



## **Case Study: BWP Connector Program is a Mutual Benefit Model for Greater Boston**

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**SUMMARY: Mutual benefit is what makes BWP's Connector model hum, generating year one outcomes that included 362 new jobs and \$38 million in new statewide spending<sup>1</sup>. This document briefly looks at two previously unpublished cases where the Connector program was successful in helping entrepreneurs solve pressing needs. The stark differences between these two examples hint at the breadth of benefits that BWP generates and the variety of situations in which the Connector model can be harnessed. Both of these cases demonstrate how the Connector model carries innovative thinking and technologies into organizations not typically thought of as part of the innovation economy.**

All economic activity is built on the principle of mutual benefit. So too is Boston World Partnerships' Connector program.

By briefly describing two previously unpublished examples where BWP's Connector program has delivered significant benefits to multiple parties simultaneously, this document enhances readers' understanding of how our platform works, and it invites new partnerships from a wide range of organizations throughout Greater Boston – and beyond.

(BWP previously published case studies showing the Connector program's impact on, respectively, job creation, workforce development, and international business development activities for Greater Boston. These also are stories of mutual benefit in the context of BWP's Connector strategy, and readers are invited to revisit those cases in the document archive at [www.bostonworldpartnerships.com](http://www.bostonworldpartnerships.com).)

### Example #1: BWP Finds A Home for One Hundred Startups

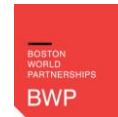
The core team at Mass Challenge ([www.masschallenge.org](http://www.masschallenge.org)) worked incredibly hard to create the world's largest startup competition in Massachusetts. They lined up world-renowned partners and raised substantial funds. But one major resource they had not found was low-cost space to house the one hundred or so startup teams that their competition would identify and work with. A BWP Connector introduced CEO John Harthorne to BWP staff, who, informed by the intelligence that the Connector network aggregates, saw a possibility of aligning Mass Challenge's need with the objectives of two parties that Harthorne had not previously met. The goal was to create a mutual benefit situation that would advance key goals for the respective parties and offer profound benefits for the local economy.

- *Mass Challenge.* Objective, as stated by Harthorne to the BWP team, was to find high-quality space to house the competition at low cost or zero cost.
- *The Office of Mayor Thomas M. Menino.* Objective, as stated in Mayor Menino's 2010 Inaugural Address and in subsequent staff level conversations, was to transform the South Boston Waterfront into Boston's Innovation District.
- *The Fallon Company.* Objective, as hypothesized by BWP staff, was to attract high-quality professional services firms and other firms to visit its beautiful new office building on Fan Pier.

BWP initiated the effort to bring these three parties together and helped to frame the conversation. Mass Challenge and The Fallon Company did go on to strike a deal, providing a first-class solution for Mass Challenge's space needs, thus supporting this high-profile competition as it delivers such great benefits to the Massachusetts economy. For Mayor Menino's bold vision for Boston's Innovation District, the arrival

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<sup>1</sup> See "Case Study: BWP Network Intelligence Nets 200 New Jobs for Boston" in the document archive at [www.bostonworldpartnerships.com](http://www.bostonworldpartnerships.com).



of the 100+ startup teams who will be housed in the space creates instant critical mass. And, even prior to the arrival of the startup teams, this deal has yielded a significant volume of visits from business decision-makers and leading influencers who are associated with the competition, as well as multiple media stories, referencing the features and benefits of the Fallon Company's available space and the visionary nature of the company's principals.

#### Example #2: BWP Brings Mobile Marketing to Hard-Working Neighborhood Groups

Born out of Harvard University's Idea Translation Lab, MuseTrek offers downloadable mobile phone tours – "treks" – of museums, cities, and cultural resources tailored to the interests of the user. After early success in Paris at the Louvre, MuseTrek looked to launch its program and grow its business in Boston. BWP made multiple connections to help MuseTrek find early partners. This included framing conversations between the MuseTrek team and some of Boston's cultural leaders, which in turn led to collaborations with neighborhood organizations Discover Roxbury and Iquilinos Boricuas en Accion (IBA).

Driven by the idea that how people interact with a painting, a building, or a city doesn't have to be dictated by an "expert," MuseTrek created a platform in which users can upload and download personalized tours to their mobile phone. The result is a new way of interacting with art and architecture, history and culture, people and communities. "We envision Boston neighborhoods engaging their citizens in taking ownership of their space and presenting their neighborhood in ways they would like it to be seen," says MuseTrek founder Mishy Harmon.

Unlike Example #1, this example features small organizations, each with just one or two staff people. It reflects the wide range of the Connector program's beneficiaries, and the way that BWP dedicates resources to help small organizations just as it does with big organizations. After all, today's small startup may be tomorrow's fast-growing hot company. And even if that doesn't turn out to be the case, by helping small startups, BWP's Connectors are impacting the culture of our region, making it more likely that the next startup will locate, stay, and grow here in Greater Boston.

#### BWP Creates Alignment Among Interests – Internally and Externally

Early in the Connector program's evolution, BWP figured out how to align Connectors' business self-interest with the civic purposes that BWP was created to address – promoting and growing the regional economy. With the July 2010 introduction of its new funding model, BWP has brought those two elements into alignment with a third element – the growth goals of business funding partners. The result is a powerful engine for growing the Connector program and increasing the benefits it generates.

Internally, BWP's commitment to mutual benefit yields uncommonly high levels of engagement among Connectors, which propels BWP's whole crowd-sourcing strategy for growing the economy. 99% of Connectors consider BWP a trusted network. These are high-achieving professionals from different industries and countries who share expertise and contacts to help other businesses grow here.

Mutual benefit also characterizes the outcomes that the Connector model yields – the activity that is visible externally. BWP's approach has three steps. We learn your needs. We source our network to identify solutions. And we connect you to them. This is incredibly effective when BWP finds a way to frame, authentically, your business need as representing a beneficial opportunity for Connectors as well.

BWP does all of this in the name of economic growth as mutual benefit extends beyond the parties to a deal, with the ultimate beneficiary being the Greater Boston economy.