

Empowering Youth through Entrepreneurship From East Africa to Chicago

By Nicole Robinson

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Executive Summary

According to the International Labor Organization's *Global Employment Trends for Youth* report, global youth unemployment is estimated at 73 million.¹ According to a report by global consulting firm EY, roughly \$150 billion a year in productivity is lost globally because of youth unemployment.² Although these young people have gained in terms of educational achievement, the employment gap continues to widen, which has helped fuel resentment and political action in the form of the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, and Black Lives Matter movements. Africa presents the biggest challenge and opportunity, with nearly 200 million youths who are willing to work but who have grown up in economies that lack sufficient traditional employment options.

One of Africa's rising stars, Nairobi, Kenya, has been recognized for its leadership in attempting to combat youth unemployment through entrepreneurship. Most notably, in 2015, Nairobi was home to the sixth annual Global Entrepreneurship Summit, an event designed to empower entrepreneurs at all stages of business development. The country's leadership in entrepreneurship is driven by an economy in which national youth unemployment is 17 percent, with estimates in Nairobi of over 30 percent.³ Although Kenya offers free primary education, improving quality remains an aspiration, as many students graduate with poor basic literacy and math skills. Students from families with more

resources choose private institutions over a crippled public system.⁴ Despite having strong social and family networks, some youths are enticed by petty crimes, gangs, and prostitution. Additionally, via gangs and militias, youths are often pawns of politicians seeking political gain by paying them to incite violence.

Nearly 8,000 miles away in Chicago, the third-largest city in America, the situation is equally troubling. Unemployment for those 16 to 24 has reached 18 percent and is a troubling 30.7 percent for black youths. Even more staggering, 47 percent of 20-to-24-year-old black youths were out of school and out of work in 2014. This is alarmingly high compared to 20 percent of Hispanic men and 10 percent of white men in the same age group.⁵ Additionally, violence in Chicago takes a particular toll on youths: for the five-year period 2009–2014, people 18 to 29 accounted for 51.9 percent of the city's homicide victims. Lack of opportunity, unstable family structures, substance abuse, mental-health problems, and education-system failures have contributed to an environment that makes young people vulnerable to gangs, crime, and violence.

Although these two global cities are geographically oceans apart, their social, economic, and education realities are strikingly similar. These shared challenges present a shared opportunity for government, community, and business stakeholders in each city to create an

environment where young people are inspired by entrepreneurship and leverage it as a tool to build the skills that lead to a small enterprise or a springboard to entry-level work. As part of a larger, underdeveloped-country economy, Nairobi's youths have become entrepreneurs out of necessity. An entrepreneur by necessity requires different skills and supports than an entrepreneur who has identified a significant market opportunity and plans to grow a business and create many formal jobs for others. The Kenyan government, the World Bank, and leading nongovernmental organizations have undertaken various creative efforts to support youth entrepreneurship, including creating a 2030 Vision long-range plan and establishing a Youth Enterprise Fund to help develop and support new ideas. Although some of these inspiring plans have experienced some executional challenges,⁶ there is merit in exploring the glimmers of progress achieved and how they might inspire leaders some 8,000 miles away. Chicago's rich business and entrepreneurial metropolis is better positioned to creatively and effectively invest in youth enterprise in ways that lead to real opportunities.

Helpful insights to a robust entrepreneurship ecosystem are reflected in the United Nations' support of the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance, the Sustainable Development Goals, and most recently the UN Conference on Trade and Development. With these insights as a guide, Chicago's pathway to creating an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem in which underserved youth entrepreneurs are successful resides in the execution of three key actions: (1) scaling up youth entrepreneurship learning, (2) transforming business mentorships, and (3) infusing funds to develop entrepreneurs and their ideas.⁷

The increasing momentum around youth entrepreneurship sets the stage for Chicago to reflect on existing efforts with an eye toward envisioning the future entrepreneurship ecosystem for young people. The optimal ecosystem will be truly inclusive and reach beyond those who have traditionally had easier access to entrepreneurship resources and thinking to support the

typically underrepresented. This paper will offer actions business, governments, foundations, and community organizations can explore to ramp up these ecosystems for future youth entrepreneurs.

Who Is the Youth Entrepreneur?



Simon Macharia Wanjiru, Kenyan Youth Entrepreneur

Before joining the Kenya Youth Business Trust (KYBT) entrepreneurship program, Wanjiru relied on friends who would call him to service their computers for a small fee. The money he earned was never enough to pay rent or other necessities. Through KYBT's program, Wanjiru received training to write a business plan and received seed capital to start Kings Computer Services. Wanjiru is better positioned to support himself and proudly says, *"Today I have my own business, I can sufficiently support my household; I am happy not to have to go back to parents to ask for assistance anymore—that used to be so embarrassing to me."*

Rising youth entrepreneurs 15 to 24 years old operating in emerging markets like Nairobi often become entrepreneurs out of necessity. In underdeveloped economies with limited traditional business employment, entrepreneurship has emerged as an innovative alternative to traditional social and economic development actions. Interestingly, entrepreneurship by necessity is not limited to emerging markets. In fact, entrepreneurs in developed cities report starting their business not because they had a truly innovative idea but because they needed the income.

To set the context for youth entrepreneurs, Youth Business International (YBI) offers the best definition to distinguish underserved youths from their better-resourced, better-educated, and more-experienced counterparts. YBI is a

global network of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to helping young people grow and start their own businesses. According to YBI, the underserved youth entrepreneur is self-employed (or wants to be self-employed) or has started a small business (or wants to start a small business) in either the formal or informal sector.⁸ The primary motivator for exploring entrepreneurship is likely the need to generate income. But developing entrepreneurship leadership competencies such as initiative, innovation, creativity, and being able to navigate the work environment are even bigger benefits. Developing these competencies sets the stage for young people to fulfill their business dream or continue education pursuits to secure traditional employment. Further, youth entrepreneurs recognize the necessity of hard work and possess a drive to defy the odds.

Additionally, the Aspen Institute's Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy Group states that entrepreneurship education fosters the ability to:

- recognize opportunities in one’s life
- pursue such opportunities by generating new ideas and marshaling the needed resources
- create and open a new venture
- think and create critically⁹

The pursuit of learning and developing skills that lead to income may be compelling for young people in Chicago and Nairobi who may have infrequent exposure to the broader economy because of community isolation.



Latrell Garnett, Chicago Youth Entrepreneur

Budding entrepreneur Latrell Garnett plans to launch QuickShoppie, an app that will redefine local shopping. The app will enable residents to order food and over-the-counter drug items for home delivery. Garnett is piloting the app in the Hyde Park community and tapping students and other youths to handle pickup and delivery. Garnett is operating out of the University of Chicago Innovation Exchange and wants to leverage his passion for business to serve communities. In 2015, Garnett debuted his business concept at a Technori start-up showcase event.

Optimizing the Ecosystem for Young People

The optimal ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship is not unlike that for traditional entrepreneurs, but the challenge is much greater for underserved youths who bear the burden of social gaps and exclusion that make the battle for success more difficult. In recognition of this fact, a growing number of organizations, including Accenture Global Consulting, the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance, and most recently the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have offered policy guides to help countries think through how to evolve their ecosystems for youth entrepreneurs. After the UNCTAD report was released, Katherine Ellis, director of youth affairs, Commonwealth Secretariat, said:

“As youth unemployment hits critical levels, it is vital we create environments conducive to youth entrepreneurship. Given the right opportunities and

support, young people have huge potential to drive economic growth. By making this new policy guide available, we hope to help governments invest strategically in the next generation of entrepreneurs.¹⁰

Leveraging these expert insights as a guide, this report will examine the opportunities and challenges Nairobi and Chicago face in evolving their respective youth entrepreneurship ecosystems through the following three dimensions:

1. Scaling up youth entrepreneurship learning
2. Transforming mentorship
3. Infusing funds to develop entrepreneurs and their ideas

Chart 1
Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

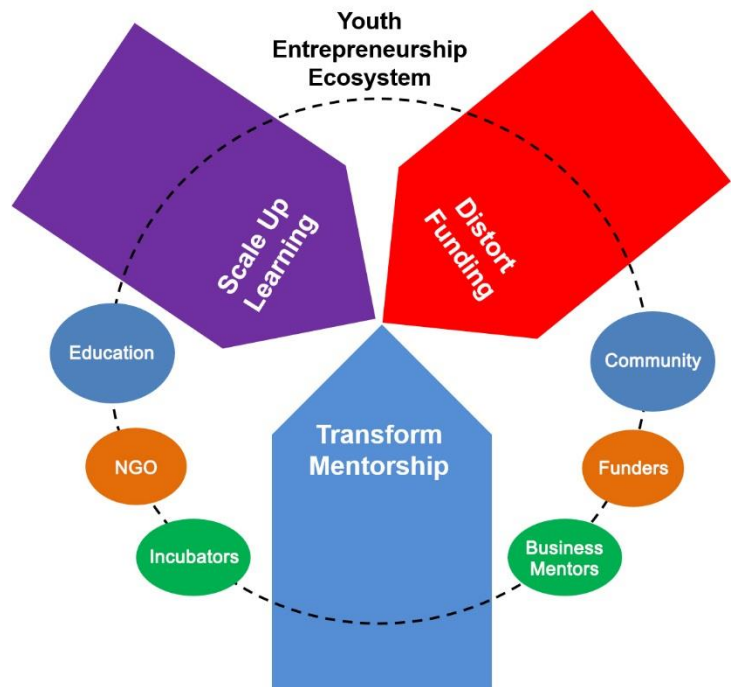


Chart by Nicole Robinson

Scaling Up Youth Entrepreneurship Learning

Overwhelmingly, leading youth entrepreneurship experts stress the importance of equipping students with the skills and stamina needed to be successful. The preparation for entrepreneurship does not begin once someone starts a business, but it can begin as early as elementary school, where even the most basic principles of entrepreneurship can be instilled. Francis Chigunta from the University of

Zambia is a leading expert in identifying employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for ex-combatant youth in post-conflict countries. He suggests there are learning opportunities for young people across the various states of entrepreneurship: pre-entrepreneur, budding entrepreneur, and emergent entrepreneur. Pre-entrepreneurs may have instincts or ideas typically demonstrated by entrepreneurs but don't have the business context. Budding entrepreneurs are those who have started a business and desire to sustain it, while emergent entrepreneurs are striving to grow. At every entrepreneurship stage, a strong learning and development environment can help propel business ideas to action. To ensure the youth entrepreneurship environments are structured for success, it is important for cities like Nairobi and Chicago to assess the learning environments for entrepreneurship and to take actions that help them evolve.

In Chicago, the majority of curriculum-based youth entrepreneurship education efforts reaching underserved youth are led by the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), the Future Founders Foundation, and Good City Chicago. Other organizations targeting underserved youth through extracurricular entrepreneurship training include the Chicago Urban League, the Westside Youth Technical Entrepreneurship Center, and the YWCA. Each group plays a vital role in educating youth in the principles of entrepreneurship.

The NFTE is the leading national nonprofit bringing entrepreneurship training to high school students in low-income communities. Reaching approximately 30 Chicago public high schools, the NFTE trains teachers to deliver a semester-long, evidence-based curriculum while it recruits entrepreneurs and business professionals to help coach teens. As the NFTE arrived in Chicago in 2005, Future Founders emerged under the leadership of Groupon founder Brad Keywell, who wanted to nurture the entrepreneurial spirit in Chicago's youth through extracurricular experiences, summer camps, and exposure to entrepreneurs. Newer to the scene is Good City Chicago, which focuses on developing social entrepreneurs in underserved communities through incubator programs, workshops, and capacity-building opportunities. Distinctive to the Good City model is the focus on building new social enterprises through community collaboration.

Each of the organizations brings high-quality programs to underserved youth, but they are challenged to scale in a way that would have a transformative impact on Chicago's youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. In particular, Chicago

could benefit from expanded entrepreneurship education at the elementary, high school, and community college levels. At the high school level, the battle for classroom content and time is strong, so scaling up will require a multipronged approach of expanding existing in-school programs, delivering more out-of-school activities, and providing enrichment through community-based incubators and makers' spaces that engage youth in entrepreneurship and business creation.

Options for under-resourced youths to continue elements of an entrepreneurship education beyond high school varies from entrepreneurship courses and clubs at City Colleges to the Chicago Entrepreneurship Center at the Chicago Urban League to groups like BLUE 1647 and the University of Chicago Innovation Exchange. Allies in entrepreneurship across Chicago would benefit from a citywide consortium that involves young people in the planning process to design the best entrepreneurship education strategy for underserved youths that is inclusive and will foster broad learning and best practices. In fact, following in the footsteps of Nairobi, Chicago would make a great host city for the 2018 Global Entrepreneurship summit, where youth and adult entrepreneurs could connect with the world and Chicago could unveil its strategy for an entrepreneurship ecosystem.

In Nairobi, the government has made entrepreneurship education a top priority. With so much excitement over Africa's development, an interesting mix of resources has been made available through governments, NGOs, and the private sector to help develop the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. One of the top players in the ecosystem is the Kenyan Youth Business Trust (KYBT), which is a member of the Youth Business International network, an organization dedicated to building the capacity of organizations developing youth entrepreneurs. The KYBT offers youth entrepreneurs business development and management training based on the International Labor Organization's methodology and materials. Additionally, a participating youth with a viable business plan can submit the plan for seed capital and is matched with a volunteer business mentor for three years.

Most recently, the Safaricom Foundation has launched a revolving fund aimed at assisting youth-owned businesses in Kenya lacking access to microcredit. The fund will be managed by the NGOs Junior Achievement Kenya and Hand in Hand Eastern Africa, with beneficiaries set to be trained in entrepreneurship and business literacy before becoming eligible for loans.

Others involved in the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem include Youth Initiatives-Kenya (YIKE), the Mara Foundation, and the Asante Africa Foundation. YIKE is an NGO that provides 45 groups from informal settlements across Nairobi with entrepreneurial and financial support. The Mara Foundation incorporates three key integral platforms, maintaining a set focus on developing a small business ecosystem to support entrepreneurs, with a particular emphasis on youth and women entrepreneurs in line with the founder's vision to create change for a sustainable future. The Asante Africa Foundation developed the Leadership and Entrepreneurship Incubator to inspire people 15 to 20 to visualize themselves as entrepreneurs, leaders, global citizens, and change agents in their communities.

Even further, media companies are helping build the ecosystem through the production of a TV series, *Vijana in Action*, which has been aired nationally by the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. So far, 48 successful entrepreneurs have been showcased on a national scale through *Vijana*. Viewership of this program is estimated at more than 200,000 youths. There is also social engagement throughout the show, with over 12,000 youths responding to different aspects of it through text messaging.

To scale up partnership across Nairobi's youth entrepreneurship ecosystem, the KYBT has joined a new consortium, the Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs-East Africa (CAYE-EA). The vision of CAYE-EA is for "a thriving environment for young entrepreneurs in East Africa" that contributes to sustainable economic growth and social development. The new network's mission will be "to connect, unify and build the capacity of young entrepreneurs across East Africa, so as to drive trade, advocate for change and enhance the entrepreneurship culture." Participating countries are Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Uganda.¹¹

Transforming Business Mentorships

Chicago and Nairobi have received praise for their positions in the global world as emerging hot spots for startups and entrepreneurs. Chicago, home of 1871, the top-ranked university-affiliated incubator in the United States, is producing some of the brightest entrepreneurs. Most notable in Chicago's entrepreneurship trajectory is Groupon, which, upon its initial public offering, became the fastest growing company of all time. Cofounder Brad Keywell also nurtures innovation through the

establishment of Chicago Ideas Week to help inspire ideas, collaborations, and funding.

Nairobi has earned the nickname Silicon Savannah, and Bloomberg Business News predicts that by 2018, Nairobi's tech scene could be worth \$1 billion. Over the last six years, Nairobi has experienced the perfect storm in which improved Internet and mobile-technology and money access converged with the necessity of inspired ideas and a willing government. Nairobi's most famous early example is the Ushahidi app (meaning "witness" in Swahili), developed in 2007 to digitally track outbreaks of violence during Kenya's election crisis. The Ushahidi software that evolved became a highly effective tool for digitally mapping demographic events and is one of Africa's first globally recognized apps. As Kenya shifted back to stability, requests came in from around the globe to adapt Ushahidi for other purposes. By the end of 2008, the app had become Ushahidi the international tech company, which now has multiple applications in more than 20 countries.

With unique tech startup success, Chicago and Nairobi are well positioned to play roles in shaping the youth entrepreneurship movement through transformative mentorship. Given young people who are early in their education, growth, and development, mentorship plays a particularly critical role far beyond what it would mean for an entrepreneur based in a traditional incubator setting. Members of Chicago's startup scene and providers of youth entrepreneurship training overwhelmingly believe teaching the principles of entrepreneurship is a worthwhile investment in young people. But the path to a successful business is difficult for a fully resourced adult and increasingly more difficult for a young person living in an underserved community.

One way successful Chicago business owners are lending their time and talents is through involvement with university-based incubators, serving as business-competition judges, and speaking to NFTE and Future Founders participants. To accelerate business-owner engagement with youth, the Illinois Science and Technology Coalition (ISTC) created a Mentor Matching Engine that teams Illinois high school students with science, technology, engineering, and math professionals, entrepreneurs, and experienced business leaders. The mentoring relationship is completely virtual, taking place online through the ISTC's unique portal, which leverages video, text, and other social tools to create a sustained engagement between a young person and the mentor. The ISTC is still testing the portal, which currently reaches over

900 students working on individual and group projects. To expand reach to youth entrepreneurs, the ISTC has teamed up with the NFTE, which, along with Future Founders, are all housed in 1871. They are hopeful that this colocation with entrepreneurs might inspire more engagement with their youth entrepreneur program participants.

A pivotal incubator transforming how young people on the South and West Sides are engaged in innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship is BLUE 1647, founded by CEO Emile Cambry. Cambry has assembled a coworking space for local startups that also serves as a learning lab for over 1,200 Chicago Public Schools students. BLUE 1647 offers an afterschool option that inspires creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Students are advised by successful entrepreneurs who are willing to coach and offer wisdom. Similar to some of the NGOs working with youths, BLUE 1647 struggles to attract enough entrepreneurs and organizations to give young people opportunities to work and learn. Additionally, BLUE 1647 has redefined inclusive entrepreneurship with incubator satellite spaces in the Chicago neighborhoods of Blue Island, Englewood, and Lawndale and with ones soon to open in Roseland and Austin.¹²

Generally, most entrepreneurs are open to meaningful mentorship but struggle with how to be impactful and long to broaden their community perspective in the spirit of forming more transformative mentorships. Entrepreneurs are driven, creative individuals who often value speed as currency and therefore want to see fast results with financial impact. One entrepreneur who believes in the power of transformative mentorship and its impact is Andre Hughes, chairman of investment firm C3 Venture Group LLC and founder of Powered by Action, an organization offering innovative technology and collaboration tools to nonprofit organizations operating in developing and distressed communities. As former managing partner of Accenture, he has mentored young business owners and believes that by penetrating the walled gardens of Chicago's underserved neighborhoods, the city's entrepreneurship ecosystem can tap the passion of young people to make their small business ideas and communities flourish.

Another entrepreneur who has bridged the gap to transformative mentorship is Alan Matthew, CEO of start-up investment firm Tribal Ventures LLC. He is lending his voice to underserved youths by advising African-American and Hispanic groups connected with Chicago-based Black Tech Mecca, a collaborative community committed to building a thriving black tech ecosystem. To accelerate his

individual efforts, he will soon launch Tribal Mentor Labs, an incubator space designed to bet on the higher risk entrepreneurs from underresourced communities who may need additional business support and mentoring to ensure success. To maximize impact, he'll recruit other business leaders in specific specialty areas. Matthew's mindset, passion for entrepreneurship, and overall optimism fuel his interest in supporting youth entrepreneurs.

Part of bridging the gap between underserved youth and entrepreneurs is to help both groups think creatively about how to collaborate. One stakeholder said his best youth entrepreneurship success stories involved young people who were able to leave their neighborhoods, even for brief periods, to gain exposure to other cultures, communities, and thinking. This stakeholder also felt that through media and other outlets, some business leaders buy into the cycle of low expectations of underserved communities. The founder of NFTE, Steve Mariotti, said:

"I know a secret which, if fully understood by our government, business, and community leaders could have enormous positive implications for the future of our society.

"Simply put, the secret is this: Children born into poverty develop special gifts that prepare them for business formation and wealth creation. . . .

"In short, youth from low-income communities have 'street smarts,' or what we at NFTE call 'business smarts.' Precisely because of their background—that is, because of their experience surviving in a challenging world—they are able to perceive and pursue short-lived opportunities that others, more content with their lot in life, can easily miss."¹³

A possibility for Chicago entrepreneurs and investors might be to offer a two-day boot camp that connects them to communities, youth entrepreneurs, and the issues they face. Designed as an immersion experience, this effort could offer insights that would inspire entrepreneurs and investors to bet their time and talents on young people. Chicago might draw inspiration from Angel Resource Institute (ARI), offering expedited two-to-three-day workshops to aspiring angel investors and entrepreneurs seeking angel investments around the world. ARI promotes a peer-led education model, urging entrepreneur investors to share business skills and practical knowledge

with each other. It has conducted more than 300 courses in 15 countries angelresourceinstitute.org.

Another best practice is to celebrate entrepreneurs like Brad Keywell, Alan Matthews, Emile Cambry, and Andre Hughes who are working with underserved communities. By raising the visibility of local mentors, Chicago and Nairobi can encourage more high-quality, transformative mentorship. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Adolf F. Monosson Prize for Entrepreneurial Mentoring has done just that in Boston. There, a committee comprising leaders of local entrepreneurship organizations accepts nominations for great mentors and honors the recipients at an annual ceremony. Mentors tend to mention the award prominently in their biographies, encouraging other local business leaders and successful entrepreneurs to give back to the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Chicago could launch a similar effort for entrepreneurs supporting youth in underserved communities.

Individual business leaders are also contributing to strengthen the ecosystem. Entrepreneurs in Africa like Tony Elumelu are determined to "prove that the Africa private sector can itself be the primary generator of economic development." His foundation is dedicated to the promotion and celebration of entrepreneurship and excellence in business leadership across the continent, with initiatives like the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Program. Leaders of small and medium-sized enterprises volunteer through programs with KYBT to mentor entrepreneurs.

Infusing Funds to Support Entrepreneurs and Their Ideas

The need for increased funding is a common theme in the UNCTAD research as well as from other public- and private-sector research policy frameworks. This theme was echoed by stakeholders in Nairobi and Chicago, but both agreed that youth entrepreneurship as a tool for social and economic development is a relatively new phenomenon. Nairobi's focus on youth entrepreneurship has attracted investment from the US Agency for International Development and major foundations

operating in and outside of Nairobi. The most widely known is the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF), established to provide loans to youth-led enterprises, offer business development, support technical assistance, and provide marketing and sales training. The fund partnered with 32 financial intermediaries to provide youth direct access to funds, either as individuals or as organized entities. The original YEDF was established with approximately \$10 million, but some evaluations of the program uncovered mismanagement, which has led to several program management changes. Despite these challenges, other countries like South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand have successfully established entrepreneurship funds targeting 12-to-18-years-olds.

The funders most active in Chicago's youth entrepreneurship space include the Coleman Foundation, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange Foundation, and the Motorola Solutions Foundation. They are investing in organizations like NFTE, Future Founders, and Good City Chicago while also teaming up with universities and community colleges. In other cases, traditional workforce development funders are channeling traditional employment training to support entrepreneurship-type activities. Additionally, there is much to learn from organizations like Good City Chicago that have established innovation funds targeting investment in women-led enterprises. On the national stage, Chicago should seek out funding options through organizations like the Case Foundation, whose strategic focus on ensuring entrepreneurship includes women, minorities, and other underserved populations. Part of the opportunity for funders, implementing NGO partners, and the broader entrepreneurship community is to build better collaboration across stakeholders and develop a common strategic vision for youth entrepreneurship. Generating an overall strategy will help better leverage existing resources and determine exactly how much incremental funding is needed to support an ecosystem for youth entrepreneurs. Establishing an innovation fund is one of many opportunities youth entrepreneurship advocates can explore to place a big bet to invest in the human spirit, creativity, and ambition of Chicago's young people.

Chart 2

Opportunities and Actions to Support Chicago’s Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

Opportunity Areas	Recommended Actions
<p>Scaling Up Youth Entrepreneurship Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a citywide entrepreneurship consortium to develop a comprehensive plan for cultivating youth learning and continued best practices. • Create a learning environment that supports youths across the entrepreneurial continuum, with curriculum across elementary school, high school, and community college. • Continue to invest in community-based entrepreneur education centers, incubators, and maker spaces. • Consider hosting the 2018 Global Entrepreneurship summit to enable youth and adult entrepreneurs to connect with the world and unveil its citywide strategy for Chicago’s entrepreneurship ecosystem. • Engage youth throughout the vision and planning process to ensure community needs are met.
<p>Transforming Business Mentorships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the stage for transformative mentorship through a boot camp equipping successful entrepreneurs and venture capitalists with social insights into young people and their home communities. • Drive an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem by teaming up high-risk entrepreneurs and angel investors with underserved youths for coaching and business development. • Include successful entrepreneurs in the vision and planning process to ensure plans align with the business community.
<p>Infusing Funds to Support Entrepreneurs and Their Ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scan the national and global landscapes of funding opportunities to identify all possible resources available to underserved youth. • Create a citywide entrepreneurship private innovation fund with support from businesses, NGOs, and government to fund businesses that will provide startup capital to individuals/groups with viable business propositions. • Channel loans through community-based organizations to strengthen commitment and social cohesion across youth entrepreneurs.

The Emerging Leaders Program

The Emerging Leaders (ELs) Program prepares the next generation of leaders in Chicago's public, private, and nonprofit sectors to be thoughtful, internationally savvy individuals by deepening their understanding of global affairs and policy. During thought-provoking discussions, dinners, and other events, ELs gain a broader world view, hone their foreign policy skills, and examine key global issues. Emerging Leaders become part of a network of globally fluent leaders who will continue to raise the bar for Chicago as a leading global city.

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Their efforts have resulted in another great group that The Chicago Council is proud to have as Emerging Leaders. Our sincere appreciation goes to the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Foundation for their support of the Emerging Leaders Class of 2016.

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Born in Chicago and a product of the public school system, Nicole R. Robinson has spent her business career building bridges between communities, individuals, and corporations. Most recently she served as senior director of community involvement for Mondelēz International and president of its foundation, she leads community programs designed to promote good nutrition and healthy lifestyles and to inspire volunteer service. These award-winning programs spanned the globe, touching five continents, while reaching underserved and underrepresented neighborhoods. Under Robinson's leadership, the Mondelēz International Foundation has received numerous honors for outstanding and innovative programming. She has worked with the United Nations World Food Programme and variety of multinational NGOs, including CARE, Save the Children, INMED Partnerships for Children. Today Nicole proudly serves as Vice President of Community Impact for the Greater Chicago Food Depository a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing food to hungry people, while striving to end hunger. Through a network of 650 pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and mobile pantries, Nicole partners with communities to make good nutritious food accessible to families across Chicago.

Endnotes

- ¹ Global estimates in this report apply the age definition of 15–24 for youth, and Chicago-specific references apply the age definition as 16–24. Developing countries like Kenya typically define youth as 15–29. Differences exist in the way national governments define and measure youth, and there is growing momentum to increase the upper age limit to better reflect increasing educational attainment and postponement of labor market entry beyond the age of 24.
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- ⁵ Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz, “Nearly Half of Young Black Men in Chicago out of Work, out of School: Report,” *Chicago Tribune*, January 25, 2016, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/ct-youth-unemployment-urban-league-0126-biz-20160124-story.html>
- ⁶ Oduol Stephen Okoth, Simeon Okelo, Fredrick Aila, Abiud Ochieng Awiti, Maria Onyango, Martin Ogutu, and Odhiambo Odera, “Effect of Youth Enterprise Development Fund on Youth Enterprises in Kenya,” *International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics* 2, no. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 2013), <http://www.youtheconomicopportunities.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource/Effect%20of%20the%20Youth%20Enterprise%20Development%20Fund%20on%20Youth%20Enterprises%20in%20Kenya.pdf> .
- ⁷ The phrase *entrepreneurship ecosystem* refers to individuals, companies, nongovernmental organizations, and governments that interact to influence the development of entrepreneurs and their firms in a single metropolitan area or region. Healthy ecosystems enable entrepreneurs to access the resources they need to grow and create jobs and value for their communities. Research suggests that the best ecosystems follow a specific cycle of growth, in which local entrepreneurs who succeed in building scalable firms go on to reinvest their financial, intellectual, and social capital into the next generation of local entrepreneurs and companies.
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- ⁹ Aspen Institute Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy Group, *Youth Entrepreneurship Education in America: A Policymaker’s Action Guide*, 2008, https://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/pubs/YESG_Policy_Guide.pdf.
- ¹⁰ AllAfrica.com, “Africa: UNCTAD and Commonwealth Launch Guide to Youth Entrepreneurship,” press release, Commonwealth News and Information Service, Nov. 24, 2015, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201511251618.html>.
- ¹¹ Gabriella Mulligan, “6 East African Countries Form Entrepreneurship Alliance,” *Disrupt Africa*, May 26, 2015, <http://disrupt-africa.com/2015/05/6-east-african-countries-form-entrepreneurship-alliance/>.
- ¹² Meg Graham, “Blue 1647’s Emile Cambry Bringing Coworking, Accelerator to Englewood,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 6, 2015, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/bluesky/originals/chi-blue-1647-greater-englewood-emile-cambry-bsi-20150403-story.html>.
- ¹³ Aspen Institute Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy Group, *Youth Entrepreneurship Education in America*. Second reference to this source so that’s all you need in the citation.

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