



**NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL  
BLACK FOUNDER  
ACCELERATOR**

powered by **gener8tor**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator®  
Powered by gener8tor invests \$1M into ten new startups  
Innovative companies selected for 12-week accelerator program**

**Milwaukee, WI** - Ten new, fast-growing startup companies from across the country have each been selected to receive a \$100,000 investment and participate in the Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor.

The ten selected startups are providing wide-ranging inclusive and innovative solutions for small businesses, bridging wealth and housing gaps, increasing accessibility within the financial planning space and more.

The Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor program is made possible by a partnership with Northwestern Mutual. Research shows that undercapitalized founders receive less than two percent of venture capital. To combat this substantial funding disparity for entrepreneurs, each selected startup receives \$100,000 investment and inclusion in a 12-week intensive program with access to individualized coaching and mentorship from industry-leading professionals. This is one of many core components to Northwestern Mutual's Sustained Action for Racial Equity (SARE) initiative, which was created to advance bold, sustainable change that accelerates Northwestern Mutual's commitment to fight racism, prejudice and social injustice with a focus on creating inclusive and thriving communities.

Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor received more than 525 applications from across the country for the program. The 10 selected companies were

chosen based on their growth potential, investor readiness and strategic alignment with Northwestern Mutual.

"As we witness the remarkable achievements of each cohort, we are reminded that programs like these are essential in fostering a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem," said Abim Kolawole, Chief Audit Executive at Northwestern Mutual and executive sponsor of the company's SARE initiative. "We hope that the success of these founders will inspire future generations of entrepreneurs to pursue their dreams."

"This program's success is an honest reflection of our company's unwavering support to create a more diverse industry by helping founders propel their businesses forward," said Craig Schedler, Managing Director of Northwestern Mutual Future Ventures. "We are confident that this next cohort of bright entrepreneurs will use the resources provided in this program to become leaders in their respective sectors."

At the end of the Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor program, the startup founders will pitch their companies to key stakeholders, community partners and the public at a Showcase event at Northwestern Mutual's Headquarters at 12 p.m. CT, Tuesday, Oct. 8. Please register at this [registration link](#).

Startup founders interested in learning more about gener8tor's programming or applying to a future Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor program can visit the [website](#), or reach out to Managing Director Mfoniso Ekong at [mfoniso@gener8tor.com](mailto:mfoniso@gener8tor.com). Those interested in mentoring these companies or getting involved in other ways are also encouraged to connect.

# Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor 2024 Spring and Fall Cohorts

## Cadence Cash



**Cadence Cash** transforms financial support for small businesses (SMBs). Cadence Cash's AI-driven platform provides actionable insights, bias-free strategic capital, and a virtual assistant who acts as a financial co-pilot for small businesses. **Within seven months from the launch of its beta, Cadence Cash grew its registered users base to over 2100+ users and its loan pipeline from \$0 - \$8M+.**

Founder and CEO: Charles Inokon | [charles@cadencecash.com](mailto:charles@cadencecash.com) | [cadencecash.com](https://cadencecash.com)

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Location: Raleigh, North Carolina

## Cyber Pop-up



**Cyber Pop-up** secures small businesses (SMBs) through a managed marketplace powered by vetted cybersecurity experts. Cyber Pop-up's unique Cybersecurity Concierge Center offers a flexible, trustworthy and efficient way for SMBs to get fast access to vetted cyber experts and Services. **Cyber Pop-up recently secured a cyber talent partnership with ISC2, the world's largest cybersecurity organization and has helped SMBs in product avoid an estimated \$5M in potential breach impacts.**

Founder and CEO: Christine Izuakor | [christine@cyberpopup.com](mailto:christine@cyberpopup.com) | [cyberpopup.com](https://cyberpopup.com)

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Location: Chicago, Illinois

## Leap



**Leap** bridges the racial wealth and housing gap by providing access to capital to underserved homeowners through Home Equity Agreements (HEAs). Leap's HEAs are shared agreements between a homeowner and Leap, where the homeowner receives an upfront lump sum of liquidity in return for sharing in their home's appreciation. **Leap has partnered with EXP Commercial, a publicly traded real estate brokerage with over 90,000 agents who will have the potential to earn a commission for each contract they originate.**

Founder and CEO: Ashley Bete | [ashley@leaphei.com](mailto:ashley@leaphei.com) | [leaphei.com](https://leaphei.com)

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Location: Los Angeles, California

## Matrix Rental Solutions



**Matrix Rental Solutions** revolutionizes the residential rental application process. As the first Universal Residential Rental Application, Matrix simplifies and accelerates leasing by consolidating the entire process into one application, one screening and one fee. **To date, Matrix Rental Solutions has generated over \$200K with a 2024 ARR opportunity of \$2M!**

Founder and CEO: Sipho Simela | [sipho@mymatrixrent.com](mailto:sipho@mymatrixrent.com) | [mymatrixrent.com](http://mymatrixrent.com)

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Location: Stamford, Connecticut

## Sandbox



**Sandbox Wealth** provides turnkey banking solutions for independent financial advisors that deepen relationships and drive organic growth. Combining cash management, credit solutions and sophisticated analytics, Sandbox has created a comprehensive platform that empowers independent firms to compete with legacy private banks and wirehouses. **Sandbox has an active pipeline of 8 independent firms managing about \$200B with a pilot planned for Q3 2024.**

Founder and CEO: Ray Denis | [ray@sandboxwealth.com](mailto:ray@sandboxwealth.com) | [sandboxwealth.com](http://sandboxwealth.com)

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Location: New York, New York

## AssetLink



[AssetLink](#) increases connectivity within the wealth management space through a proprietary relationship intelligence platform. Through a robust data ingestion engine, AssetLink makes data AI compatible and readable. **AssetLink has over \$1T in AUA from over 20,000 wealth managers, 17,000 accredited investors and 135 investment firms.**

Founder and CEO: Devon Drew | [devon@assetlink.ai](mailto:devon@assetlink.ai) | [assetlink.ai](http://assetlink.ai)

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Location: Houston, Texas

## Bump



[Bump](#) provides personalized financial and insurance tools for content creators on YouTube, Snap and Instagram. Recognizing the challenges these professionals face with traditional financial institutions, Bump goes beyond by assisting creators in uncovering hidden revenue streams and gaining a comprehensive understanding of their market value. **To date, Bump has been backed by Sixty8 Capital, Snap, Symphonic Capital and Capitalize VC and has partnerships with Bell Bank, Mastercard and Visa!**

Founder and CEO: James Jones | [james@usebump.com](mailto:james@usebump.com) | [usebump.com](http://usebump.com)

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Location: Hollywood, California

## CHIP



[CHIP](#)'s financial services marketplace unlocks the over 29 Trillion dollars in wealth generated by Multicultural Americans by making access to financial professionals of color easy. CHIP is the Angie of the financial services industry. CHIP enables those 99M individual consumers with financial products, i.e., retirement plans, investments and insurance. Those with estate planning needs now have a platform to build their financial team while feeling empowered with their money. **Over the past year, CHIP has generated 80K+ in revenue and has secured partnerships with OBWS, Lincoln Financial Group, One Digital, CitizenM Hotels, and Broadridge to grow the user platform.**

Founder and CEO: Dana Wilson | [dana@chipprofessionals.com](mailto:dana@chipprofessionals.com) | [chipprofessionals.com](http://chipprofessionals.com)

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Location: Verona, New Jersey

## CultureLancer




[CultureLancer](#) provides solutions for innovative companies looking to source emerging talent from Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions through a human-centered talent development and recruitment platform. WayPaths powered by CultureLancer provides advanced skill matching software and predictive hiring analytics to ensure candidates are perfectly aligned with each employer's specific needs, reducing the time and cost associated with onboarding and training. **CultureLancer serves students across 30 HBCUs and MSIs and has a pipeline of 17,000 students.**

Founder and CEO: Brianna Brazle | [brianna@culturelancer.com](mailto:brianna@culturelancer.com) | [culturelancer.co](http://culturelancer.co)

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Location: Houston, Texas

## Context Data

 **ContextData** [Context Data](#) helps startups and small and medium companies quickly process and transform their data for enterprise AI applications. Context Data achieves this with an easy-to-use super connector platform which easily connects to multiple internal sources to extract data, transform them into AI optimized embedded data and writes the final data to all major vector databases (Pinecone, Qdrant, Weaviate etc.). Context Data is able to reduce deployment time from an average of 4+ weeks to just a few hours and at a fraction of the cost! **ContextData recently onboarded its sixth enterprise customer, 170+ developers, launched an open source ETL framework and partnered with Pinecone, the largest AI database in the world!**

Founder and CEO: Jide Ogunjobi | [jide@contextdata.ai](mailto:jide@contextdata.ai) | [contextdata.ai](https://contextdata.ai)

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Location: New York, New York

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### About gener8tor

[gener8tor](#) is a global venture firm and accelerator network that supports [startups](#), [workers](#), [employers](#), [artists](#) and [musicians](#) across race, place and gender. gener8tor partners with companies, governments, universities and nonprofits to operate accelerator programs and [conferences](#) in more than 45 communities across 25 states and territories and three countries. *Fast Company* named gener8tor one of the Best Workplaces for Innovators in 2021 and 2022. The International Trade Council recognized gener8tor as the Global Venture Capital Firm of the Year in 2022.

### About Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® Powered by gener8tor

Northwestern Mutual Black Founder Accelerator® invests in up to ten companies per year (two cohorts of five) focused on fintech, insuretech, digital health and data analytics. In addition to a \$100,000 investment, each participating startup will receive a concierge experience during the 12-week accelerator program.

gener8tor and Northwestern Mutual will support the growth of these startups through our network of experienced mentors, technologists, industry experts, angel investors and venture

capitalists. We accept applications from startups across the globe. However, we do require that at least one founder from each startup be based in the United States

### **About Northwestern Mutual**

[Northwestern Mutual](#) has been helping people and businesses achieve financial security for more than 165 years. Through a comprehensive planning approach, Northwestern Mutual combines the expertise of its [financial professionals](#) with a personalized digital experience and industry-leading products to help its clients plan for what's most important. With over \$627 billion of total assets being managed across the company's institutional portfolio as well as retail investment client portfolios, more than \$36 billion in revenues, and \$2.3 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than five million people with life, disability income and long-term care insurance, annuities, and brokerage and advisory services. Northwestern Mutual ranked 110 on the 2024 FORTUNE 500 and was recognized by FORTUNE® as one of the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2024.