“New Left Accelerator is my answer to the question: ‘How can I ensure that progressives win the battle for our nation?’”

Toby Rubin, New Left Accelerator Board Chair and Former Executive Director of UpStart
A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

New Left Accelerator builds progressive power by identifying the movement’s biggest challenges and investing in early-stage organizations with bold approaches to solving them. We are a hub for innovation. We invest early. We double down in non-election years to ensure organizations can maximize their impact when it counts. And we share what we learn.

All of the leaders in our inaugural accelerator cohort were first-time founders with new ideas about how to make the progressive movement stronger, broader and deeper. All of them turned to us for help building stable and effective organizations capable of scale. And all of their organizations played a critical role in the progressive movement’s recent wins!

Now, our challenge is to protect and build on those victories. Read on to learn more about how you can help build this momentum.

Together, we can build the capacity of diverse organizations with bold ideas that will build progressive power — and set the course for our nation.
At New Left Accelerator, we ask: What are the most pressing challenges facing the progressive movement, who are the bold, new leaders working to solve those challenges and what do they need to succeed? Here’s how we help them succeed and scale.

**ACCELERATOR PROGRAM**

New Left Accelerator’s capacity-building program is tailored to the unique needs of early-stage organizations and leaders—regardless of their legal form. We are the only program designed to support 501(c)(4)s, nonprofit corporations, PACs, and other creative legal entities, in addition to traditional 501(c)(3)s.

We select six to ten organizations for an 18-month capacity-building program. The program provides in-depth, training, coaching, strategic planning and organizational development support from a diverse pool of consultants and mentors—all experienced with early-stage organizations.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE MOVEMENT**

How can I build a website quickly? Should we set up a 501(c)(4)? Where can I get solid legal advice on a small budget? When a new founder needs help, New Left Accelerator’s technical assistance program provides rapid, one-on-one support ranging from strategic advice to referrals to vetted experts, lawyers and consultants to connections to resources appropriate for early-stage organizations. We have provided technical assistance to more than 45 progressive organizations, including:

- Jolt Action
- INDIVISIBLE
- VOTE.org
- FLIPABLE
- TOWN HALL PROJECT
- #NATIONAL SCHOOL WALKOUT
- WALL-OF-US

“**New Left Accelerator is a center of innovation** that identifies where the progressive movement needs to go, then lifts up a new generation of leaders with creative ideas about how to get there.”

Mera Paul, New Left Accelerator Board Member
In 2016, one of the progressive movement’s biggest challenges was building infrastructure to harness and sustain the massive, new wave of civic engagement.

New Left Accelerator took direct action to address this challenge. We launched our first cohort in early 2017 to expand the capacity of leaders with innovative approaches to providing the technological, legal and other resources the movement needed to grow and win. These organizations took diverse legal forms, including a PAC, an LLC, a non-profit corporation and a 501(c)(4). Investing in the capacity of these new groups has already paid huge dividends!
THE IDEA
When we met founder Rita Bosworth in November 2016, New Left Accelerator’s team was immediately impressed by her plan to make inroads into badly gerrymandered states ahead of 2021 redistricting. Her idea was to build a platform to strategically redistribute resources and volunteers from solidly blue regions to help key “sister districts” in purple and red states win state legislative races.

CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT
New Left Accelerator’s team guided Sister District through a strategic planning and organizational development process, generating a compelling mission, vision and values and a strategic business plan to guide their work. Together, we built a strong, effective senior leadership team and created the internal processes that enabled Sister District to operate efficiently and scale quickly.

MOVEMENT IMPACT
In 2018, alone, Sister District mobilized more than 40,000 volunteers who helped 31 state legislative candidates in nine states flip or hold state chambers. In 2019, Sister District is launching its Last Chance campaign to flip key races in Louisiana, Mississippi and Virginia.

“New Left Accelerator has connected us to resources and talent that are bringing us to the next level. The support has been invaluable.”
Rita Bosworth, Founder & Executive Director, Sister District

2018 AT-A-GLANCE
31 RACES IN 9 STATES
40,000 VOLUNTEERS MOBILIZED
48,934 DOORS KNOCKED
158,482 CALLS MADE
273,111 POSTCARDS SENT
372,732 TEXTS SENT
$763,443 DOLLARS DONATED DIRECTLY TO CANDIDATES
16 DEMOCRATIC WINS
THE IDEA
Founder Josh Nussbaum’s vision was simple: Leverage the power of progressive organizations to collectively bargain for the technology and critical resources movement-building organizations need to win. He and his team created a cooperatively governed non-profit corporation to build this central bargaining power.

CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT
New Left Accelerator is supporting The Movement Cooperative in its rapid ascent from great idea to critical institution by providing the leadership team with executive coaching and supporting organizational development and strategic business planning to help capitalize on their early success and scale sustainably.

MOVEMENT IMPACT
By bringing more than 30 progressive organizations together to bargain collectively for critical tools, technology and data (like the voter file) and providing technical expertise to administer them, the Movement Cooperative has fundamentally changed and improved how the movement accesses critical resources, making the entire field more effective.

"New Left Accelerator fills a glaring hole in support for new founders and is a go-to resource for organizations like ours that need to scale quickly. Their approach is grounded in values of equity and inclusion, which is invaluable."
Josh Nussbaum, Founder & CEO, The Movement Cooperative

2018 AT-A-GLANCE
18 STAFF
33 MEMBERS IN THE COOPERATIVE
270 STATE-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
14 LICENSES SECURED FOR KEY TECH AND DATA TOOLS
15% - 100% SAVED OVER LIST PRICES FOR THESE TOOLS
**THE IDEA**

New Left Accelerator’s team was immediately impressed by Ragtag founder Brady Kriss’s vision: Build an energized community of highly-skilled tech volunteers to help progressive organizations and candidates use technology to amplify their impact and win critical victories.

**CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT**

New Left Accelerator assembled a team to lead Ragtag through a strategic planning process, which sharpened their mission, identified key stakeholders and created value propositions that led to successful communications and fundraising efforts and helped them plan for future growth.

**MOVEMENT IMPACT**

More than 600 skilled Ragtag volunteers have assisted more than 475 progressive campaigns and organizations in the last two years. With services including a help desk, security training and rapid-response tech support at critical moments like The March for Our Lives, Ragtag has become the de facto Chief Technical Officer (CTO) for the progressive movement.

“"The resources and consulting that New Left Accelerator provides make it possible for mission-driven startups like ours to really hit the ground running.”

Brady Kriss, Founder & Executive Director, Ragtag

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**2018 AT-A-GLANCE**

- **600+ SKILLED TECH VOLUNTEERS**
- **77 PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATIONS ADVISED**
- **400 PROGRESSIVE CAMPAIGNS SERVED**
- **50-100 DAILY VIEWS ON THEIR GUIDES TO COMMON TECH CHALLENGES FOR CAMPAIGNS**
THE IDEA

New Left Accelerator immediately recognized the potential of founder Traci Feit Love’s vision: Build an army of volunteer attorneys to protect rights and defend our democracy on a moment’s notice via a centralized online platform.

CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT

New Left Accelerator helped Lawyers for Good Government develop a clear narrative for their work, strengthen their board and build their fundraising capacity. We also supported their leader as she designed and launched two flagship programs: Election Watch, a non-partisan program to prevent voter suppression and Project Corazon, which helps asylum-seekers and reunites families separated by the Trump administration’s “zero-tolerance” policy.

MOVEMENT IMPACT

Lawyers for Good Government’s volunteers mobilized across the country to fight the Muslim Ban, help DREAMers after DACA was rescinded, protect voter rights, foster climate change mitigation efforts and assist immigrant families. In 2019, they plan to expand significantly to meet ever-growing demand.

“New Left Accelerator’s commitment to supporting new leaders in the progressive space is unrivaled. The resources and connections they provide have been critical to our growth as an organization.”

Traci Feit Love, Founder, President & Executive Director, Lawyers for Good Government

2018 AT-A-GLANCE

250,000 VOLUNTEER LAWYERS RECRUITED

5,400 LAWYERS MOBILIZED TO HELP DREAMERS AFTER DACA WAS RESCINDED

200+ LAWYERS WORKING TO HELP STATES TRANSITION TO 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY

1,000+ IMMIGRANT FAMILIES SERVED

4X INCREASE IN YEAR-END FUNDRAISING RETURNS OVER 2017
DOUBLING DOWN TODAY TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT IN 2020 & BEYOND

2019 will be a pivotal year for the progressive movement. This gap year between election cycles provides a short window in which to help organizations that demonstrated impact in 2018 position themselves for maximum impact in 2020—and beyond.

We’re building on the success of our first cohort by launching the New American Majority cohort and developing the resources early-stage organizations need to maximize their impact and build power.

THE NEW AMERICAN MAJORITY COHORT
To build permanent progressive power, we must invest in the leaders of the New American Majority: Women, youth and people of color. In partnership with Roadmap Consulting, New Left Accelerator’s 2019-2020 cohort will build the capacity of eight to ten diverse, early-stage organizations that demonstrated impact in engaging these key constituencies in 2018.

Accelerator recipients will receive an executive coach and 18 months of in-depth training, strategic planning and organizational development support from a diverse team of consultants and mentors.

THE CAPACITY SHOP
The Capacity Shop is a separate but affiliated 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to improve the access, relevance, timeliness and application of existing capacity-building and organizational development resources for early-stage social justice and progressive power-building organizations.

The Capacity Shop employs a collaborative approach, bringing together capacity-building providers to centralize learnings and create resources to meet the needs of early-stage organizations. Our goal is to better serve young people, people of color, women, people located outside major coastal and Midwestern cities, people living with disabilities and people from low-income backgrounds who are launching new initiatives or organizations to build power in their communities. The work of The Capacity Shop is nonpartisan.

“'To grow the progressive power base, donors and capacity-building providers must utilize off-election years to make sure high-impact, emerging organizations have what they need to grow and maximize their impact. I am proud to partner with New Left Accelerator to lead the way in 2019.'

Nijmie Zakkiyyah Dzurinko, Director of Partnerships and Learning, Roadmap Consulting

COMPOSITION OF THE NEW AMERICAN MAJORITY
(Percentage of All U.S. Eligible Voters)

- 43% Other Whites
- 23% Progressive People of Color
- 28% Progressive Whites
- 6% Other People of Color
- 51% Other People

Based on American Majority Project Research Institute analyses of the Citizen Voting Age Population Special Tabulation from the 2009-2013 5-year American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Redistricting Data Office and the National Election Pool Exit Poll, 2012.
FROM THE TRENCHES OF OUR MOVEMENT-BUILDING
WHAT WE’VE LEARNED ABOUT WHAT NEW ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO SUCCEED

Working for two years to build the capacity of early-stage progressive organizations poised for growth, we’ve learned a lot about what emergent leaders and organizations need to succeed.

Through feedback from our accelerator and technical assistance participants and interviews with more than 40 progressive leaders, capacity-building providers, funders and fellowship program managers, we’ve gleaned a number of important lessons on how to best support diverse new leaders and organizations.

1. Capacity-building during non-election years is critical.
When funding dries up after elections, many early-stage organizations with proven impact are left scrambling for support rather than building their strength to win the next policy, electoral or public-opinion battle. Providing funding and capacity-building support during off-election years — when organizations actually have the time to prioritize their internal capacity — is essential to the movement’s success.

2. Powerful movements are made of more than just 501(c)(3)s
Progressive organizations must employ multiple strategies to have maximum impact. These strategies require a hybrid of organizational structures — including LLCs, PACs and 501(c)(4)s, as well as traditional 501(c)(3)s. Unfortunately, most capacity-building programs and fellowships only support 501(c)(3)s. This must change. Investing in the capacity of organizations with a variety of legal structures is critical to ensuring that the movement stays nimble and secures more wins.

3. New leaders and tactics are required to engage new constituencies
The New American Majority is being mobilized by a new generation of Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+, immigrant, young, low-income and other underrepresented leaders who are piloting innovative ways to organize and mobilize their communities. We must find and invest in these leaders, connecting them with the resources and support they need to experiment with new tactics that strengthen and deepen our growing movement.

4. We must expand and improve capacity support specifically designed for early-stage organizations
Current capacity-building services are often designed for established organizations, leading to mismatched consultants and recommendations that can be unsuitable for an early-stage organization without the time, experience, staff or funds to implement them effectively. Emergent organizations need holistic, customized resources designed specifically to address needs that arise on the journey from ideation to growth. We need to form a community of practice to share learnings and best practices and create resources tailored to serve this critical slice of our movement.

5. Effective capacity-building requires the space to be candid
For capacity-building to be effective, organizations must be able to reveal their deepest challenges in confidence to a trusted team. Many funders already understand the importance of investing in capacity-building; it is also essential to create safe spaces for organizations to be honest about their challenges and needs without fear of jeopardizing funding. Capacity-building is most effective when funders partner with independent providers who can assess and manage an organization’s needs in confidence.
OUR TEAM

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Jen Cheyne
Director of Operations & Acceleration
Barbara Reiss
Director of Strategic Initiatives & Programs

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Alicin Williamson
Joel Yanowitz
Nijmie Zakkiyyah Dzurinko

INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF PROGRESSIVE POWER

The future of our country depends on what — and who — we choose to invest in today.

Join us in building a more just, compassionate and equitable America.

NewLeftAccelerator.org/Donate