

Frequently Asked Questions
NJHSA Jewish Poverty Challenge
May 2019

Q1. Do I have to travel out of state during the incubation program?

A1. No, more than 80% of the program will be virtual and the other 20% will be at your office.

Q2. How much time will I have to dedicate to the program?

A2. We estimate about 10 hours per week will be required to successfully complete the program.

Q3. How many of my coworkers have to participate during the program?

A3. You should have at least one lead person committed to the program and at least one support person helping you along the way. We find that teams with more than one person typically accomplish more during the program.

Q4. How would participating in an incubator benefit my organization?

A4. The incubator will provide you with a structure to engage with your environment, gain a deeper understanding of your clients, identify potential partners, address potential obstacles, and test underlying assumptions. The approach is action oriented with less focus on research and more on engagement - running measured tests in the market to learn, evolve and improve.

Q5. Do I need any specific technology or communication platforms?

A5. You will need access to a computer with internet access, Webcam for video conference and a gmail account.

Q6. Are the sessions One-on-One or classroom style?

A6. Most sessions will be held in group format (classroom style) and each week we will have several One-on-One sessions with each participating team. Most of these interactions will take place on the phone or using a video conferencing technology such as Zoom.

Q7. Is there any out-of-pocket cost that I need to account for?

A7. If you have access to a laptop with a high-speed internet connection, the only out-of-pocket expenses will be office supplies.

Q8. What do I get at the end of the program?

A8. At completion, you will have (1) a well-rounded view of how to take your project to the next level; (2) experience and skills employing a lean approach to launch new or improved solutions to existing problems; and (3) direct feedback from clients, partners and funders on the viability of your approaches.

Q9. How important are collaborations as a part of a successful proposal?

A9. Collaborations are critical to the creation of a high impact solution. Few if any organizations possess the diversity of resources and expertise necessary to help clients overcome the range of obstacles keeping them in poverty or pulling them back in once they've escaped. Meaningful collaborations among organizations with the required resources and expertise will almost always be a part of a scalable solution (see Question #2 below for the definition of "scalable").

Q10. In the request for proposal and during the information session, we used the terms "scale" or "scalable". What does this mean in context of the Jewish Poverty Challenge?

A10. In business, the term "scalable" general refers to a business's ability to grow over time, increase profits and adapt to the inevitable market challenges associated with growth. In context of the Jewish Poverty Challenge, the term has another meaning – specifically, the term refers to the leverage inherent in your solution. In other words, how will your solution enable you to generate an increase in measurable impact per unit of investment when compared to existing solutions?

Q11. To qualify for the Jewish Poverty Challenge, what percentage of your targeted clients must be Jewish?

A11. To qualify for the Jewish Poverty Challenge, at least 50% of your targeted clients must be Jewish.

Q12. How aggressive should applicants be in terms of the potential impact of their solutions?

A12. The applicants should be both ambitious and aspirational in their proposed solutions. As an example, it would be easy and pragmatic to conclude that the lack of affordable housing is an unsolvable problem in context of current resources, economic conditions, and other practical constraints. We have found, however, in working with for-profit and nonprofit organizations, that aspirational goals help facilitate breakthrough thinking, even if the initial approaches prove to be impractical. Applicants may, however, find it helpful to focus on a well-defined clientele, with a specific set of circumstances and challenges.

Q13. Could you provide a few examples of the challenges addressed by participants in the Jewish Poverty Challenge workshop at the Network's annual conference?

A13. The challenges included innovations in food pantry operations; case management services; affordable housing; workforce development services; transportation; financial literacy services; partnerships with local clergy or other Jewish communal organizations; volunteer engagement; emergency financial assistance operations; data collection; assessment and monitoring; staff recruitment, retention, development and training; client outreach and/or targeted services to key populations. The key populations included the elderly, single parent households, persons with disabilities, unemployed and underemployed persons, and Holocaust Survivors, among others.