

For Immediate Release
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Deadline approaching to compete for UpPrize Social Innovation Challenge funding

Prizes of up to \$350,000 will be awarded in two challenge areas

PITTSBURGH, Oct. 11, 2016 – For social entrepreneurs interested in products and solutions to improve the lives of vulnerable populations in Pittsburgh and increasing access to healthy food, the clock is ticking to apply for challenge funding from the *UpPrize: Social Innovation Challenge*. The challenge, now in its second year, is organized by The Forbes Funds in collaboration with BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania and Bridgeway capital. *UpPrize* engages the community in producing solutions and breakthrough innovations to more effectively meet the critical needs of our region's nonprofits and people. Organizations will compete for up to \$350,000 in each of the two challenge areas. Submissions are due by Nov. 30.

In its second year, *UpPrize* is one of the most significantly capitalized social innovation competitions focused on improving the quality of life in a given community. Last year, support was [directed to such innovations](#) as improved online experiences for the visually impaired, a technology-enabled solution for breaking human trafficking rings, state-of-the art volunteer screening for individuals working with children and an inventory system for re-used materials.

Interest in the funding is intense. Nearly 500 nonprofit leaders, community representatives, entrepreneurs and investors from southwestern Pennsylvania gathered in Pittsburgh on Oct. 6 to learn more about this year's *UpPrize* challenge. Nonprofits, start-ups, established firms, student and government agencies are all eligible to participate. This year applicants will compete for up in each of these two challenge areas:

1. **Impactful Technology:** Products and solutions that will improve nonprofit service delivery and/or the lives of vulnerable populations in southwestern Pennsylvania.
2. **Healthy Food:** Products and services that will increase access to healthy and nutritious food choices for vulnerable and underserved populations.

“The Pittsburgh region has everything needed to lead the world in purpose-driven community innovation. We have a significant competitive advantage in this space because of our can-do culture, accelerators, universities, philanthropies, start-ups, student innovators, corporate citizens such as BNY Mellon, Bridgeway and Comcast, and a robust nonprofit sector that employs 10 percent of the workforce,” said Kate Dewey, President of The Forbes Funds. “Leveraging our region’s collective strength offers exciting new ways to solve entrenched challenges facing nonprofits and to improve the region at a neighborhood level. *UpPrize* can help make this happen in a way that everyone wins.”

“This year’s *UpPrize* challenge is designed to generate innovative technological solutions to some of our region’s most pressing issues,” said Kenya Boswell, president, BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the founding partner of *UpPrize*. “We believe that technology has tremendous potential to positively impact individuals, organizations and industries within our community. As a founding partner, we ultimately see the connection between innovation, ideas that ignite change, and BNY Mellon’s mission – to improve lives through investing.”

Mark Peterson, President and CEO of Bridgeway was drawn to *UpPrize* this year because “the competition aligns with Bridgeway’s work to build entrepreneurial capacity and invest to improve the region. Bridgeway joined the Forbes Funds to create the Healthy Foods Challenge Area and find solutions to food access issues. We are eager to connect with socially innovative entrepreneurs bringing healthy food to those who need it most.”

Comcast Business has also joined as the *UpPrize* Media and Technology Partner.

“Comcast is honored to join the Forbes Funds, the BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania and Bridgeway as the official media and technology sponsor of the 2016-2017 *UpPrize* Challenges,” said Paul Merritt, regional vice president, Comcast Business. “We’re proud to support Pittsburgh’s growing ecosystem of innovators, small businesses and start-ups.”

How to apply: The *UpPrize* welcomes products and applications from all disciplines, including entrepreneurs, innovators, makers, coders, designers and researchers. Anyone, from a student to an established firm, is eligible to submit a solution for consideration. Interested participants should construct a brief video submission, which addresses at least one of the two core areas of opportunity. Applications will be judged by an independent panel of nationally recognized innovation experts. The competition is free to enter and the deadline to apply is 5 p.m. on November 30, 2016. Some rules and restrictions apply. For more information and complete contest details, including terms and conditions, visit UpPrize.org.

The 2016 *UpPrize* winners will be announced in March 2017.

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About The Forbes Funds

The Forbes Funds builds the management capacity and impact of community-based nonprofits individually and collectively. A supporting organization of the Pittsburgh Foundation, The Forbes Funds has more than 30 years of experience in supporting the advance of a more effective and sustainable nonprofit sector. Further questions should be directed to Kate Dewey, president, The Forbes Funds at dewey@forbesfunds.org.

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