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## **The Sorenson Impact Center Launches National Project to Create a More Inclusive Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**

**SALT LAKE CITY, Utah** — The Sorenson Impact Center is launching the first stage of Project DEEP (Developing Equitable Economies Program) with the mission of closing the equity gap in entrepreneurship. [Made possible by funding](#) from the Economic Development Administration and JP Morgan Chase, the project aims to support women and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) by providing open access training on entrepreneurship and investment, changing the economic landscape in Utah and beyond.

“We are excited to launch a new initiative to support a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Project DEEP will highlight lessons and best practices around the critical work required to unlock equitable opportunities for women, people of color, rural individuals, and others that have been historically shut out of entrepreneurship,” says Kyra Clarke, Project Lead for Project DEEP. “Systemic solutions and change require systemic action, which is why we are focusing on not only entrepreneurs, but on the full ecosystem including capital allocators, technical training resources and partners, philanthropy, and policymakers.”

The Center will officially launch the project’s first resource, a cinematography-quality video course on demystifying entrepreneurship, at the Sorenson Impact Summit on 25 May 2021. The course is focused on helping anyone learn the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, no matter their background, while also recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities facing women, people of color, rural individuals, and others not well represented in the current entrepreneurial ecosystem. The project website ([project-deep.com](http://project-deep.com)) also houses additional resources, and videos for the first course have been pre-recorded, so participants can work at their own pace using the workbook to assist them.

Kimmy Paluch, founder of pre-seed venture firm [Beta Boom](#) and an advocate for a more inclusive ecosystem, serves as the first course expert. “We’re not seeing enough founders of color and female founders represented. There are real biases and gaps that exist in our ecosystem,” says Kimmy Paluch. “But what we want to do is draw some inspiration from founders who have been able to navigate this, how have they found success and also learn from the struggles that we’ve all faced. I’m excited because I see a sea of change coming.”

Project DEEP will continue to release new courses and resources on topics such as diversifying investing, creating a policy environment for inclusive economies, and more. While the project is housed in Salt Lake City, UT, the focus is both local and national. In 2020, Forbes ranked Utah as the best state for entrepreneurship, yet the state ranked worst for women's equality in the same year. Nationally, only 2% of venture capital goes to women founders, with less than 3% going to Black and Latinx founders, despite women of color being the fastest-growing entrepreneur segment.

Project DEEP is a collaborative, community-centered effort: we welcome ideas and partnership. Please email Megan Brewster at [megan.brewster@sorensonimpact.com](mailto:megan.brewster@sorensonimpact.com) to connect.

**About the SORENSON IMPACT CENTER:**

The Sorenson Impact Center serves as a catalyst for solving social problems through the use of data, evidence, and innovation. Housed at the University of Utah's David Eccles School of Business, the Center works with public, nonprofit, and private sector stakeholders across the globe to develop and implement outcome-driven solutions to problems. Its 25-person staff includes experts in data science, finance, policy, investment, and storytelling. These professionals are augmented by the talents of 50 graduate and undergraduate students from diverse disciplines and universities. Together, the Center works with clients to marshal capital for social good, empower data-driven programs, break down silos across sectors, and equip the next generation of leaders with social purpose.

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