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**VENTURE CAFE & DISTRICT HALL PROVIDENCE OPERATIONS TO TRANSITION
FROM INNOVATION STUDIO TO VENTURE CAFE GLOBAL INSTITUTE AND
CAMBRIDGE INNOVATION CENTER**

Providence RI, Aug. 27, 2021 - Innovation Studio (f.k.a Venture Café New England), the Venture Café Global Institute and Cambridge Innovation Center have agreed to shift responsibility for the operations of the **Venture Café Providence Thursday Gathering program and District Hall Providence** to the Venture Café Global Institute (VCGI). We expect the transition to be complete sometime between the end of September through the end of October.

Launched in 2019, Venture Café Providence and District Hall Providence have served as a beacon to collaborate on world leading research, experience the latest technology and to build new businesses together by offering a civic space dedicated to innovators in Rhode Island to convene, explore and connect.

President of VCGI, Zara Crichton says "CIC and VCGI are always exploring new concepts and enhancements to existing initiatives, in this spirit we've identified an exciting opportunity to streamline the management of Venture Café & District Hall Providence. Our partners at Innovation Studio share the goal of maintaining a deep, sustained impact in the Rhode Island area for years to come, and expect to continue to collaborate to achieve that."

Venture Café and CIC founder, Tim Rowe, reflected on the success of the partnership over the years, "Innovation Studio has a long history of revolutionizing the process of innovation practice and is well respected for creating powerful civic innovation spaces for learning in the New England area. These spaces have proven their impact by gathering over half a million people and most importantly, bringing access to innovation to a wider audience, particularly audiences of color".

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Long term collaborator and Chair of Innovation Studio, Mitch Tyson, added, "We are grateful to CIC and VCGI for their long term support as we have worked together to strengthen the innovation ecosystem in New England inclusive of Rhode Island. This change will enable Innovation Studio to focus on the mission of making our world class innovation ecosystem more diverse and inclusive."

"Innovation Studio will now focus more on its principal mission: inclusionary innovation," agreed Innovation Studio President, Daniel Vidaña. "In 2015, we launched the Roxbury Innovation Center, a first-of-its-kind program in the United States and a landmark project for the City of Boston with a mission to foster local economic development in the heart of Nubian Square." Vidaña added. To aid in Rhode Island's economic recovery and increase opportunities, Innovation Studio will continue building on its programs to strengthen existing small businesses to support their retention and growth and create opportunities where new and aspiring entrepreneurs can obtain the resources and skills necessary to successfully build businesses.

Given the nature of this shift , Innovation Studio will undergo an organizational review and realignment of the Rhode Island Innovation Studio team and Tuni Schartner has made the decision to transition from her role as Executive Director for Venture Café Providence and District Hall Providence effective September 10, 2021. "I am honored to have led the Innovation Studio Providence team these past 19 months as we've supported, and grown, our community of entrepreneurs and innovators. I look forward to continuing to support Venture Cafe and District Hall Providence as VCGI assumes responsibility, as well as look forward to supporting the great work Innovation Studio will continue to do in Rhode Island democratizing entrepreneurship and working to build equitable pathways for all. Daniel Vidaña, President of Innovation Studio will assume interim leadership responsibilities for Innovation Studio Rhode Island while the realignment takes shape." added Tuni Schartner, Executive Director of Venture Café and District Hall Providence.

"We look forward to collaborating with Daniel Vidaña and his team at Innovation Studio for years to come," added Crichton, "as all our organizations are guided by the central tenant - that innovation is for everyone.

About Venture Café Global Institute

Founded in 2009 by Tim Rowe, CEO and Founder of the Cambridge Innovation Center (CIC), and co-founders Aubree Lawrence and later Carrie Stalder, Venture Café started with the simple idea - to connect innovators in the Boston area.

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Today, Venture Café's flagship Thursday Gathering program has attracted 500,000+ innovators worldwide; entrepreneurs, scientists and creatives convening weekly, working together to make things happen. The VCGI network currently includes nine Venture Cafés sites worldwide, which work in partnership with CIC to strengthen innovation ecosystems.

Venture Café Global Institute's mission is to enhance, accelerate and introduce the innovation process to communities throughout the world - developing inclusive and resilient innovation ecosystems. Our vision is that one day, across the world, everyone will participate equally in the process of innovation.

> find out more www.venturecafeglobal.org

About Innovation Studio

Innovation Studio (Formerly Venture Café Foundation) is an economic development focused 501(c) (3) non-profit, envisioning a world where anyone can be an innovator. Innovation Studio's mission is to democratize innovation by cultivating relationships and providing resources for anyone to successfully launch and grow a business.

Innovation Studio has run 5,000+ program sessions, held more than 2800 office hour sessions, welcomed 250,000+ public lounge users and 265,000+ program attendees.

> find out more www.innovationstudio.org

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