Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Who is eligible to participate in the Innova entrepreneurship program?
A: The program is open to individuals within Greater Houston community who are interested in expanding their small businesses. There are no specific eligibility criteria based on age or educational background.

Q2: How long is the program?
A: The Community Business Academy (CBA) is 12 weeks long and Business Accelerator Services (BAS) are offered individually as needed for up to one year.

Q3: Is there a cost to participate in the program?
A: We strive to make the program as accessible as possible, so the cost of tuition for the program is fully covered by MAM. However, participants are asked to contribute $50 to cover the cost of training materials.

Q4: Will I receive a certificate upon completion of the program?
A: Yes, participants who successfully complete the Community Business Academy will receive a certificate of completion at graduation.

Q5: What will I learn in the program?
A: Participants will cover a range of vital entrepreneurship topics, including business feasibility, competition analysis, fundraising, marketing and sales strategies, pricing, financial planning, negotiations, market research, profit and loss, bookkeeping basics, budgeting, business planning, operations management, and cash flow management.

Q6: Will there be any opportunities for funding or investment?
A: No, MAM’s Community Business Academy does not serve as a funding source for Innova program participants. However, we offer a range of other services that may help make your business more appealing to investors, including:

- Business Development and Analysis
- Financial Management and Planning
- Market Research and Decision-Making
- Marketing and Sales Strategies
- Operations and Growth Strategies
- Growth Strategies

Q7: Can I participate if I only have a business idea and haven’t started my business yet?
A: For this particular cohort, the program is focused on individuals who have already started their business or have a product or service to work with. The training materials and activities are designed to provide hands-on, experiential learning, and participants learn from each other’s real-life business experiences. However, we encourage you to stay connected and look out for future cohorts that may cater specifically to individuals at the idea stage.

Q8: How can I apply for the entrepreneurship program?
A: To apply for the INNOVA program, please complete the program inquiry form and attend an information session before completing the program application. You can also contact Innova@mamhouston.org for further assistance.

Q9: Are there any post-program supports or follow-up activities?
A: Absolutely! We offer Business Acceleration Services (BAS). INNOVA Graduates will receive specialized services and support to accelerate their small business growth. These services include one-on-one coaching, networking opportunities, training workshops, and assistance in accessing new markets. Our goal is to provide ongoing support to entrepreneurs, helping them overcome challenges to achieve their business goals effectively.

Q10: Can I participate in the entrepreneurship program while working full-time?
A: Yes. While participation in the program will depend on the readiness of your product or service for market launch, we do understand that individuals often have existing commitments. If you have developed a product or service ready for launch, we encourage you to have a plan in place to dedicate a balanced amount of time to work on your small business for its growth and sustainability. The training sessions for the program are held once a week (Tuesdays from 6-9 PM) with approximately 2 hours of additional self-paced growth work per week (5 hours total commitment per week).