



Association for Enterprise Opportunity

Electronic Press Kit



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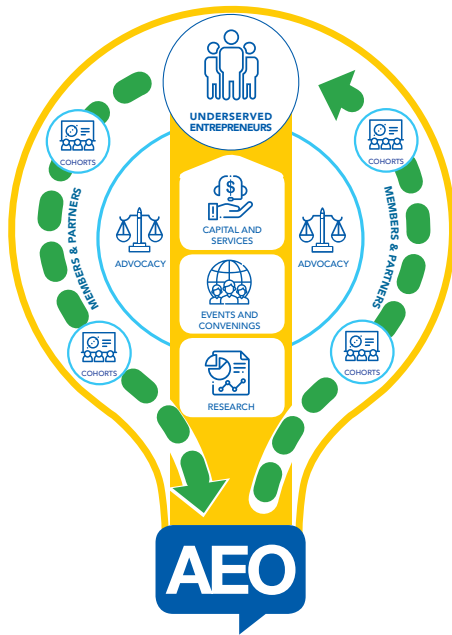
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AEO Innovation Hub



AEO's Innovation Hub is the central point for the introduction of new methods, products, services, and ideas into the small business ecosystem, for the purpose of creating impact in the market. This new organizational model leverages AEO's core competencies to better serve microbusinesses by strengthening the organizations that support them, all within the goal of creating a more robust and inclusive marketplace. Designed to solve market challenges, spur innovation, and drive transformational, system-level change for underserved entrepreneurs, it has four primary directives:

- Engagement in cohorts and partnerships that discover and develop innovations that increase access to capital, trusted guidance, and more.
- Organization and promotion of convenings that enable the sharing of ideas and insights that can drive performance for small businesses.
- Development of an advocacy agenda that is capable of giving voice to the needs of organizations that serve microbusinesses, and empowering them to pursue the policy interests of the business owners they serve.
- Establishment of a research and data agenda, supported by targeted marketing and branding campaigns, that gives widespread access to critical information for market actors in the microbusiness landscape.





Connie E. Evans

President & CEO

Connie E. Evans is the President and Chief Executive Officer of AEO.

Connie is a visionary leader, astute strategist, activist and social entrepreneur who has founded three organizations. In 1986 she was the founding president of the award-winning Women's Self-Employment Project, the first and largest urban microbusiness development organization in the U.S., and the first adaptation of the Grameen Bank model to a U.S. urban setting. She also pioneered one of the first matched-savings program—Individual Development Accounts—in the country. In 2000 she founded WSEP Ventures, a social enterprise-hybrid organization developed to serve as a catalyst for social change, economic development and community

empowerment. In 2007 she founded CSolutions Consulting, an advisory boutique specializing in solutions that address social change.

An international development consultant with more than 25 years of experience, she has been recognized and utilized by such groups as the World Bank, the Clinton Administration, and a host of local government, private and independent-sector organizations. With international experience spanning 43 countries, she draws on her expertise in developing and implementing strategies to further economic development, health and social change in communities.

Connie started her career in community mental health as a master-level psychologist. Her commitment to improving the health and life options for disadvantaged women and their families moved her to "harness the marketplace" for solutions. As the Assistant Director of a Hull House Association affiliate in Chicago, she became the Project Director for the first resident-managed public housing site in the city. She helped low-income women organize, develop leadership skills and learn business acumen in order to take control over a multi-million dollar enterprise.

Connie has given lectures at universities throughout the U.S., and is a frequent panelist and keynote speaker at conferences around the globe. She has many distinguished awards, including: being named the Inaugural Twink Frey Social Activist in 2006; the 1996 Chicagoan of the Year by Chicago Magazine; the first Teknion Humanitarian Award in 1999; Gloria Steinem Woman of Vision Award; 1998 Community Leader of the Year presented by the African American MBA Association at the University of Chicago; and the Chicago Community Service Fellowship Award by the Chicago Community Trust.

Connie's broad experience across the worlds of business and finance compliments her skills in development finance. She served two elected terms on the Board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago—the first African American woman to hold such a position—and was appointed by President Clinton to the CDFI Advisory Board, a fund in the Department of the Treasury. She was appointed by President Obama to be a member of the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. She was also appointed by President Clinton as a member of the U. S. Delegation to Preparatory Meetings for the Summit of the Americas, the U. S. Delegation to Preparatory Meetings for the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and again for Beijing Plus Five.

A strong advocate of good governance in nonprofits, she has nearly 20 years of service on philanthropic foundation boards, and serves on a number of national and international boards.





Hyacinth Vassell

Vice President, Innovation Engineering

Hyacinth Vassell is the Vice President of Innovation Engineering. In her role, she oversees and develops strategies across programmatic, research, and advocacy initiatives organization-wide. A critical component of Vassell's role is leading teams in multiple complex problems that create and develop standards, models, and tools for technical assistance solutions. In the post, Vassell is also responsible for shaping new initiatives, as well as building and managing philanthropic and partner relationships.

Prior to AEO, Vassell was the Director of the Inner City Capital Connections program at Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC). She was responsible for the development of the program's scope, strategy, and content. During her tenure, Vassell created and oversaw the CEO Series, which provides online cutting-edge content for CEOs across the U.S. She also successfully developed and scaled the Inner City Capital Connections program to 10 cities and connected a nationwide network of capital providers, which made almost \$1.5 billion of debt and equity capital available to program participants. While at ICIC, Vassell helped participants develop business strategies that enabled them to create almost 16,000 jobs in underserved communities.

Vassell also has broad experience as a senior business consultant. She worked with firms such as Arthur Andersen and Accenture, leading diverse project portfolios in re-engineering, process improvement, and change management. Vassell has worked in the telecom, industrial and consumer products, information technology, health care, entertainment, hospitality, and the banking industry. Former clients include AT&T, Fidelity, Fleet Bank, Caterpillar, Starwood Hotels, and MGM Grand.

In addition to championing small business, Vassell is also an entrepreneur. She is the CEO and Owner of French Studios and the Royal Solutions, and served as the past co-Chair of Roxbury Prep and advisor to the Girl Scouts strategic initiative. Vassell is a proud graduate of the University of Massachusetts—Amherst, where she earned a B.S. in Psychology.



Brand Guidelines

Brand Marks and Variations

AEO Logo:



Vertical:



Association for
Enterprise
Opportunity

Horizontal:



Association for
Enterprise
Opportunity

Colors



AEO Blue

C: 100
M: 70
Y: 0
K: 0

R: 0
G: 91
B: 170

Hex Code: #005baa



AEO Yellow

C: 0
M: 30
Y: 100
K: 0

R: 255
G: 203
B: 5

Hex Code: #ffc005



AEO Cyan

C: 62
M: 0
Y: 0
K: 0

R: 56
G: 198
B: 244

Hex Code: #38c6f4



AEO Green

C: 80
M: 10
Y: 100
K: 0

R: 45
G: 164
B: 74

Hex Code: #2da44a

Logo Clearing Space

