



Founder Fellowship at [The Tech Incubator at Queens College](#), (TIQC), Serves Underrepresented Entrepreneurs for Tech and Tech-Enabled Startups

TIQC Selected by the [New York City Economic Development Corporation](#) (NYCEDC) to Operate in the 2023 Founder Fellowship Program

Queens, NY – (May 15, 2023) -- [The Tech Incubator at Queens College](#), CUNY (TIQC) is one of the few incubators that provides free accelerator programs for underrepresented entrepreneurs for tech and tech-enabled startups in New York City. TIQC was one of the five organizations selected by the [New York City Economic Development Corporation](#) (NYCEDC) to operate in the 2023 Founder Fellowship program, designed to improve access to capital and networks. This prestigious Founder Fellowship evolved from NYC Venture Fellows, which accelerated some of NYC's most successful startups including Warby Parker, Etsy, Foursquare, and Rent the Runway.

TIQC is playing an important role in amplifying the startup culture by providing much-needed resources and support to underserved and BIPOC tech founders from the local community access to the resources they need to realize their ventures. Participants in the fellowship at TIQC gain skills to successfully lead their companies, and are given opportunities for professional networking, fundraising, mentorship, and business development. These entrepreneurs are provided access to six months of free co working space, an innovation lab, interns support, faculty advisors, one on one mentorship, and industry experts, and vast resources from TIQC network, resources from Queens College such as the School of Business, Small Business Administration (SBA)/Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and programs such as Data Analytics, Economics, Computer Science, Media Studies, Art & Design.

Two resources in the ecosystem that were brought in by TIQC were [Think8](#) and [WeLoveMentors](#). Think8 has conducted a three day in person workshop at the beginning of the program which provided a framework that allowed the Founder Fellows to align their purpose and visions. Subsequently both partners provided one on one coaching and mentoring with each

of the Founder Fellows to help them further develop their strategy and roadmap towards implementation.

“We are helping underserved founders grow their ventures by connecting them with resources from the tech ecosystem and increase their impact and footprint with a goal of promoting equity in New York City,” says Ying Zhou, Executive Director of The Tech Incubator at Queens College (TIQC).

In this inaugural year, the Founder Fellowship program at TIQC accepted 12 startup companies, many of which are run by founders from underserved communities, many of whose ventures aim to serve underserved communities. The innovative startups include:

[Animation Nights New York](#) (ANNY) is a monthly screening event and annual festival based in NYC. Since 2015 we have curated the best Animated Short Films, virtual reality animation experiences, and interactive games from all around the world. **ANNY Exchange** is a hub and platform connecting animation talent to opportunity. Yvonne Grzenkowicz is the founder of Animation Nights New York and ANNY Exchange. She has a background in narrative figurative painting & drawing, character animation, and website development. She is a curator of Film, VR, and Games for Animation Nights New York and involved in development and production of the ANNY Virtual Events Space Platform. She is an Epic MegaGrant recipient and was recently selected as a Women Who Code Applaud Her Awards: 100 technologists to Watch. Animation Nights New York is a NYC SBS Certified Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE).

[BodyLogicPT](#), **Healthcare**, a breakthrough industry disruptor that is driving innovation in healthcare and impacting healthcare accessibility and inequity with a "Wellness on Demand" approach. The start-up is creating the nation's first fully equipped, tech-empowered mobile Physical Therapy clinic to serve more people in more communities in half the time. She says I want you to think of physical therapy as the backbone of physical health not just when you are in dire need (i.e. through an injury or surgery.) BodyLogicPT was founded by Omolola Omishore, a first-generation Nigerian-American doctor, published research author, and sports medicine industry expert, based in New York City.

[Innocuous AI](#) helps enterprises harness the power of generative AI to boost productivity and enhance customer experiences. The startup is creating an easy-to-use B2B SaaS platform that enables businesses that may not have an AI developer team to take advantage of the power of GPT with their own proprietary data or any ever-changing external data to streamline workflows and enhance the value they provide to their customers. Depending on the industry, time savings using Innocuous AI's platform helps save companies 50% to 75% of the time it takes to complete a series of repetitive tasks and help companies drive revenue or reduce customer churn. Regina Jaslow is the co-founder and CEO of the startup, and brings over 20 years of experience in marketing, sales, and customer success in tech startups. Noam Rosenberg is the co-founder and CTO, who brings over 10 years' experience in AI development. He was the AutoML Lead at Dataloop and built an open-source deep learning project that outperformed the Google-equivalent.

[Kquika is using](#) machine learning predictive technology to help airlines resolve flight delays and maintain equipment, thereby saving them significant amounts of money. This is particularly important given recent incidents, such as the FAA outage that hit Southwest Airlines and the holiday meltdown that exposed the company's technology woes, leading to costly delays and disruptions. Kquika is a company that offers solutions to address operational inefficiencies in aviation, aerospace, aircargo, and government industries. Kquika was founded by Victor Oribamise, originally from Nigeria, a Weill Cornell Medical College graduate student.

[Layman](#) reclaims the legal system for the people using the power of the people. Layman is a web application that uses AI to help regular people crowdsource legally binding documents and contracts without needing lawyers for free in only a few minutes. Created by a recent grad from NYU School of Law, Breaking Barriers Scholar from Columbia University School of Public Health, and published Fulbright Scholar, Esosa Ohonba hopes to simulate the experience of having a lawyer in the family for the 100 million marginalized Americans who can't afford one.

[Light Pong & Friends](#), Inc. specializes in creating super cool connected toys for "kidults," catering to those who still feel like a kid at heart. The company's flagship product, Light Pong, is the world's first 1-dimensional game console, offering engaging games that can be enjoyed solo or with a friend and is suitable for ages 6 to 106. Light Pong has taken social media by storm, with over 50 million views on TikTok and Instagram, and has been featured in prominent publications like Mashable, Gizmodo, and Yahoo Finance. The journey began on Kickstarter, where the company raised an impressive \$150k from backers, placing it in the top 5% of all Kickstarter campaigns worldwide. The company's success has attracted amazing investors and advisors like LongJump VC and Bop It! inventor Dan Klitsner. Before launching Light Pong in 2021, Aaqib Usman founded Midwest Immersive, an interactive multimedia studio specializing in cutting-edge technologies like AR, VR, and projection mapping. Aaqib's distinctive approach to connecting the digital and physical realms has garnered the attention of an elite clientele, including global brands like Adidas, Progressive, and Vans.

[REEAPA](#) celebrates the diverse talent of Harlem, New York by creating local events and popup shops to allow musicians, dancers, street artists and more to showcase their talent. "Everybody's life matters." REEAPA was founded by the entrepreneur and rap lyricist Maulana Randall. She has a passion for helping the youth in her community and created Spitdatpain which builds strong communities through youth led communication and policing programs. She says we create a calming towards unification. We have inclusion which cultivates the power to be heard which results in restoration, harmony, longevity and a better quality of life. We transform communication for healing and bridge the gap to heal the world. Better communication reduces misunderstanding and brings about mutual respect. We are purpose driven to calm a divisive climate through unity, care and concern. As a result, this creates validation, forgiveness, reduces depression and the end result is a better quality of life.

[Solid Gold Global](#) (Sagos Distro) is a new (*global*) music and video distribution platform with a network in over 60 countries. It is a full-service platform that provides end to end solutions to monetize on Web2 and Web3. It integrates NFTs as forms of payment and secures both royalties

and protects the copyright & (*publishing*) for its artists. Sagos Distro was founded by Kofi Mensah, who is originally from Ghana, and has an extensive background in music management.

[SaveAway®](#) Pioneering the “Save Now, Buy Later” category, SaveAway®’s [patented](#) platform offerings empower underserved buyers and sellers alike to realize opportunity where they least expected it: to render the unaffordable affordable, sustainably — by making more informed buying decisions and seeing those purchases fulfilled by seamlessly combining social advice+gifting from friends, with intelligent direct-deposited auto-saving, and sales offers — without the slippery slope of credit resulting in debt for far too many. SaveAway® was cited most recently on [the NASDAQ site](#) and Workweek among "[Fintech that makes an impact](#)", and previously named [Top Fintech Forward Company To Watch](#). SaveAway® was founded by Om Kundu, bringing to bear nearly two decades of learnings across retail commerce + fintech: A Stanford University alum with BS in Mathematical and Computational Sciences, with interdisciplinary 'Science, Tech, Society' honors, Kundu has contributed to numerous industry forums including, recently, as the facilitator of [NRF 2023's Table Talk on Retail Evolution/Transformation](#), and SXSW 2023's [Fintech & E-commerce Meet Up](#).

[5050 Style](#) delivers elegantly designed, uplifting organizational products and services that seamlessly integrate into daily life, helping individuals cultivate healthy habits and unlock their full potential in both personal and professional spheres. This e-commerce platform sells desk top trash cans. The founder, Charlie Lin's concept is that these cans will help people organize and form good organizing habits. The company is early stage and plans to develop other habit-forming products to help with organization. Charlie Lin is a student at Queens College, has background in software engineering and was formerly a USMC Veteran.

[TrustFundRegistry™](#) is an artificial intelligence wealth tech that aims to deliver automated financial tools and education through a gift registry business model. It empowers families in the BIPOC community to build and transfer intergenerational wealth. Parents can share photos and videos of their children to engage family and friends to send gifts directly into the child’s long-term investment fund to celebrate life events. As a result, children learn how to build and manage wealth, the present has a higher value, and it is easy and fun for family and friends to contribute. It was founded by Aixa Elgazwe, a 20-year serial entrepreneur that includes housing services, management, and consumer packaged goods. Aixa's most significant personal achievement is founding, CreditRockStar.com, a credit education firm that filled the gap in housing education for credit restoration. She helped 500+ families become homeowners starting in the 2008 financial housing crisis.

[Walkspan](#) is a data-driven and location intelligence technology firm dedicated to advancing urban livability and walkability at a global scale. Its preferential mapping technology allows users to find sidewalks that meet their walking criteria. Rather than relying on the shortest route available, Walkspan empowers people by providing options like tree lined paths, shopping corridors, building edges marked with beautiful architecture, neighborhood vibrance and more. The experience of walking enhanced by Walkspan's navigation tool leaves residents feeling happier and healthier. Walkspan was founded by Bernardita Calinao who received her PhD and Master’s degrees in Environmental Science from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Under the umbrella of the NYCEDC, the fellows also have access to free legal service, one year free of We Work space, connections among with 100 new startups funded by the other cohorts in the NYCEDC 2023 Founder Fellowship program. For more information about the Founder Fellowship at Tech Incubator at Queens College see <https://techincubatorqc.com/founder-fellowship/>

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