and Conney, 2019).

Neumeyer, Santos, and Morris (2018b) identified four different types of entrepreneurial ventures - “aggressive or high-growth, managed-growth, lifestyle, and survival” all of which require different types of assistance and attention. The study compared the entrepreneurial ecosystems in two metropolitan cities in the U.S. - Orlando and Chicago - that both include different city layouts, demographics and resources, but also include large networks. The study found that in both cities, the participants in the high-growth or aggressive ecosystems tended to have a more white-male demographic with greater connectivity, whereas most female and minority entrepreneurs experienced a number of barriers in the managed growth and lifestyle ecosystems that were not as prevalent for the other group (Neumeyer et al., 2018b).

Social Networks

Social networks play an important role in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. It also requires a high degree of trustworthiness and cooperation from all parties within the ecosystem (Muldoon, et al., 2018). Muldoon, Bauman, and Lucy (2018) evaluated the role of trust and distrust in an entrepreneurial ecosystem and stated “...social network ecosystem plays a critical role to assist entrepreneurs in ideation, research, development, strategic planning and launch of entrepreneurial ventures...” in allowing for an exchange of knowledge between parties. The study also noted that, in order to build that trust, members within the social network had to maintain a level of cooperation to ensure that all members within the network benefit from the connection and resources that each party brings to the ecosystem (Muldoon, et al. 2018).

Allahar and Sookram (2019) suggested the concept of a “quadruple helix” strategy, which would include: university, industry, government, and civil society to form a collaborative

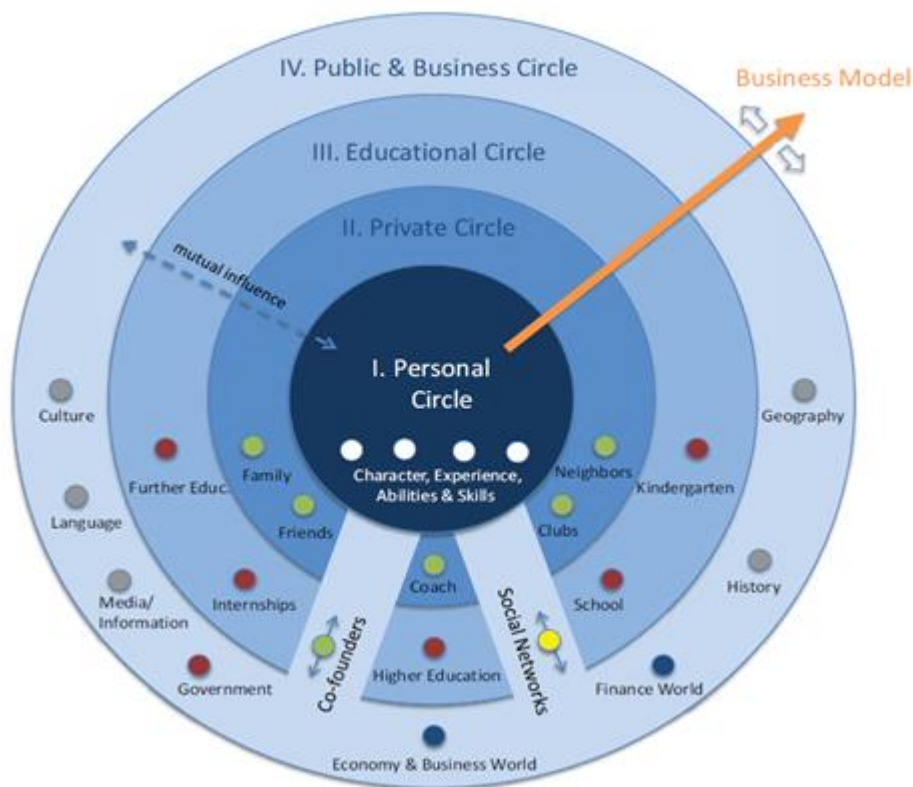
network of knowledge and resources. The study found that building an effective university entrepreneurial ecosystem was a major undertaking that required major funding, additional staff resources, and long-term planning to implement a sustainable program. The study identified that a potential solution would be extending the ecosystem network by strengthening interrelationships with other stakeholders to include non-government organizations to create the quadruple helix approach.

Institutional and Organizational Supports

The Role of Government in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Schwarzkopf (2015) studied entrepreneurship from an individual level by focusing on the entrepreneur at the center and looking at what influences an entrepreneur's overall success, starting from the center and looking outward in chronological order. Schwarzkopf's book identified four elements starting from the center, as shown in Figure 4: 1) The Personal Circle, which is the entrepreneur's own skills and abilities; 2) The Private Circle, which is their immediate social network including their friends and family; 3) The Educational Circle, which involves the level of educational attainment and continued educational growth; and 4) The Public & Business Circle, which is the stage of action in using the various resources to start and grow their business as depicted in Figure 4 (Schwarzkopf, 2015).

Figure 4



The study concluded that the Public & Business Circle was one of two circles that required the most improvements and additional development in order to better serve entrepreneurs (Schwarzkopf, 2015). The Public & Business Circle provides an opportunity for government entities and the public to support local entrepreneurs, which could increase their likelihood of succeeding in their community (Schwarzkopf, 2015).

Motoyama and Knowlton (2016) observed the role of local government in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in St. Louis, Missouri, through the use of its Arch Grant program, an annual competitive funding opportunity supported by a public-private partnership. The grant offered \$50,000, required recipients to locate in a specific area, and gave recipients access to a network of business support organizations that would help them in their early startup stage (Motoyama & Knowlton, 2016). The study found that the role of government in the public-

private partnership for the grant offered more than just a monetary contribution to the recipients, but the resources in the network offered the businesses a sense of support, not only from the organizations, but between the recipients themselves, between different sectors, and between other cohort recipients as well (Motoyama & Knowlton, 2016).

Colleges and Universities in the entrepreneurial ecosystem

College campuses can offer a breadth of knowledge and resources that no other incubator space or nongovernment organization can offer. For instance, Albort-Morant & Oghazi (2015) found that entrepreneurs with higher educational attainment tend to find incubators more useful. Young entrepreneurs with college experience were more likely to better understand how, when, and where to create a business, which offers “adaptability, imagination, and flexibility,” which are all important in developing a sustainable business model (Albort-Morant & Oghazi, 2015, p. 2128).

Furthermore, O’Brien and Conney (2019) identified six components where college campuses could have the greatest potential in creating an effective entrepreneurial ecosystem for underrepresented populations. The first component was personal development through teaching and activities (O’Brien and Conney, 2019). The second was a multidisciplinary approach that involved lessons outside of the classroom to understand the entrepreneurial support on campus and in the community to help grow their social capital and social networks (O’Brien and Conney, 2019). The third was culture, and creating a university-community engagement culture, that works collaboratively (O’Brien and Conney, 2019). The fourth encompassed the various resources, including financial, human, and spatial resources that would allow entrepreneurs access to inter-disciplinary experts, various funding sources, and physical space (O’Brien and Conney, 2019). The fifth required coordination from multiple stakeholders, including local

businesses, government agencies, community groups, and universities to enhance social capital (O'Brien and Conney, 2019). The sixth component was the overall infrastructure of a university campus, allowing access to space, environment, and social networks (O'Brien and Conney, 2019).

Additionally, campuses consist of characteristics that contribute to the (1) available assets, (2) liberty, and (3) diversity, while creating an environment of opportunity (Miller & Acs, 2017). Millers & Acs (2017) defined these characteristics as available assets being “courses, extracurricular and cocurricular options; peers, faculty, alumni, networks to other institutions, research, labs, and libraries” (p. 80); liberty being defined as “...dispersed decision-making for administration and faculty, freedom of research and field of study, extra-curricular choices, part-time/full-time/executive operations, transfer system...” (p. 80); and diverse populations with regard to “ethnicity, place of birth, field of study, age, education levels, political ideologies, regenerating youthful populations, visiting scholars and students; full time/part time; adjuncts/research faculty/teaching faculty” (p. 80).

Alternatively, colleges can be a resource for entrepreneurs who would not normally have access to certain resources, while providing real life experience for college students. At Davidson College in North Carolina, the Hurt Hub is an entrepreneurship incubator where local businesses can “...assign students short-term work involving market research, copywriting, data analytics, web development and other skills” (Cuthrell, 2020, p. 2).

With a university's wealth of knowledge, expertise, and greater network, these institutions could create and/or help support an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is more holistic, inclusive, and assists under-represented entrepreneurs to build their social network and social capital - while also further engaging with the local community.

Interorganizational Relationships

Interorganizational relationships can play a significant role in addressing various needs with limited resources through a series of transactions, flows, and linkages between two or more organizations (Daft, 2020). Strengthening relationships between multiple organizations can create a network of resources for organizations that would otherwise be limited in their services.

Interorganizational cooperation

An ecosystem with multiple organizations offering similar resources may have historically been seen as a competitive market. However, Quarshie & Leuschner (2020) identified that in times of disaster, the “...objective of disaster management is to save lives, reduce human suffering, meet basic needs, protect property and the environment, and stabilize the incident” (p. 5) Therefore, government agencies must interact with other nongovernmental organizations to meet its overall objectives for the community and learn to rely on those organizations as partners.

There are four main types of interorganizational frameworks that provide managers insights on how to better coordinate and strategize, according to Daft (2020), which depend on whether the organizations are similar or dissimilar. The relationship between the organization types are depicted in Figure 5 (Daft, 2020).

Figure 5*Interorganizational frameworks*

		ORGANIZATION TYPE	
		Dissimilar	Similar
ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP	Competitive	Resource Dependence	Population Ecology
	Cooperative	Collaborative Network	Institutionalism

Daft (2020) describes the inter-organizational framework types as the following:

- Resource-dependent: Organizations purposely reduce their dependence on the environment.
- Collaborative networks: Organizations allow themselves to become dependent on other organizations to increase value and productivity for all.
- Population ecology: New organizations fill niches left open by established organizations and contribute to the rich variety of new organizational forms to benefit the overall society.
- Institutionalism: Organizations legitimize themselves in the larger environment and design structures by borrowing ideas from each other.

Identifying the programs and resources the organizations in a community provide will allow for analyzing and understanding which type of inter-organizational framework exists.

Government's Role as a Convener and Facilitator

A study by Moutfound and Geiger (2020) found that the changing societal demands can be addressed by a more direct interaction between government and inter-organizational

networks. The study found that long-term institutional goals can be complemented by governmental institutions' short-term goals and governance. The study also stated that "...whether direct top-down legislation, or more distant bottom-up governance - [Government's approach] will influence the relationships..." (Moutfound and Geiger, 2020, p. 501).

Networks are generally maintained through relational transactions, including trust, social capital, and contracts, but they can also have "...structures and organizing elements embedded temporarily or permanently within them" (Quarshie & Leuschner, 2020, p. 19). In an example of the Hurricane Sandy natural disaster, it is noted that the state government acted more as an organizer, facilitator, and supply network member in the disaster response network (Quarshie & Leuschner, 2020).

Building and maintaining inter-organizational trust may be a role that a government organization can play. A study by Zhong, et al. (2017) found that "Relationship duration is positively related to [inter-organizational trust]..." however, when relationships prolong, it can start to have a negative effect (p. 1068).

METHODOLOGY

The research method for evaluating Stockton’s entrepreneurial ecosystem was benchmarking and program evaluation. Benchmarking allows for the study to identify practices that are already being implemented in other places and that would result in potential improvements and applying best practices to yield better results (Bogetoft, 2012). Program evaluation looks to “...identify the merits of a new program, make changes to an existing program, or describe changes or outcomes in organizations, communities, or systems following the completion of a program” (Gooden & Berry-James, 2018, p. 16).

For the benchmarking component, the research will examine four additional California cities - two cities from the Kauffman Foundation’s 2017 Startup Activity Index and two cities that are not identified in the Index but are similar in size to Stockton, also located in the Central Valley, and have active entrepreneurial initiatives in the community, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Selected Cities for this Research

Kauffman Report	Central Valley
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Riverside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Merced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sacramento 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fresno

The City of Riverside was ranked number 12 in the Startup Activity Index, with the City of Sacramento ranking number 20, both of which moved up from their previous 2016 rankings (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2017). The City of Merced is located in the Central Valley and its University of California campus received state funding in 2016 to assist in expanding or accelerating entrepreneurship through A.B. 2664. The City of Fresno is also

located in California's Central Valley and is home to a public university, but it did not receive federal funding for expanding its entrepreneurship efforts.

The research evaluated the resources, services, and institutions that are applicable to five of the eight entrepreneurial ecosystem elements that were identified in the Kauffman Foundation's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0:

Ecosystem Element 1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.

Ecosystem Element 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.

Ecosystem Element 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.

Ecosystem Element 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.

Ecosystem Element 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.

Three of the elements were not included in the evaluation because they are already implied. For example, one element is "Entrepreneurs who aspire to start and grow new businesses, and the people who support entrepreneurs." (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2019, n.p.). Because all of the cities have existing entrepreneurship programs and resources, it is assumed that there are "...entrepreneurs who aspire to start and grow new businesses..." and people/organizations to support them. Another element in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0 is "Talent that can help companies grow" (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2019, n.p.). For the purpose of this research, that evaluation was combined with "People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs" since those can be directly related (Ewing

Marion Kauffman Foundation, 2019, n.p.). By examining the entrepreneurial ecosystem elements of other California cities with different resources and networks, the research was able to compare the strength of the cities' entrepreneurial ecosystem in other jurisdictions.

The program evaluation for this research examined the existing resources currently available to entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurs' experience in receiving these resources, and the City of Stockton's role in the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem by examining its annual Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA program guidelines and requirements.

The study identified entrepreneurial resources and programs that received funding through the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA since its inception in 2016 and through a Google search for "Entrepreneurship programs in Stockton, CA". A Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap was developed to identify existing resources, organizations, and the stage of business they offer services for. The Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap was based on the Entrepreneurial Resource Roadmap developed by Sourcelink, a company that specializes in helping communities develop effective entrepreneurial ecosystems by identifying programs and partners, and connecting them in a way that puts the entrepreneurs at the center of the resources (Sourcelink, 2021).

The Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap identifies the types of services and whether there are audience-specific programs, such as programs for women-entrepreneurs or minority-entrepreneurs. It is also broken up into sections that reflect the stage of the business venture - idea/planning, startup/launch, growth, and survival - that the organizations provide services to. The information regarding the organizations and their services was determined by exploring their websites and conducting interviews with staff. Eleven interviews were conducted with ten organizations. The Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap will include ESOs that

received financial support from the City of Stockton’s Entrepreneurship Grant Program, as well as ESOs that did not. The Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap identified where organizations overlap in resources, gaps in resources, and where the organizations might complement each other.

In order to evaluate the resources from the entrepreneurs’ perspective, a survey was developed to understand their experience, background, and the result of using the program(s), see Appendix 2. The survey was also translated into Spanish, see Appendix 3. The survey was distributed through the entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs) that have received funding from the City of Stockton’s Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA since the grant program’s inception. As previously mentioned, the city’s CDBG Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) has listed that the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA has cumulatively provided financial support to ESOs that have assisted more than 900 entrepreneurs collectively between fiscal years 2016-2017 and 2019-2020, which started July 2016 through June 2020, see Table 2.

Table 2

Number of Entrepreneurs Assisted

Fiscal Year	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	Total
Number of Ent. Assisted	40	475	186	221	922

Source: City of Stockton *2017a, 2018, 2019a, 2020b*

It is important to note, however, that since the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA is administered annually, if an ESO was awarded multiple times and assisted the same entrepreneur over different fiscal years, the entrepreneur would have been counted in each fiscal year.

Regardless, the entrepreneur was sent the survey from the organization that they received services from. Forty-five English surveys were completed. No Spanish surveys were completed.

Additionally, although other ESOs were included in the Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap, the survey was not distributed to their program participants because the City of Stockton did not yet establish a regular working relationship with those ESOs.

Lastly, to evaluate the City of Stockton's role in the ecosystem, the past Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFAs were examined to understand the goal, objectives, application requirements, and expectations from the grantees. The city's reporting requirements for the Entrepreneurship Grant Program's grantees were also examined to see the type of information that was sought by the city.

As a result of using benchmarking and program evaluation to assess Stockton's entrepreneurial ecosystem, the study aimed to develop a recommendation for the City of Stockton to consider incorporating into its future Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA, and for its efforts in supporting entrepreneurship as identified in Stockton's Economic Development Strategic Action Plan. The recommendation includes specific elements and potential partners/resources that could be leveraged to improve the existing local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The project was reviewed by the San Jose State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and was categorized as exempt from IRB oversight, see Appendix 1, because "Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation." (Cornell Law, n.d., n.p.).

Qualitative data was obtained through surveys of entrepreneurs who have previously- or are currently - receiving assistance from ESOs that were funded by the city's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA. The survey results were used to examine the services that are currently being used, understand the entrepreneur's experience, and to see whether there are gaps between the programs and resources being offered, in order to evaluate how the ecosystem can better support local entrepreneurs. Additional qualitative data for ESO program information was obtained through interviews with the program administrators, website information, published meeting minutes, and other public information.

Quantitative data was obtained from annual financial reports, the U.S. Census Bureau, and any other public reporting data to understand the demographics, funding, and overall entrepreneurial activity in Stockton. The data collected demonstrated the need for specific resources for under-represented communities, the financial commitment to support local entrepreneurs, and the steady growth of the number of entrepreneurs and microenterprises in the region, which demonstrate a need for ESOs' programs and services.

FINDINGS

Kauffman’s Benchmark and Stockton’s Rating

The cities identified in the Kauffman Foundation’s Entrepreneurship Startup Index - Riverside and Sacramento - demonstrated the necessary elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, as identified in the Kauffman Foundation’s Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0 (Ewing Kauffman Foundation, 2017).

The City of Riverside is located in southern California, approximately 390 miles south from Stockton, with a population of more than 314,000 residents (US Census QuickFacts, 2021b). The City of Riverside is a community with a University of California campus that received state funding to support and expand its entrepreneurship efforts in 2016. UC Riverside’s Office of Technology Partnerships’ website offers a variety of resources for entrepreneurs at the idea, startup or growth stages for technology-based businesses. It also includes access to entrepreneurial training, mentoring, access to capital, networking opportunities, success stories, job postings from startups, and contact information for the “entrepreneur liaison” (UC Riverside, 2021). Table 3 summarizes the ecosystem elements in the City of Riverside.

Table 3

City of Riverside Ecosystem Elements

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
EE1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.	<p>UC Riverside’s Office of Technology Partnerships offers a number of programs, referrals, and services for entrepreneurs (UCR, 2022). UC Riverside’s EPIC SBDC also provides entrepreneurs with consulting services, trainings, and help with applying for funding (EPIC SBDC, n.d.)</p> <p>The California Baptist University offers an undergraduate entrepreneurship program (California Baptist University, 2022).</p>

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
	The City of Riverside lists a number of resources on its website for business assistance, entrepreneurship, makerspace, and more (City of Riverside, n.d.)
EE 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.	The California Baptist University hosts an annual Business Plan Competition (California Baptist University, 2022).
EE 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.	All of the organizations provide easy access to applying for their programs, obtaining a membership, or attending public events.
EE 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.	ExCITE Riverside is an accelerator/incubator program in collaboration between business leaders, the City and County of Riverside, and UC Riverside for high-tech startups (ExCITE, 2022).
EE 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.	The UC Riverside’s Office of Technology Partnerships displayed a success story on its website (UCR, 2022). EPIC SBDC also highlights some success stories on its website (EPIC SBDC, n.d.)

The City of Sacramento is located approximately 50 miles north of Stockton, with a population of nearly 525,000 residents (US Census Bureau QuickFacts, 2021c). The City of Sacramento is a community with a California State University campus that did not receive state funding through AB 2662. However, its public college does have the Sacramento State’s Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, which offers information for various resources, such as pitch competitions, workshop series, a certificate program, various programs and resources from other organizations depending on the stage of their business, and stories of entrepreneurs that were “#MadeAtSacState” (Sacramento State, n.d.). Table 4 summarizes the ecosystem elements in the City of Sacramento.

Table 4*City of Sacramento Ecosystem Elements*

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
<p>EE1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>Sacramento State offers a bachelor's degree program in business administration with a concentration in entrepreneurship. Its Carlsen Center also offers a cohort program and workshops (Sacramento State, n.d.)</p> <p>The Sacramento Entrepreneurship Academy offers a five-month entrepreneurship program taught by successful entrepreneurs (Sacramento Entrepreneurship Academy, n.d.)</p> <p>StartupSac provides workshop organization, event organization, website development, content production & marketing, press release writing & distribution, consulting, and conducts studies, research and surveys (StartupSac, n.d.)</p>
<p>EE 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.</p>	<p>Sacramento State Carlsen Center's 1 Million Cup chapter offers weekly meetups for entrepreneurs to present their startups to a network of peers for advice and feedback (Sacramento State, n.d.)</p> <p>The Sacramento Entrepreneurship Academy hosts an annual showcase for its cohort class that also includes exhibits and presentations for successful entrepreneurs (Sacramento Entrepreneurship Academy, 2022)</p> <p>StartupSac hosts a number of events including happy hour meetups, pitch fest, and showcase event (StartupSac, n.d.)</p>
<p>EE 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.</p>	<p>All of the organizations provide easy access to applying for their programs, obtaining a membership, attending public events, or joining a mailing list.</p>
<p>EE 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.</p>	<p>StartupSac created a Sacramento Startup Ecosystem Circuit Board Diagram that visually displays the available resources and where they intersect</p>

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
	(StartupSac, n.d.)
EE 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.	Sacramento State’s Carlsen Center hosts a webpage dedicated to “Entrepreneurs Made at Sac State” (CSUS, n.d.) StartupSac hosts a podcast of startup profiles (StartupSac, n.d.)

The City of Merced is located approximately 70 miles south from Stockton in California’s central valley, with a population of more than 86,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, 2021d) The City of Merced was not identified in the Kauffman Foundation’s Entrepreneurship Startup Index but is also a community with a University of California campus that received state funding through the 2016 legislation to support and expand entrepreneurship efforts. UC Merced’s Innovation and Entrepreneurship Expansion Program was made possible through AB 2664, where the university’s goals were to “(1) improve entrepreneurial network efficiency by developing nodes and new connections, and (2) deliver tools and resources to entrepreneurs that allow them to unlock these networks and accelerate new enterprise.” (UC Merced, n.d., n.p.) The school was able to expand its services through partnerships with other nearby cities, as well. Its website offers information for events, programs and resources, and a point of contact (UC Merced, n.d.) Table 5 summarizes the ecosystem elements in the City of Merced.

Table 5*City of Merced Ecosystem Elements*

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
<p>EE1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>The UC Merced offers an entrepreneurship curriculum with classes in introduction to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship theory and practice (UC Merced, 2022)</p> <p>The UC Merced Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab (ieLab) lists faculty members, affiliate members, and specialists (UC Merced, 2022)</p> <p>Merced College offers an associates degree in small business entrepreneurship (Merced College, n.d.)</p> <p>The UC Merced SBDC offers consulting services, training, events, and workshops (UC Merced SBDC, n.d.)</p> <p>The Modesto-Merced SCORE office offers one-on-one business counseling and workshops for entrepreneurs (SCORE, n.d.)</p>
<p>EE 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.</p>	<p>The UC Merced Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab (ieLab) has hosted a pitch fest, symposium, and speaker series in the past (U.C. Merced, 2022.)</p>
<p>EE 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.</p>	<p>Other than the educational resources through Merced College, the primary way of accessing resources is by going directly to SBDC, SCORE, or by contacting UC Merced staff for other resources.</p>
<p>EE 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.</p>	<p>Although the resources are not listed on the website, the UC Merced Venture Lab acts as a community business incubator and offers entrepreneurs assistance with finding community resources. (UC Merced 2021) The UC Merced ieLab also offers assistance for faculty, students, or at-large community members in need of innovation and entrepreneurship assistance (UC Merced, 2022)</p> <p>The UC Merced SBDC lists a number of federal and state business resources on its website (UC</p>

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
	Merced SBDC, n.d.) The County of Merced lists a number of local resources for small businesses on the Department of Community & Economic Development website, including UC Merced SBDC (County of Merced, n.d.)
EE 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.	The UC Merced SBDC created a SBDC Success Stories 2019 Compilation and individual businesses success stories in 2020 for the greater Central California area (UC Merced SBDC, n.d.).

The City of Fresno is located approximately 120 mile south from Stockton in California’s central valley with a population of more than 540,000 residents (U.S. Census QuickFacts, 2020e). Similar to Sacramento, the City of Fresno also has a California State University with an innovation and entrepreneurship center, and did not receive state funding through AB 2664. The center launched in 2003 and credits its strategic partnerships with community groups, corporate sponsors, businesses and individuals to support students, faculty, alumni and entrepreneurs (Fresno State, n.p.). Fresno was also not identified in the Kauffman Foundation’s Entrepreneurship Startup Index, but does include most of the required elements.

In February 2022, Fresno was identified as “...one of the top 10 cities for entrepreneurs of color in the U.S.” by JobSage, which named organizations such as the Asian Business Institute & Resource Center, Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce and Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation as being essential in providing resources, education, and funding opportunities for entrepreneurs of color (Dillard, 2022, n.p.). Table 6 summarizes the ecosystem elements in the City of Fresno.

Table 6*City of Fresno Ecosystem Elements*

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
<p>EE1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>Fresno State’s Lyles Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship offers local and university resources for entrepreneurs attending the university and community members at-large (Fresno State, n.d.). Fresno State also offers a bachelor’s degree program in business administration with an entrepreneurship option (Fresno State, 2021).</p> <p>Fresno City College offers an Entrepreneurship and Small Business program that provides “...guidance in business model development, implementation and management.” (Fresno City College, n.d.).</p> <p>The Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce (FMBCC) offers technical assistance and supplier development, an accelerator program, professional development program, and financial management program (FMBCC, 2021)</p> <p>The Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation (FAHF) offers technical assistance, a micro-loan program, and workshops (FAHF, 2022)</p>
<p>EE 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.</p>	<p>Fresno State’s Lyles Center hosts events featuring business entrepreneurs as speakers and hosts the Central Valley Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum that includes a panel of investors (Fresno State, 2021)</p> <p>The FMBCC hosts a number of events including the Black Economic Symposium and Women of Color Business Symposium offering businesses an opportunity to gather and network (FMBCC, 2022)</p> <p>The FAHFoundation hosts annual gala for “Developing Hispanic Leaders” and a business hub for downtown business owners (FAHF, 2022)</p>
<p>EE 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone</p>	<p>All of the organizations offer easy access points to contact the organization for more information or to</p>

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
can participate.	become a member.
EE 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.	The Asian Business Institute & Resource Center (ABIRC) offer information on grant programs, hosts workshops, and offer a list of business resources including data, ESOs, and other organizations that provide services to small businesses and entrepreneurs (ABIRC, 2022)
EE 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.	The Asian Business Institute & Resource Center has a space for business spotlight for its members (ABIRC, 2022)

Stockton does not have a public university but does have a public community college and a private university that each offer a certificate program and resources for entrepreneurs (University of the Pacific, 2021; and San Joaquin Delta College, 2020). Stockton also has local organizations and agencies that offer different types of resources for entrepreneurs, depending on their needs.

Stockton also has the individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem, which are the ones that saw the need for these types of organizations and brought their organization to Stockton or created an organization dedicated to providing specific needs for the small business community. Lastly, the organizations have the onramps (or access points) so that anyone and everyone can participate.

However, there are no clear or consistent intersections between the entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs). There is one organization that lists additional resources by providing a link to other local ESOs on their website, but no other ESO did the same. Additionally, there are no visible success stories of entrepreneurs who have successfully participated in any programs or

used the various resources provided by the ESOs. Table 7 summarizes the ecosystem elements in the City of Stockton.

Table 7

City of Stockton Ecosystem Elements

Ecosystem Element	Evaluation
EE1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.	See Table 8 for programs and resources that demonstrate Stockton’s ESOs wealth of knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.
EE 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.	This research found no evidence of an institution hosting a gathering for entrepreneurs and the ecosystem. Although, through the interview process, it was found that there are many individuals and institutions that are champions for the entrepreneurs and the ecosystem and would support gatherings.
EE 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.	All of the ESOs provided information on how to access and/or who to contact for their programs on their website.
EE 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.	Main Street Launch is the only organization that lists other organizations on their website as additional resources.
EE 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.	This research found no evidence of public stories.

Entrepreneur Support Organizations in Stockton

Since 2016, the City of Stockton’s Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA has provided 14 ESOs with financial support. As a result of online searches, four additional ESOs were identified and included in the Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap as well, although they have not received financial support from the City of Stockton to support their ongoing services. A total of 18 ESOs were identified, see Table 8.

The Stockton community has a variety of ESOs including coworking spaces, accelerator programs, mentoring, one-on-one counseling, minority-focused entrepreneurship programs, access to financial capital, and various workshop opportunities. Through the research of their websites and the eleven interviews that were conducted, it was found that a majority of the ESOs provide resources for an entrepreneur at every level of their business venture, which illustrates a level of overlap of services, see Table 8.

The San Joaquin Small Business Development Center (SBDC), which first opened its doors in the early 1990s, provides services to entrepreneurs and small business owners at every stage and prepares milestones for their clients to achieve in order to address their concerns. SBDC mainly offers individual counseling/technical assistance and group training through workshops in business planning, regulatory requirements, tips for seeking financing, how to market our business, how to pursue government contracts, etc. (Personal communication, May 27, 2021, see Appendix 1). There has been a steady increase over the last couple of years, but COVID-19 has nearly doubled their clientele (Personal communication, May 27, 2021, see Appendix 1). Outreach for SBDC's events and services is usually done through email newsletters and social media, but the biggest referral source is through networking with other ESOs and community contracts (Personal communication, May 27, 2021, see Appendix 1).

Table 8

Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap

Access to Capital	Certificate Program	Cohort Program	Financial Literacy	Marketing/Sales	Mentoring	Networking	Space	Technical Assistance	Women or Minority Programs	Workshops	Service Provider	Business Stage
	X	X				X			M	X	African American Chamber of Commerce	Idea / Planning Stage
	X						X				Centro Community Partners	
	X				X		X			X	Huddle by Launchpad	
X	X	X				X	X	X	W&M	X	Main Street Launch	
		X	X	X			X				Oracles of Truth	
	X										San Joaquin Delta College	
X		X						X		X	San Joaquin Small Business Development Center	
X		X						X			Stocktin Impact Corp	
							X				The Well	
	X										University of the Pacific	
	X	X				X			M	X	African American Chamber of Commerce	Start-up / Launch Stage
X											California Capital FDC	
	X							X	M		Centro Community Partners	
X											Downtown Stockton Alliance	
	X								M	X	El Concilio	
	X				X	X				X	Huddle by Launchpad	
X	X	X				X	X	X	W&M	X	Main Street Launch	
		X	X	X			X				Oracles of Truth	
X											San Joaquin County	
	X										San Joaquin Delta College	
X		X						X		X	San Joaquin Small Business Development Center	
	X	X			X	X		W			Stockton Community Kitchen	
X		X						X			Stocktin Impact Corp	
							X				The Well	
	X										University of the Pacific	
	X	X				X			M	X	African American Chamber of Commerce	Growth Stage
											Asian American Chamber of Commerce	
X											California Capital FDC	
	X							X	M		Centro Community Partners	
X											City of Stockton	
X											Downtown Stockton Alliance	
	X						X	M & W			El Concilio	
						X				X	Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce	
	X			X		X				X	Huddle by Launchpad	
X	X	X				X	X	W&M	X	X	Main Street Launch	

Access to Capital	Certificate Program	Cohort Program	Financial Literacy	Marketing/Sales	Mentoring	Networking	Space	Technical Assistance	Women or Minority Programs	Workshops	Service Provider	Business Stage
			X	X	X			X			Oracles of Truth	Survival Stage
X											San Joaquin County	
	X										San Joaquin Delta College	
X								X		X	San Joaquin Small Business Development Center	
		X	X		X		X		W		Stockton Community Kitchen	
X			X					X			Stockton Impact Corp	
								X			The Well	
	X										University of the Pacific	
		X	X			X			M	X	African American Chamber of Commerce	
X											California Capital FDC	
		X						X	M		Centro Community Partners	
X											City of Stockton	
X											Downtown Stockton Alliance	
		X						X			El Concilio	
						X				X	Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce	
		X			X		X			X	Huddle by Launchpad	
X		X	X				X	X	W&M	X	Main Street Launch	
			X	X	X			X			Oracles of Truth	
X											San Joaquin County	
	X										San Joaquin Delta College	
X			X					X		X	San Joaquin Small Business Development Center	
X			X					X			Stockton Impact Corp	
	X										University of the Pacific	

Stockton Impact Corps (SIC) is an organization that originated from the local private university, University of the Pacific, in 2013 as a project from the campus's business club, and became an independent organization in 2014 after realizing the need for the program's sustainability due to the turnover in club's president after every semester (Personal communication, May 18, 2021, see Appendix 1). SIC provides business consulting services/technical assistance to entrepreneurs at all stages and access to capital (Stockton Impact Corps, n.d.). Its "business clinic" offers entrepreneurs individualized technical assistance to address their needs, and SIC develops a 1-, 3-, or 5-year roadmap to keep businesses on track in achieving specific goals (Personal communication, May 18, 2021, see Appendix 1). The program has seen steady growth since 2014, regardless of having limited resources to conduct outreach (Personal communication, May 18, 2021, see Appendix 1). Most recently, SIC moved to a new location in 2020 that includes a small commercial kitchen that it is hoped will assist 11 food entrepreneurs with growing their business aspirations (Personal communication, May 18, 2021, see Appendix 1).

Huddle was a membership-based coworking space in Stockton that opened in 2014 and was the first coworking space in San Joaquin County (Personal communication, April 22, 2022, see Appendix 1). Huddle was acquired by Launchpad in 2019, an organization with a nationwide network to help "...catalyze the growth of entrepreneurship ecosystems in cities across the United States" that started in New Orleans in an effort to spark economic recovery from Hurricane Katrina (Personal communication, June 11, 2021, see Appendix 1; Launchpad, n.d., n.p.). Launchpad identified Stockton as a "momentum market" and used a federal tax incentive to acquire Huddle in its efforts to expand Launchpad's network, which has offices in New Orleans, Louisiana; Newark, New Jersey; Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee; and Mesa, Arizona

(Personal communication, June 11, 2021, see Appendix 1). However, to leverage Huddle's existing presence in the community, the space became known as "Huddle powered by Launchpad" and used the strengths of both organizations to create an entrepreneurial hub specific for Stockton, but with the network and curriculum from Launchpad's experience (Personal communication, July 20, 2021, see Appendix 1).

In addition to its access to office space, conference rooms, curriculum and programming, Huddle by Launchpad launched a membership scholarship program specific to Stockton-based, low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs (Personal communication, June 11, 2021, see Appendix 1). The demand for memberships has been growing, and the organization expanded its physical footprint in 2020 to encompass two floors at its location in downtown Stockton, with a goal to create an entrepreneurship center on the ground floor that is accessible to non-membership community members (Personal communication, July 20, 2021, see Appendix 1). Huddle by Launchpad's main source of outreach is through existing members, attending community events, and other grassroots marketing efforts (Personal communication, July 20, 2021, see Appendix 1).

Centro Community Partners (Centro) is an organization with multiple locations nationally and internationally, with U.S. offices in Oakland, Hayward, San Jose, and New York (Personal communication, May 25, 2021, see Appendix 1). Centro launched its Stockton programs in 2016 (Personal communication, April 30, 2021, see Appendix 1). Centro offers two cohort programs - a Basic and Advanced Program - which are 9- and 10-session programs that focus on helping entrepreneurs in the idea or startup stage for its Basic Program, or entrepreneurs with existing small businesses that are in the survival stage for the Advanced Program (Centro, n.d.). The programs use a phone app specifically designed for entrepreneurs in Centro's program to help

keep them organized and on track with meeting their goals (Personal communication, April 30, 2021, see Appendix 1). Its Basic Program is offered in both English and Spanish languages.

Centro recently added one-on-one technical assistance to its services (Personal communication, April 30, 2021, see Appendix 1). Its main outreach efforts are by emailing past participants and people who have expressed interest, emailing other local ESOs and business organizations, and posting on their partners' website (Personal communication, April 30, 2021, see Appendix 1).

Oracles of Truth is a community-based organization focused on individuals and businesses through its networking services (Oracles of Truth, 2020). The organization first started offering business services through a partnership with the African American Chamber of Commerce of San Joaquin County in 2017, before moving its operations to Stockton in 2019 (Personal communication, May 19, 2021, see Appendix 1). Oracles of Truth assists entrepreneurs at every stage of their business venture and works with them through a 5-year stage development and roadmap (Personal communication, May 19, 2021, see Appendix 1). Its main outreach efforts come from direct mailers and partnerships with nonprofit organizations (Personal communication, May 19, 2021, see Appendix 1).

The African American Chamber of Commerce of San Joaquin County (African American Chamber) continues to offer its BRIDGES program for African American entrepreneurs. The BRIDGES Entrepreneur Education Program seeks "...to provide aspiring and established small businesses with the basic principles of establishing and operating a small business" (African American Chamber, n.d., n.p.)

The Oakland-based organization Main Street Launch (MSL) opened its Stockton location in 2019 in the organization's first attempt to replicate its Bay Area program - the African American Entrepreneurship Institute, also known as the Entrepreneur-In-Residence Program -

that focused on providing access to capital and other necessary tools to stabilize businesses in underserved communities (Personal communication, July 9, 2021, see Appendix 1). The organization has offices in Oakland, San Francisco, and Stockton, and offers business support services such as mentorship, coaching, technical assistance, workshops, and access to capital (Main Street Launch, n.d.a). Its Entrepreneurs-In-Residence program is a unique 6-month program offering African-American entrepreneurs a network of experts, business training, professional mentorship, access to capital, temporary office space, and a monthly stipend for the duration of the program (Main Street Launch, n.d.b). MSL's main outreach efforts are through its partnerships with other ESOs (Personal communication, July 9, 2021, see Appendix 1).

The Stockton Community Kitchen is a kitchen incubator, modeled after the San Francisco-based nonprofit La Cocina, to help women food entrepreneurs get experience in operating a commercial kitchen, build a business plan, help with cost estimates to conduct their business, and provide other tools and knowledge for operating a food-based business (Personal communication, May 20, 2021, see Appendix 1). For example, program participants can earn the ServSafe certification through food and alcohol safety training (Personal communication, May 20, 2021, see Appendix 1). The Stockton Community Kitchen launched its program in January 2020 with the plan to conduct its program in cohort groups with three cohorts per year (Personal communication, May 20, 2021, see Appendix 1). However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization has changed its model and now offers its space and services on an as-needed, one-on-one basis (Personal communication, May 20, 2021, see Appendix 1).

During the height of the pandemic, the program participants learned to operate a commercial kitchen while providing meals to homeless shelters (Personal communication, May 20, 2021, see Appendix 1). Most recently, in April 2022, the operator of the Stockton

Community Kitchen opened the Stockton International Food Hub, where the program participants can sell their food to the general public (Stockton Community Kitchen International Food Hub, 2022).

El Concilio is a community-based, nonprofit organization that focuses on “...empowering California’s diverse low-income, minority and marginalized communities.” (El Concilio, 2022a, n.p.). Its services include family wellness, preschool centers, immigration services, behavioral health, job readiness, senior services, adult education, DUI services, re-entry services, and transportation services (El Concilio, 2022a). El Concilio has not received an Entrepreneurship Grant from the City of Stockton in the past, but as part of its adult education services, the organization hosts a number of programs for Latinx entrepreneurs. For example, the Women’s Entrepreneurship Symposium is a “...three-day professional development event [that] brings together women entrepreneurs to learn about best practices and participate in an interactive business planning, development and management...” for independent businesses and start-ups (El Concilio, 2022b, n.p.). The Latina Leadership Luncheon offers a space for Latina business owners to network and learn from experienced Latina business owners (Personal communication, July 16, 2021, see Appendix 1).

The San Joaquin County Economic Development Division offers a Revolving Loan Fund “...for startup, gap financing, expansion or location of businesses in San Joaquin County” (San Joaquin County Worknet, n.d., n.p.).

The Downtown Stockton Alliance (DSA) is a non-profit organization for downtown businesses and residents within the downtown improvement district (Downtown Stockton Alliance, n.d.a). The DSA provides access to capital for startups and existing businesses through its Downtown Stockton Enterprise Loan (DSELF). The DSELF is “...intended to provide

traditional and ‘gap’ financing by providing small business loans to Downtown Stockton entrepreneurs who cannot obtain a complete package of conventional financing” (Downtown Stockton Alliance, n.d.b, n.p.). Existing businesses demonstrating growth potential, and start-ups demonstrating “...a needed product or service with a high propensity for success in downtown,” could be found eligible for funding (Downtown Stockton Alliance, n.d.b, n.p.).

Lastly, the two largest college campuses in Stockton - University of the Pacific (UOP), a private university, and San Joaquin Delta College, a public community college - both offer certificate programs in entrepreneurship (University of the Pacific, 2021, & San Joaquin Delta College, 2020). UOP’s Entrepreneurship Certificate program is completely online, and allows students to complete the 5-course program anytime within a 6-month timeframe, starting at any time and at their own pace (University of the Pacific, 2021). Courses include Introduction to Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Management, Strategic Marketing, Accounting and Finance, and Business Law (University of the Pacific, 2021). UOP also offers a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Certificate Program that is designed to help business leaders “...understand the challenges and opportunities with making .. important strategic change in [their] organization” as they engage with employees, customers, and other stakeholders from diverse backgrounds (University of the Pacific, 2022, n.p.).

San Joaquin Delta Community College (Delta College) offers two certificate programs - Entrepreneurship Certificate of Achievement and a Small Business Certificate of Achievement. The Entrepreneurship Certificate of Achievement program is an 18-unit program that prepares students for launching a new business (San Joaquin Delta College, 2020a). The program focuses on “...developing the entrepreneurial mindset, identifying and evaluating business opportunities, pitching the business idea, and developing a business plan” (San Joaquin Delta College, 2020a,

n.p.). In 2019, Delta College hosted a Student Entrepreneur Expo on its campus that offered a space for entrepreneurs to show off their products, and the event even included students who were not in the Entrepreneur Program (Personal communication, June 8, 2021, see Appendix 1). Delta College also offers a Small Business Certificate of Achievement, which focuses on existing small businesses, where students “...demonstrate the ability to prepare a business plan, analyze the funding required to start a business, develop a marketing plan, set up an elementary bookkeeping system, and articulate some of the legal issues facing small businesses today” (San Joaquin Delta College, 2020b, n.p.).

Entrepreneurs in Stockton

The entrepreneur survey received 45 complete responses, see Appendix 3. Surveys that did not include answer to at least 50% of the survey questions were not counted. Almost 50% of the respondents participated in an entrepreneurship accelerator program and 36% received one-on-one technical assistance. There was almost an even split with 33% of entrepreneurs being at the start-up/launch stage and 31% being at the survival stage. Twenty percent of the respondents were at the growth stage and only 13% were at the idea/planning stage. Nearly 56% of the respondents did not hear about the program through traditional outreach efforts, 27% heard about the program through an email promotion, 11% were able to find information from the organization's website, 2% from brochures, 2% from Facebook, and 2% from flyers.

A majority of the respondents demonstrated a positive overall experience in their respective programs, with 96% saying the material was easy to understand and 78% saying the program provided them with the basic knowledge to start their business. More than 50% were *very satisfied* with the overall program organization, and almost 56% were *very satisfied* with the instructors' knowledge. Regarding the facility environment, 80% of respondents were

satisfied (40%) and *very satisfied* (40%). More than 42% were *very satisfied* with the administrative process of their program, and more than 53% were *very satisfied* with the pricing of the program they participated in.

In terms of accessibility, more than 90% of the respondents found the location for their program easy to get to. Nearly 98% of the respondents said the program was offered in their primary language. Nearly 96% said they would recommend their program to another entrepreneur.

With regard to networking, almost 67% of respondents said the program offered them an opportunity to meet and network with other entrepreneurs. More than 53% said they still keep in touch with other entrepreneurs they met in the program, with more than 13% identifying that, although they do not keep in touch with other entrepreneurs from the program, they would be interested in doing so. More than 84% of respondents said they would be interested in attending entrepreneur meetups.

Although many respondents had a positive experience overall, almost 76% of respondents identified the need for additional resources after completing their program. Almost 67% of respondents said they were able to access those additional resources.

More than 64% of respondents said they have not used other entrepreneurship programs/services. Forty-two percent said they were unaware other resources were available, 16% said they felt well-prepared and did not need additional assistance, 11% said they did not have the financial means to participate in another program, and 9% said they did not have the time to participate in another program.

After completing their program, 44% of the respondents said they launched their business and 42% were in the process of launching their business. Approximately 84% of respondents identified that the COVID-19 pandemic affected their business plans.

In terms of socioeconomic demographic data, 51% of the respondents were employed while participating in their entrepreneurship program and 47% were not employed. Forty percent of the respondents were self-employed, 24% were employed full-time, 13% were unemployed, nearly 7% were employed part-time, 4% were retired, another 4% were unable to work, 2% were students, and another 2% were homemakers. Most of the respondents were 35-44 years old (33%), approximately 31% were between the ages of 45-54 years old, 24% were 55 years or older, and 11% were 25-34 years old. Almost 38% of respondents were Black or African American, 20% were Hispanic or Latino, 16% were White, 11% were Asian, 7% were Multiracial or biracial, 4% identified as Other, 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native, and another 2% were Naive Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. A majority of the respondents were women (60%), and the remaining 40% identified as male. With regard to educational attainment, 31% had some college with no degree, 18% had a high school diploma or equivalent, 16% had an Associate's degree, 13% had a master's degree or higher, 11% had a Bachelor's degree, and 9% had less than a high school diploma.

With regard to familial experience, 51% of the respondents said they had family members with experience in starting and growing a business, while 49% of respondents did not have family with experience as a small business owner.

City of Stockton Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA

The City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA seeks to support organizations that "...create economic opportunity for the business community..." by providing

new/existing services for start-up businesses and entrepreneurs in Stockton (City of Stockton, 2021c, p. 3). The annual competitive funding opportunity is for organizations “...that provide consulting, training, innovation, provide co-working office space, preparation assistance of business documents, financial assistance, budgeting, workshops, promoting, etc.” (City of Stockton, 2021c, p. 3). In 2020, the City of Stockton also offered the grant directly to entrepreneurs that “...are exploring opening a new business, are still in the concept stage, or are currently operating as a start-up business. They must be a resident of Stockton and conduct business in Stockton” (City of Stockton, 2020c, p. 3).

The Entrepreneurship Grant Program is funded with CDBG funds and, therefore, the ESOs must fulfill one of the following federal HUD objectives in order to qualify, as specified in the 2020 NOFA (City of Stockton, 2020c, p. 5-6):

- Provide benefit to low and moderate-income persons (self-certification forms must be submitted quarterly for participants and entrepreneurs);
- Create or retain jobs at least 51% of which benefit low and moderate-income persons (self-certification forms must be submitted quarterly);
- Provide goods and services to residents of low and moderate-income residential area; and
- Program beneficiaries must be primarily low/moderate-income people. Defined as individuals with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income for the Stockton area (2020 limits), as shown in Table 9:

Table 9

2020 HUD Household Income Limits

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
80%	\$41,450	\$47,400	\$53,300	\$59,200	\$63,950	\$68,700	\$73,450	\$78,150

The applications are reviewed by a selection committee composed of City of Stockton staff and business/community representatives, who score the applications based on content, need, and feasibility. Based on the scores, the committee makes recommendations for funding, using the allotted amount available for the ESOs and entrepreneurs, although the entrepreneur applicants can only receive up to \$5,000 each.

Approved grantees are required to execute an agreement with the City of Stockton, and submit quarterly reports, a final report at the end of the fiscal year, and self-certification forms for the individuals/entrepreneurs that were served, to ensure that one of the aforementioned HUD objectives was achieved.

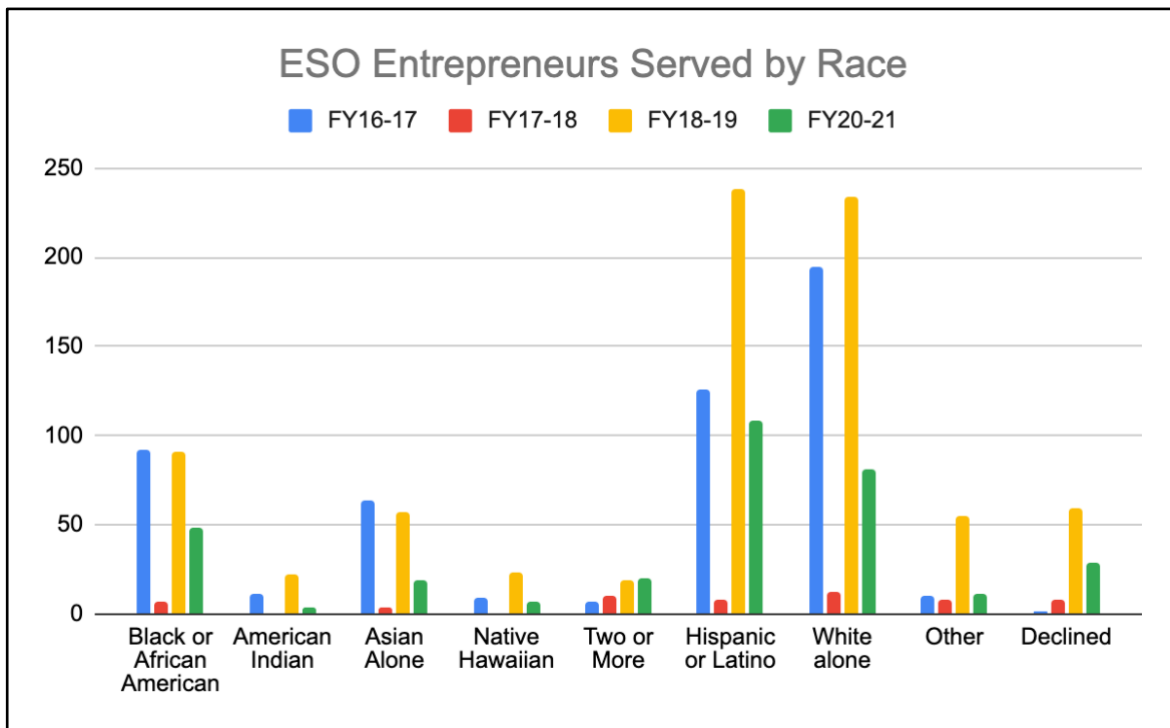
The quarterly reports require grantees to provide the number of new full-time equivalent employees created, the number of businesses that received assistance, the number of individuals assisted at Very Low Income (<50% Median), and the number of individuals assisted at Low Income (51%-80% Median). The quarterly report form also provides grantees a section to report any “other additional activities” not specified. The final report is a culmination of the quarterly reports. The self-certification form requires individuals to indicate the number of people in their household and their household income. These reports are used to gather data for the City of Stockton’s CDBG Annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to demonstrate how the city used its CDBG funds to support entrepreneurs and microenterprises owned by low- and moderate-income individuals.

Entrepreneur Data

The entrepreneurs who have participated in the ESO programs that have received funding from the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA demonstrate a diverse group of entrepreneurs, see Figure 6.

Figure 6

ESO Entrepreneurs Served by Race

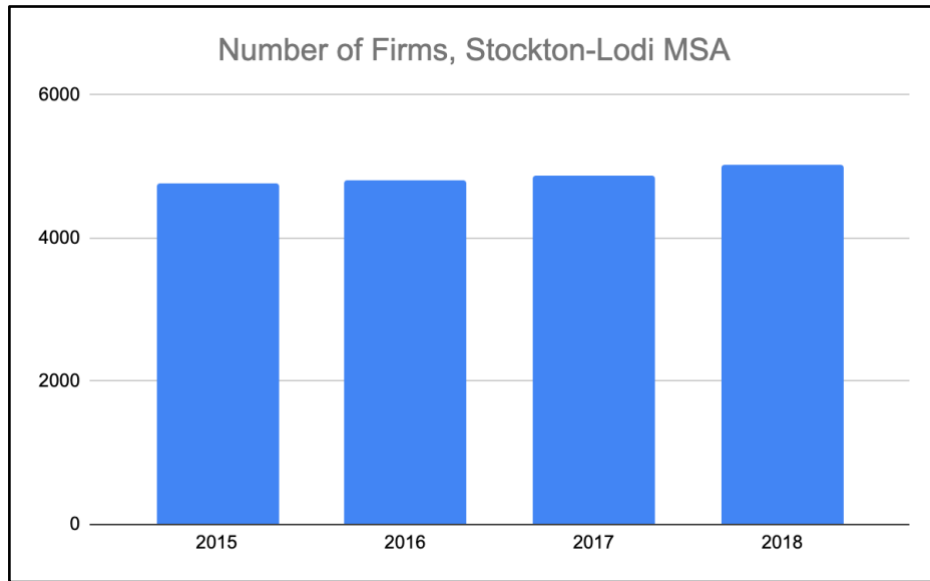


Source: City of Stockton, 2022b

U.S. Census Bureau industry data demonstrate a steady rate of entrepreneurs/microenterprises in the Stockton-Lodi Metropolitan Service Area, which are businesses with 0-4 employees, see Figure 7.

Figure 7

Number of Firms in the Stockton-Lodi MSA



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research focused on evaluating the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Stockton by first assessing the entrepreneur ecosystem elements identified in the Kauffman Foundation's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0. By elaborating on the entrepreneur ecosystem elements of two California cities that were identified in the Kauffman Foundation's Startup Activity Index (2017) as well as two other large California cities in the central valley, the Findings section answered the question of whether or not Stockton had the necessary entrepreneurial ecosystem elements to create a thriving ecosystem for local entrepreneurs.

Second, this research identified the existing entrepreneurial resources that are currently being offered to local entrepreneurs by first examining the programs and services of the entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs) that received financial support from the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA and by also including other government agencies, nonprofits, and higher educational institutions that also offer entrepreneurial support. The Findings section identified the ESOs and the services they provide, which helped identify overlaps and gaps in services.

Third, this research examined the entrepreneur's experience to better understand whether they received the necessary resources to support their business plans, whether they were able to build a network that supports them, and whether other ESO resources were available to them. The Findings section revealed the experience of 45 entrepreneurs who responded to the survey. This section will further examine the socioeconomic demographics of the entrepreneurs with regard to accessibility, and the program participants' demographics in comparison to the U.S. Census Bureau data for the entire Stockton community.

Lastly, this research evaluated the City of Stockton's role in the entrepreneurial ecosystem by assessing the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA that offers funding for ESOs through an annual competitive funding opportunity. The Findings section identified that the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA only requires ESO grantees to submit quarterly reports listing the number of entrepreneurs served with the required socioeconomic data in order to comply with CDBG requirements. This section will further elaborate on Stockton's missing elements and how other jurisdictions have addressed similar issues. This section will also provide recommendations on how the City of Stockton can address the entrepreneurs' needs and concerns while creating the last remaining elements by utilizing the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA to implement change.

EE 1: People and institutions with knowledge and resources to help entrepreneurs.

In addition to having entrepreneurs who are willing to follow their aspiration of becoming a business owner, it is necessary to have a network of people and institutions that have the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to support those entrepreneurs in achieving their goal.

The cities that were evaluated for the purpose of this research all demonstrated a network of people and institutions. All of the cities had a college or university that offered certificate and degree programs in entrepreneurship. All of the cities also had numerous organizations offering technical assistance, workshops, accelerator programs, and other resources, demonstrating the people's wealth of knowledge and resources for entrepreneurs.

Riverside, however, was the only community where the local government agencies showed a direct connection in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

EE 2: Individuals and institutions that serve as champions and conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem.

Individuals and institutions that act as champions for the entrepreneurial community and convene gatherings for entrepreneurs and other resources help create a space that feels welcomed, supported, and can help build trust.

Peer reviewed articles indicate that members within the entrepreneurial ecosystem network can all benefit from a cooperative and collaborative relationship that builds trust between the organizations, resulting in lasting connections and additional resources (Muldoon, et al. 2018).

The cities that were evaluated for this research demonstrated that there are several champions in their communities, however, there are not many conveners of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem as a whole. Sacramento State's Carlsen Center, the Sacramento Entrepreneurship Academy, and StartupSac all act as champions and conveners by hosting meetups, showcases, and pitch events that bring together aspiring and successful entrepreneurs, as well as supporting resources.

In addition to the cities evaluated for this research, there are other jurisdictions that have also demonstrated the desire to bring together local entrepreneurs and ecosystem resources with the local government agency acting as the champion and convener.

The City of Glendale, California launched "Glendale Tech Week" in 2017 in partnership with multiple local companies and organizations (Personal communication, April 5, 2022, see Appendix 1). "Glendale Tech Week" includes a number of events specific to tech startups, but the City of Glendale only hosts three events - Meet the Funders, Pitch Fest, and the awards & closing ceremony - where the city conducts outreach to potential investors, facilitates the pitch

fest events, and puts together voting and awards for entrepreneurs (Personal communication, April 5, 2022, see Appendix 1). In addition, the city also hosts monthly events called “Tech on Tap” where the city hosts a guest speaker to discuss a specific tech-related topic and then the event turns into a mixer for tech startup attendees (Personal communication, April 5, 2022, see Appendix 1).

The City of Elk Grove, California also hosts a pitch event, in addition to other incentives for the entrepreneurial ecosystem. As part of its “Startup Elk Grove Incentive Program,” the City of Elk Grove “...provides technical and financial assistance to launching and scaling startups, and for coworking and incubator facilities that support them.” (City of Elk Grove, n.d., n.p.) One of these incentives includes “Pitch Elk Grove”, a pitch event in collaboration with StartupSac that allows up to eight tech startups from the greater Sacramento region to speak (StartupSac, n.d.b).

EE 3: Onramps (or access points) to the ecosystem so that anyone and everyone can participate.

Accessibility to the ecosystem is key to the success of the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem. Providing access for the entrepreneurs and ensuring that they are able to find resources and make contact with the organization, or obtain memberships, or being able to attend workshops enables them to gain the necessary resources and build a network that supports their business venture.

All of the cities evaluated for this study had visible access points to their specific program in their local community.

In addition to the cities evaluated for this research, there are other jurisdictions where the local government agency has demonstrated the desire to build a single onramp for entrepreneurs to gain access to all of the ecosystem resources.

In 2020, the Town of Gilbert, Arizona, launched a free platform, called the Gilbert Business HUUB, that helps local businesses connect with “20+ COVID business recovery webinars for small businesses; direct connections to local government, consultants, and ongoing resources; and one-on-one technical assistance” (Town of Gilbert, n.d., n.p.). In a 2020 webinar, it was said that the platform was built by first conducting outreach to the local community for business service organizations so the platform could act as a central resource center for small businesses (CO+HOOTS, June 16, 2021). Users must sign up and create a profile on the platform in order to have access to the platform's resources, or to schedule one-on-one technical assistance with experts.

Also in 2020, the City of Rochester, New York, helped launch a free entrepreneur resource navigator platform in partnership with its local economic development corporation, called Nexus i90 “...to make support resources more accessible and easier to use so small businesses in our community can enjoy equitable growth and inclusiveness as Rochester ventures along the road to economic recovery.” (City of Rochester, 2020, n.p.). The platform includes local and regional resources for the different stages of a business from startup, growth, to exit (Nexusi90, 2022). It also includes a resources page that allows users to identify their area of assistance, specific need, opportunity populations, business type, business stage, industry, and where they are located, so they may find nearby resources.

EE 4: Intersections that facilitate the interaction of people, ideas, and resources.

The interaction between people, ideas, and resources is important in building a network that shares information, resources, and helps build momentum. Muldoon, et al. (2018) stated that social networks “...assist entrepreneurs in ideation, research, development, strategic planning and launch of entrepreneurial ventures...” (p. 172).

At least one organization in all of the cities evaluated for this study demonstrated some level of intersection with listing other ESO resources on their website. However, only one city evaluated for this study - Sacramento - had an organization that demonstrated a comprehensive visual display of the many intersections between all of the ESOs, nonprofits, funders, educational institutions, and other stakeholders that can impact an entrepreneur's business venture.

Exhibiting the intersections between ESOs is beneficial for entrepreneurs, especially startups, to learn about how different organizations can interact in working towards a similar goal. As the Stockton entrepreneur survey showed, 64% of respondents did not use resources from other ESOs, with 42% of them identifying that they were unaware that other ESOs were available.

Different types of resources will be needed to help support an individual in their business venture and it will be inevitable that they will intersect. However, making the intersections known and making the interactions more frequent can result in a more efficient use of time, especially for entrepreneurs who are trying to navigate the many resources in the ecosystem.

EE 5: Stories that people tell about themselves and their ecosystem.

Stories from individuals with similar socioeconomic backgrounds, and that have had a positive experience utilizing resources, can be a powerful tool. The two cities identified in the Kauffman Foundation's Startup Activity Index (2017) - Riverside and Sacramento - found multiple ESOs highlighting entrepreneurs' stories on their websites.

Peer reviewed articles have demonstrated that diversity and representation in entrepreneurial ecosystems are important in helping local entrepreneurs feel supported. Women entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs of color have demonstrated less participation in entrepreneurial ecosystems, but face more barriers (O'Brien and Conney, 2019; Neumeier et al., 2018).

Although it only represents a fraction of the entrepreneurs served, the survey results from the Stockton ESO program participants indicate that diversity, representation, and equity are important to the ESOs, with 60% of respondents being women, and almost 73% of respondents being from a minority ethnic group.

The lack of known success stories of those who have participated in these programs creates a lack of awareness of how ESOs can be beneficial to entrepreneurs who may feel that they do not need or have the time to participate, especially those among under-represented groups. However, if they were aware of how professional guidance and expertise could help them in managing and growing their business, then creating a visible space for success stories could be beneficial for the entrepreneurs and the organizations. Seeing entrepreneurs that look like them, or have a similar background, and have used local ESO programs and services, would allow others to hear from people that were in a similar situation, have used available ESO resources, and have become successful because of it.

Table 10 is a summary of the five cities that were evaluated for their entrepreneurial ecosystem elements. Two cities - Riverside and Sacramento - were identified in the Kauffman Foundation's Startup Activity Index for demonstrating a high level of entrepreneurial activity, such as "...new companies, business density, and growth rates" (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation 2017). Two additional California cities - Merced and Fresno - were selected because of their similarity in size and location to Stockton.

Table 10*Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Elements*

Ecosystem Element	Riverside	Sacramento	Merced	Fresno	Stockton
People and institutions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Champions and conveners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Onramps	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intersections	✓	✓		✓	
Stories	✓	✓		✓	

City of Stockton Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA - ESO Requirements

The Stockton community has most of the elements for a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem, as defined by the Kauffman Foundation's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0 (2019). The people, institutions, and champions have already demonstrated a level of passion and determination in helping the local small business community in Stockton. By bringing ESOs to Stockton or developing programs specific to the needs of Stockton entrepreneurs, the people in these organizations have demonstrated a mission to put the entrepreneurs first.

The results of the Stockton Entrepreneur Resource Roadmap show that there are numerous entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs) offering a variety of services to entrepreneurs of traditional businesses, food businesses, minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, and others. The ESOs offer a range of services from one-on-one technical

assistance, to cohort accelerator programs, to coworking incubator space for entrepreneurs to grow their business. The variety of resources being presented in different formats offers an opportunity for entrepreneurs to choose the space that best suits them and their business needs.

The City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA has provided a great source of financial support for ESOs to continue providing services to new and existing small businesses and entrepreneurs. The grant program, however, has not changed since it was first developed in 2016, other than starting to also provide grants directly to entrepreneurs as part of its 2019-2020 Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA. Additionally, the reporting requirements for the grantees mainly look to satisfy the CDBG requirements to assist individuals in a low- and moderate-income economic status.

The overall results from the ecosystem elements research, ESO interviews, and entrepreneur survey indicate there is a need for strategic partnerships between the City of Stockton, ESOs, and other community organizations in order to create a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. There is an opportunity for the City of Stockton to build upon the existing Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA so that the grantee requirements could fulfill CDBG requirements, while also strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In the entrepreneur survey, 84% of the respondents identified that although they met other entrepreneurs while participating in their program, they would still be interested in attending meetups. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the City of Stockton to implement a requirement of some level of collaboration between the ESO grantees in its Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA. This requirement would encourage partnerships between ESOs, address the lack of intersections, and give entrepreneurs the opportunity to network with other entrepreneurs.

The lack of intersections between the ESOs makes it difficult for entrepreneurs to find additional resources. Although most ESOs identify their ability to offer a wide range of services for businesses at any level, it may be beneficial for an entrepreneur to seek guidance and assistance from multiple ESOs, depending on their level of need. As the survey results indicated, 42% of the respondents were unaware that other entrepreneur resources were even available, demonstrating the lack of intersections between the organizations. By requiring the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA ESO grant recipients to participate in a collaborative event, this would also give entrepreneurs the opportunity to network with other local ESOs.

The City of Stockton has the opportunity to use the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA as a way of building strategic partnerships, by requiring ESO grantees to host a joint event, in order to achieve one of the missing ecosystem elements - the intersection where people, ideas, and resources interact. To help support these efforts, while not requiring the ESOs to pick up a lot of work for the event planning, the City of Stockton could assist by using one of its community centers or other City-owned assets to host the event. By requiring ESO grantees to work together, but offering support with the event planning, the City of Stockton can still play an active role in engaging with ESO grantees, while also giving them an opportunity to interact and collaborate with one another, to develop a workshop, or host a joint mixer for the entrepreneurs they served.

In order to address the lack of known local success stories, the City of Stockton could also add a requirement into the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA that requires ESO grantees to submit at least one “success story” at the end of the fiscal year as part of their regular reporting requirements. Seeing the number of entrepreneurs an ESO has supported with the help of the city’s financial support, and also seeing at least one success story to come out of the

program, would have a more personal impact on the use of CDBG funds. With these success stories, the ESOs and City of Stockton could help share the stories of other local entrepreneurs who have used the existing resources and found them beneficial.

Overall adding requirements to the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA, such collaborating with other ESO grantee's to host a joint event and reporting success stories, offers the City of Stockton a no-cost solution to achieving the missing two elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Building intersections between existing ESOs, and being able to see how these programs are creating an impact for the entrepreneurs by gathering success stories from the existing ecosystem players, would help Stockton strengthen its entrepreneurial network and help promote the programs, which may help with outreach for new and curious participants.

City of Stockton Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA - Entrepreneur Grant

The City of Stockton's objective for providing financial support to ESOs that "...provide new/existing services for start-up businesses and entrepreneurs within the City of Stockton" (City of Stockton, 2020c, p.3), is beneficial because the organizations are able to assist more entrepreneurs and have a wider range of knowledge and resources, as opposed to the City of Stockton's limited staff and resources. However, the city's efforts to provide financial support to entrepreneurs by including them in the same competitive funding opportunity for those "...who are exploring opening a new business, are still in the concept stage, or are currently operating as a start-up business..." as stated in the 2021 Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA (p. 3), is a different objective than the ESO objective. The area of focus for the entrepreneurs' grant funding seems very broad, and would only seem to address one short-term goal, which is access to capital.

The other ESOs that provide access to capital to entrepreneurs often require financial literacy training as a prerequisite to receiving financial assistance, in an effort to give the entrepreneur the tools and knowledge to manage their finances in the long run.

If the City of Stockton wishes to continue to offer a competitive grant funding opportunity to entrepreneurs, it would be beneficial to create a separate NOFA with a more specific criteria for eligibility and qualifications. It would also be beneficial if the City of Stockton were more focused in supporting a specific type of business venture, for example, high-tech or lifestyle business ventures.

In addition to providing more specifications, and focusing on supporting specific business venture types, the City of Stockton could add a requirement for the grantee to obtain a certain number of hours of financial literacy training, or attend a workshop by one of the ESO grantees. Requiring business grantees to seek assistance from local ESOs would not only give the entrepreneurs an opportunity to gain new knowledge, but it could also help encourage interactions between entrepreneurs and ESOs.

Lastly, there are only a handful of ESOs in Stockton, as opposed to thousands of small businesses. If the City of Stockton's Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA remains the same as one NOFA with two separate objectives and two separate application/review processes, the time to evaluate the potential number of entrepreneur applications would greatly outweigh the amount of time to evaluate the number of potential ESOs applications. For a funding opportunity that only provides \$5,000 in grant funding, the time commitment of the selection committee could be used more efficiently if there was a separate NOFA with a more specific criteria. Therefore, creating a separate NOFA for entrepreneurs would be beneficial for the City of Stockton by allowing program managers to specify the type of business venture they hope to

support, and to add specific requirements for grantees, beneficial for the applicant to see a clear understanding of what is expected of a grantee, and beneficial for the selection committee with regard to evaluation and scoring time.

City of Stockton as the Entrepreneurship Convener

As the number of entrepreneurs has remained steady and the number of ESOs have grown over the last few years, so has the need for establishing a connective and efficient network that supports entrepreneurs, and the City of Stockton has the opportunity to be the bridge. A society's changing demands can be addressed by a more direct interaction between government and nongovernmental agencies by creating an inter-organizational network (Moutfound and Geiger, 2020). Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, entrepreneurship and small business support was a focus for the community and Stockton City Council. In the wake of COVID-19, economic recovery and sustainability has become the main focus for the community, and entrepreneurship and small businesses play an integral role in that recovery, making inter-organizational networks key to economic recovery.

Furthermore, in order to strengthen the inter-organizational network and entrepreneurial ecosystem, the City of Stockton has to act as the bridge between all ESOs, whether they receive financial assistance from the city or not. As Moutfound and Geiger (2020) stated, government has the ability to influence relationships directly through legislation, or more distantly through a bottom-up governance.

Aside from making changes to the Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA, another potential no-cost solution for the City of Stockton achieving its missing elements is to host ESO roundtables, where the organizations can meet regularly and discuss areas of concern, opportunities for improvement, recent trends, recognize new ESOs in the community, share

success stories, and other topics that directly affect the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Regular meetings would potentially lead to a level of familiarity between the organizations and their services, which would be helpful when offering referrals to their clients with specific needs.

To build a more public-facing bridge among all ESOs in Stockton, the City of Stockton should develop a free website that acts as an online entrepreneur resource navigation center that includes government agencies, non-profit ESOs, higher education institutions, venture capitalists, and potentially also includes small business tax advisors, attorneys, and any other resources that entrepreneurs may need in conceptualizing, launching, growing, and sustaining their business. As previously mentioned, other government agencies, including the Town of Gilbert, have developed similar resource navigation websites.

This effort to develop an online resource navigation center would require funding that would not be appropriate for CDBG funds, since those monies must be focused on low- and moderate-income areas or individuals, but the City of Stockton could fund this effort with the General Fund monies or the newly received ARPA funds that were dedicated to the Business Attraction & Expansion Incentive Project Plan.

In 2021, as part of the fiscal year 2021-2022 budget cycle, the Stockton City Council approved a one-time allocation of \$100,000 of General Fund monies for “Economic Development Strategic Action Plan (EDSAP) Implementation,” which allowed the Economic Development Department to determine how to use those funds to accomplish initiatives in the EDSAP (City of Stockton, 2021d, p. A-25). This action, in addition to the nearly \$8.87 million in ARPA funds, demonstrate the Stockton City Council’s dedication to economic development initiatives in supporting businesses and the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Stockton. Using either of these pools of funding to hire a consultant to develop a free online entrepreneur resource

navigation platform, that provides user data and website analytics, would be beneficial for entrepreneurs to find local resources, while the data would provide the Stockton City Council with evidence of how the use of funds is impacting the small business community.

Additionally, one of Stockton's EDSAP initiatives was to host an entrepreneur summit. As previously mentioned, other city agencies have hosted events for entrepreneurs as well, including the City of Glendale with its annual Glendale Tech Week. The City of Glendale sponsors numerous events held by other organizations for tech-based entrepreneur resources during Glendale Tech Week, and hosting the Meet the Funders event, Pitch Fest, and Awards & Closing Ceremony. Although Glendale Tech Week is hosted by the City of Glendale, it is a community-driven effort that is only made possible through a number of partnerships (Personal communication, April 5, 2022, see Appendix 1)

The City of Stockton should explore its resources to host an entrepreneur summit. There are limited opportunities for Stockton entrepreneurs to gather and convene to network and find resources, and the City of Stockton has the opportunity to be the convener. By encouraging regular partnerships and hosting regular roundtable meetings, the City of Stockton could use these relationships to help plan an entrepreneur summit that uses the network, resources, and knowledge of the local ESOs.

CONCLUSION

The City of Stockton is a diverse community that has overcome financial hardships in its past, but has continued to identify entrepreneurship as a key focus in its efforts towards economic growth and sustainability.

Peer reviewed research indicates that successful entrepreneurial ecosystems should encompass diversity, trust, and multi-stakeholder coordination to provide a more integrated network (O'Brien and Conney, 2019; Muldoon, et al. 2018; Allahar & Sookram, 2019; Moutfound & Geiger, 2020).

Similarly, the last element identified in the Kauffman Foundation's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Building Playbook 3.0 (2019) is "Culture that is rich in social capital - collaboration, cooperation, trust, reciprocity, and a focus on the common good" (n.p.).

Therefore, cultivating a culture in Stockton that has the knowledge and resources, the champions and conveners, the onramps for services, the intersections that encourage interaction, and the stories of diverse people and diverse businesses creates an entrepreneurial ecosystem that can thrive.

Stockton has most of the elements to support a successful ecosystem but still has room to build intersections and share its local entrepreneurs' stories. The City of Stockton has the opportunity to address the missing elements by implementing changes to its existing Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA, since it directly impacts the entrepreneurial ecosystem and a few of its members. These changes include:

- Requiring ESO grantees to submit a success story at the end of the reporting year.
- Sharing the success stories with its network.

- Requiring ESO grantees to collaborate on a joint event and providing event planning support.
- Developing a separate NOFA for the entrepreneur grant for specific business types or startups in a specific industry.
- Requiring entrepreneur grantees to get financial literacy training from an ESO grantee or attend another workshop.

In addition to changes to its Entrepreneurship Grant Program NOFA, the City of Stockton should consider playing a more active role as a facilitator and connector in the local entrepreneurial ecosystem, to help achieve the goals and objectives of its EDSAP that also aligns with the missions of the ESOs and other nongovernmental agencies.

Creating a space, such as regular roundtable meetings, that encourages interaction between the organizations, in person and online, would be beneficial for the organizations and the entrepreneurs. The City of Stockton should consider hosting roundtables with the organizations so it can help build a sense of familiarity between the ESOs and build a sense of trust towards a common goal.

The City of Stockton should also focus on building long-term partnerships with nonprofits, educational institutions, private businesses, and other ESOs so it may host an entrepreneur summit that allows entrepreneurs to network, learn from successful entrepreneurs, gain knowledge from various ESOs, and allows them to share ideas, plans, and business ventures.

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APPENDIX A. IRB Exemption



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SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

IRB Notice of Approval

Date of Approval: 3/4/2021

Study Title: Entrepreneurship Resources in Stockton, California

Principal Investigator: Dr. Frances Edwards

Student(s): Angelina Abella

Other SJSU Team Members:

Funding Source: None

IRB Protocol Tracking Number: 20301

Type of Review

- Exempt Registration: Category of approval §46.104(d)(2ii)
- Expedited Review: Category of approval §46.110(a)()
- Full Review
- Modifications
- Continuing Review

Special Conditions

- Waiver of signed consent approved
- Waiver of some or all elements of informed consent approved
- Risk determination for device:
- Other:

Continuing Review

- Is not required. Principal Investigator must file a [status report](#) with the Office of Research one year from the approval date on this notice to communicate whether the research activity is ongoing. Failure to file a status report will result in closure of the protocol and destruction of the protocol file after three years.

Is required. An annual [continuing review renewal application](#) must be submitted to the Office of Research one year from the approval date on this notice. No human subjects research can occur after this date without continuing review and approval.

IRB Contact Information:

Alena Filip
Human Protections Analyst
Office of Research
Alena.Filip@jsu.edu
408-924-2479

Dr. Priya Raman
Institutional Review Board Chair

Dr. Mohamed Abousalem
Vice President for Research & Innovation
Institutional Official

Primary Investigator Responsibilities

- Any significant changes to the research must be submitted for review and approval prior to the implementation of the changes.
 - Reports of unanticipated problems, injuries, or adverse events involving risks to participants must be submitted to the IRB within seven calendar days of the primary investigator's knowledge of the event.
 - If the continuing review section of this notice indicates that continuing review is required, a request for continuing review must be submitted prior to the date the provided.
-

APPENDIX B. Entrepreneur Survey Questions

Entrepreneurship Resources in Stockton, California

1. Which of the following programs are you receiving this survey for?
 - One-on-one business services
 - Entrepreneurship accelerator program
 - Coworking incubator space
 - Access to financial capital

2. At what level would you consider your business?
 - Idea / planning stage
 - Start-up / launch stage
 - Survival stage
 - Growth stage

3. How did you hear about the program?
 - Brochure
 - Email promotion
 - Website
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Flyer
 - Other

4. Was the program material easy to understand?
 - Yes
 - No

5. Did the program provide you with the basic knowledge to start your business?

- Yes
- No

6. Please rate your level of satisfaction for the following:

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall program organization					
Instructors' knowledge					
Facility environment					
Administrative process					
Pricing of the program					

7. Was the program offered at a location that was easy to get to?

- Yes
- No

8. Was the program offered in your primary language?

- Yes
- No

9. Would you recommend this program to a fellow entrepreneur?

- Yes
- No

10. Do you keep in touch with other entrepreneurs you met in the program?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I would have liked to

11. Did the program offer the opportunity to meet and network with fellow entrepreneurs?

- Yes
- No

12. Would you be interested in attending entrepreneur meetups?

- Yes
- No

13. After completing this program, did you still need additional resources in order to continue with your business plans?

- Yes
- No

14. Were you able to access those resources?

- Yes
- No

15. Have you used any other entrepreneurship programs/services?

- Yes
- No

16. If yes, which one best describes the program?

- One-on-one business services
- Entrepreneurship accelerator program
- Coworking / incubator space

- Financial capital

17. If not, why not?

- I did not know there were other resources available
- I do not have time to participate in another program
- I do not have the financial means to participate in another program
- I feel well-prepared and do not need additional assistance

18. After using the resource(s), did you launch your business?

- Yes
- No
- Still in the process

19. Did COVID affect your business plans?

- Yes
- No

20. Were you employed while participating in the program?

- Yes
- No

21. What was your employment status while participating in the program?

- Employed full time (40 hours or more per week)
- Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week)
- Unemployed
- Student
- Retired
- Homemaker

- Self-employed
- Unable to work

22. What was your age while participating in the program?

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55 years or older

23. How would you best describe your race?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Multiracial or biracial
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other
- White

24. How would you describe your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

25. Do you have any family members with experience in starting and growing their business?

- Yes
- No

26. What is the highest level of education you received?

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree or higher

APPENDIX C. Entrepreneur Survey Questions - Spanish

La Programa de Ecosistema del Espíritu emprendedor en Stockton

1. ¿Para cuál de los siguientes programas está recibiendo esta encuesta?
 - Servicios empresariales individuales
 - Programa de acelerador de emprendimiento
 - Coworking/espacio de incubadora
 - Acceso a capital financiero
2. ¿A qué nivel consideraría su negocio?
 - Idea/Etapa de planificación
 - Inicio/etapa de lanzamiento
 - Etapa de supervivencia
 - Etapa de crecimiento
3. ¿Cómo se enteró del programa?
 - Folleto
 - Promocion de correo electrónico
 - El sitio de web
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Volante
 - Otro
4. ¿Fue fácil de entender el material del programa?
 - Sí
 - No
5. ¿El programa le proporcionó los conocimientos básicos para iniciar su negocio?
 - Sí
 - No
6. Por favor, califique su nivel de satisfacción por lo siguiente:

	Muy insatisfecho	Insatisfecho	Neutral	Satisfecho	Muy satisfecho
Organización general del programa					

El conocimiento del instructor					
El medioambiente de instalación					
Proceso administrativo					
Precio del programa					

7. ¿Se ofreció el programa en un lugar al que era fácil llegar?
 - Sí
 - No
8. ¿Se ofreció el programa en su idioma primario?
 - Sí
 - No
9. ¿Recomendaría este programa a un compañero emprendedor?
 - Sí
 - No
10. ¿Se mantiene en contacto con otros emprendedores que conoció en el programa?
 - Sí
 - No
 - No, pero me gustaría
11. ¿El programa ofrece la oportunidad de conocer y establecer contactos con otros emprendedores?
 - Sí
 - No
12. ¿Le interesaría asistir a encuentros de emprendedores?
 - Sí
 - No
13. Después de completar este programa, ¿aún necesitaba recursos adicionales para continuar con sus planes comerciales?
 - Sí
 - No
14. ¿Pudo acceder esos recursos?
 - Sí

- No
15. ¿Ha utilizado otros programas/servicios de emprendimiento?
- Sí
 - No
16. En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál describe mejor el programa?
- Servicios empresariales individuales
 - Programa de acelerador de emprendimiento
 - Coworking/espacio de incubadora
 - Recibido acceso a capital financiero
17. Si no, ¿por qué no?
- No sabía que había otros recursos disponibles
 - No tengo tiempo adicional para participar en otro programa
 - No tengo los medios financieros para participar en otro programa
 - Me siento bien preparado y no necesita ayuda adicional
18. Después de usar los recursos, ¿lanzó su negocio?
- Sí
 - No
 - Todavía en el proceso de planificación
19. ¿Afectó COVID sus planes de negocio?
- Sí
 - No
20. ¿Estaba empleado mientras participaba en el programa?
- Sí
 - No
21. ¿Cuál era su situación laboral mientras participaba en el programa?
- Empleado a tiempo completo (40 o más horas por semana)
 - Empleado a tiempo parcial (hasta 39 horas por semana)
 - Desempleado
 - Estudiante
 - Jubilado
 - Ama/o de casa
 - Trabajador/a por cuenta propia
 - No podía trabajar
22. ¿Qué edad tenía mientras participaba en el programa?
- 18-24 años
 - 25-34 años
 - 35-44 años
 - 45-54 años
 - 55 años o mas
23. ¿Cómo describiría mejor su raza?

- Índio americano o nativo/a de Alaska
 - Asiático
 - Negro o Afroamericano
 - Hispano o Latino
 - Multirracial o biracial
 - Nativos Hawaianos u otra islas del Pacífico
 - Otro
 - Blanco
24. ¿Cómo describiría su género?
- Mujer, incluyendo mujeres transgénero
 - Hombre, incluyendo hombre transgénero
 - No binario
 - Prefiero no decir
25. ¿Algún miembro de su familia tiene experiencia en iniciar y hacer crecer un negocio?
- Sí
 - No
26. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que recibió?
- Menos que un diploma de escuela secundaria
 - Un diploma de escuela secundaria o equivalente (e.j. GED)
 - Algunos estudios universitarios, no diploma
 - El título de asociado
 - Licenciatura
 - Maestría o mas

APPENDIX D. Entrepreneurs Survey Results

1. Which of the following program are you receiving this survey for?	Number
One-on-One business services	16
Entrepreneurship accelerator program	22
Coworking incubator space	1
Access to financial capital	2
N/A	4
TOTAL	45

2. At what level would you consider your business	Number
Idea / planning stage	6
Start-up / launch stage	15
Survival stage	14
Growth stage	9
N/A	1
TOTAL	45

3. How did you hear about the program?	Number
Brochure	1
Email promotion	12
Website	5
Facebook	1
Twitter	0
Flyer	1
Other	25
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

4. Was the program material easy to understand?	Number
Yes	43
No	2
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

5. Did the program provide you with the basic knowledge to start your business?	Number
Yes	35
No	10
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

6. Please rate your level of satisfaction for the following:							
	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A	TOTAL S
Overall program organization	2	2	3	15	23	0	45
Instructors' knowledge	3	0	5	10	25	2	45
Facility environment	1	2	5	18	18	1	45
Administrative process	2	2	4	15	19	3	45
Pricing of the program	0	1	8	10	24	2	45

7. Was the program offered at a location that was easy to get to?	Number
Yes	41
No	2
N/A	2
TOTAL	45

8. Was the program offered in your primary language?	Number
Yes	44
No	1
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

9. Would you recommend this program to a fellow entrepreneur?	Number
Yes	43
No	2
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

10. Do you keep in touch with other entrepreneurs you met in the program?	Number
Yes	24
No	15
No, but I would have liked to	6
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

11. Did the program offer the opportunity to meet and network with fellow entrepreneurs?	Numbers
Yes	30
No	15
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

12. Would you be interested in attending entrepreneur meetups?	Numbers
Yes	38
No	6
N/A	1
TOTAL	45

13. After completing this program, did you still need additional resources in order to continue with your business plans?	Numbers
Yes	34
No	10
N/A	1
TOTAL	45

14. Were you able to access those resources?	Numbers
Yes	30
No	13
N/A	2
TOTAL	45

15. Have you used any other entrepreneurship programs/services?	Numbers
Yes	16
No	29
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

16. If yes, which one best describes the program? (Mark all that apply)	Numbers
One-on-one business services	11
Entrepreneurship accelerator program	8
Coworking / incubator space	4
Financial capital	6
N/A	22
TOTAL	51

17. If not, why not?	Numbers
I did not know there were other resources available	19
I do not have time to participate in another program	4
I do not have the financial means to participate in another program	5
I feel well-prepared and do not need additional assistance	7
N/A	10
TOTAL	45

18. After using the resource(s), did you launch your business?	Numbers
Yes	20
No	4
Still in the process	19
N/A	2
TOTAL	45

19. Did COVID affect your business plans?	Numbers
Yes	38
No	7
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

20. Were you employed while participating in the program?	Numbers
Yes	23
No	21
N/A	1
TOTAL	45

21. What was your employment status while participating in the program?	Numbers
Employed full time (40 hours or more per week)	11
Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week)	3
Unemployed	6
Student	1
Retired	2
Homemaker	1
Self-employed	18
Unable to work	2
N/A	1
TOTAL	45

22. What was your age while participating in the program?	Numbers
18-24 years old	0
25-34 years old	5
35-44 years old	15
45-54 years old	14
55 years or older	11
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

23. How would you best describe your race?	Numbers
American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Asian	5
Black or African American	17
Hispanic or Latino	9
Multiracial or biracial	3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1
Other	2
White	7
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

24. How would you describe your gender?	Numbers
Female	27
Male	18
Non-binary	0
Prefer not to say	0
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

25. Do you have any family members with experience in starting and growing their business?	Numbers
Yes	23
No	22
N/A	0
TOTAL	45

26. What is the highest level of education you received?	Numbers
Less than a high school diploma	4
High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)	8
Some college, no degree	14
Associate's degree	7
Bachelor's degree	5
Master's degree or higher	6
N/A	1
TOTAL	45