Berkeley Business Retention Program

Evaluation Report

March 2021

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About Us

UPTIMA
ENTREPRENEUR COOPERATIVE

Uptima Entrepreneur Cooperative provides holistic and culturally relevant education, advising and community to support diverse entrepreneurs in creating thriving businesses in service to their communities

Bootcamps **Academy** **Advising**

Program Overview

- Pilot program to support 20 small businesses and non-profits at risk of displacement or closure in Berkeley from January 2019-December 2020

- Free one-on-one business advising and workshops
  - Create an action plan
  - Find funding
  - Implement their plan to keep their business in Berkeley

Program Overview *(cont'd)*

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- Existing independently-owned small businesses or non-profits based in the City of Berkeley
- Are potentially at risk of displacement or closure
- Have the potential to retain existing jobs or create new jobs in Berkeley
- Need business support to stay in place or relocate elsewhere in Berkeley
- Can commit the time and effort to put in place a plan to maintain and grow their business

Key Statistics

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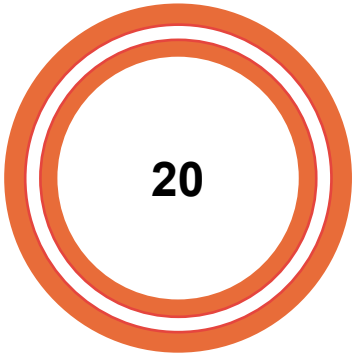
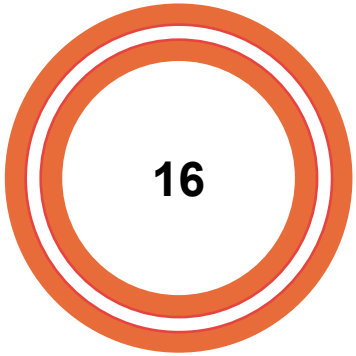
Businesses Reached

Businesses Enrolled

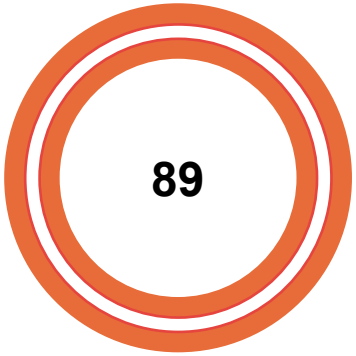


Businesses Retained

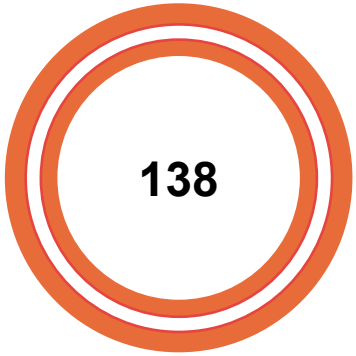


Annual Income Retained

Jobs Retained



Other Independent Businesses & Contractors Supported



Primary Outreach Efforts

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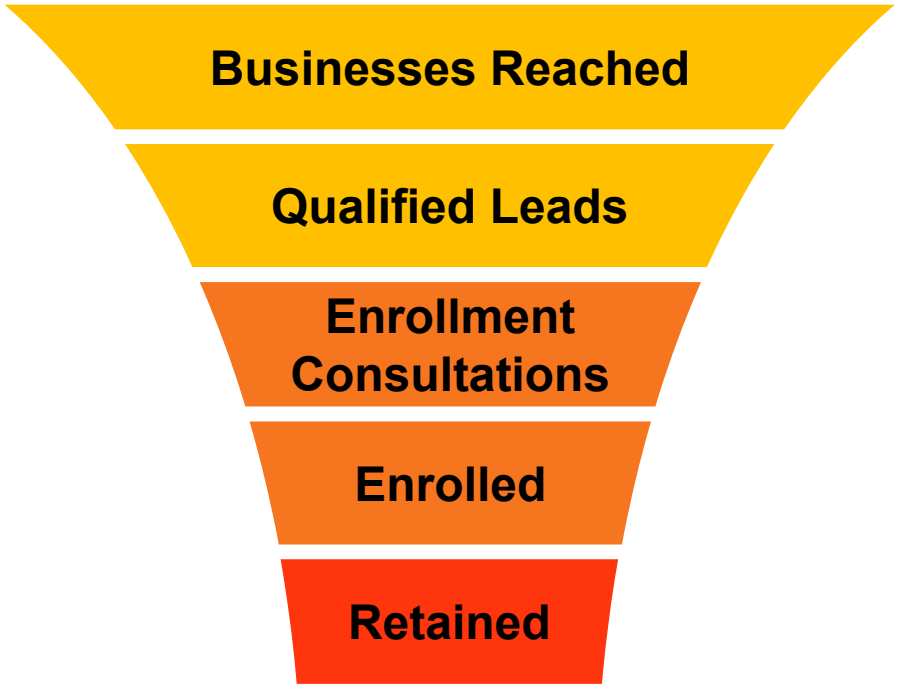
- We conducted 152 hours of outreach to small business owners and non-profit leaders across Berkeley

Business Owner Meetings	• Door-to-door outreach to existing businesses to inform them of the program, its benefits, and any upcoming information sessions
Information Sessions	• Series of 2-hour information sessions that introduce business owners to the program and provide tips and tools to help them keep their businesses in their community
Small Business Events	• Information booths and flyering at various small business events, street fairs, and festivals
Partner Organizations	• Emails and meetings with business districts, chamber, and business support, legal, financial, and real estate partners

Grassroots, face-to-face outreach proved effective in building trust with the small business and non-profit community

Business Pipeline



#	% Conversion
226	
56	25%
27	48%
20	74%
16	80%

* Businesses reached does not include attendees at merchant association meetings where program was presented.

It takes multiple points of follow-up and sharing information with leaders of small businesses and non-profits that are risk of displacement or closure

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Program Clients by Location

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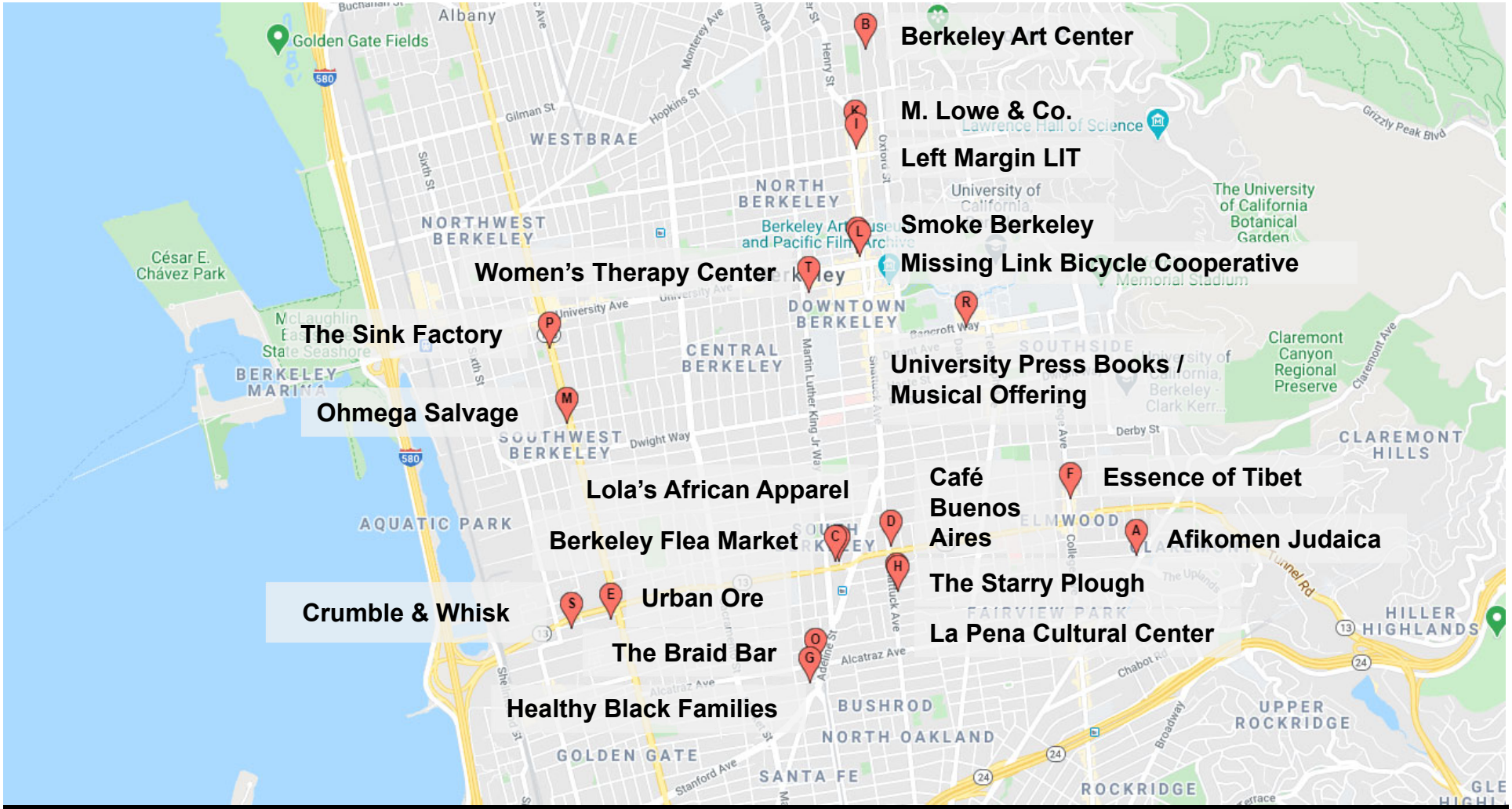

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Program Clients by Industry

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Arts & Culture

Berkeley Art Center

Berkeley Flea Market

La Peña

Left Margin LIT

Food & Beverage

The Starry Plough Pub

Café Buenos Aires

Crumble & Whisk Pâtisserie

Smoke Berkeley Gourmet Streetfood To Go

Retail – Apparel & Accessories

Essence of Tibet

Lola's African Apparel

M Lowe & Co Fine Jewelry

Retail – Bookstores

Live * Shop * Shmooze Afikomen Judaica

University Press Books
Ten Thousand Minds on Fire

Salvage & Repair

URBANORE
To End the Age of Waste

Missing Link Bicycle Cooperative
Worker-Owned for over 40 Years

The Sink Factory

Ohmega Salvage

Health & Wellness

Berkeley Black Families, Inc.

WTC
Women's Therapy Center

Personal Services

The Braid Bar

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Business Advising: Prior to COVID-19

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Create an Action Plan

- Develop strategies to increase sales and profitability
- Prepare to renew an existing commercial lease or find a new space
- Research costs to upgrade, relocate or expand the business
- Plan for retirement by developing a succession plan

Find Funding

- Learn what funding options are available and how to access them
- Prepare documentation to raise money
- Connect with potential funders
- Get assistance in navigating the funding process

Implementation

- Create or enhance the business' online presence
- Improve the business' operations, finances and administration
- Mitigate business disruption before, during and after relocation
- Transition ownership of the business

Business Advising: During COVID-19

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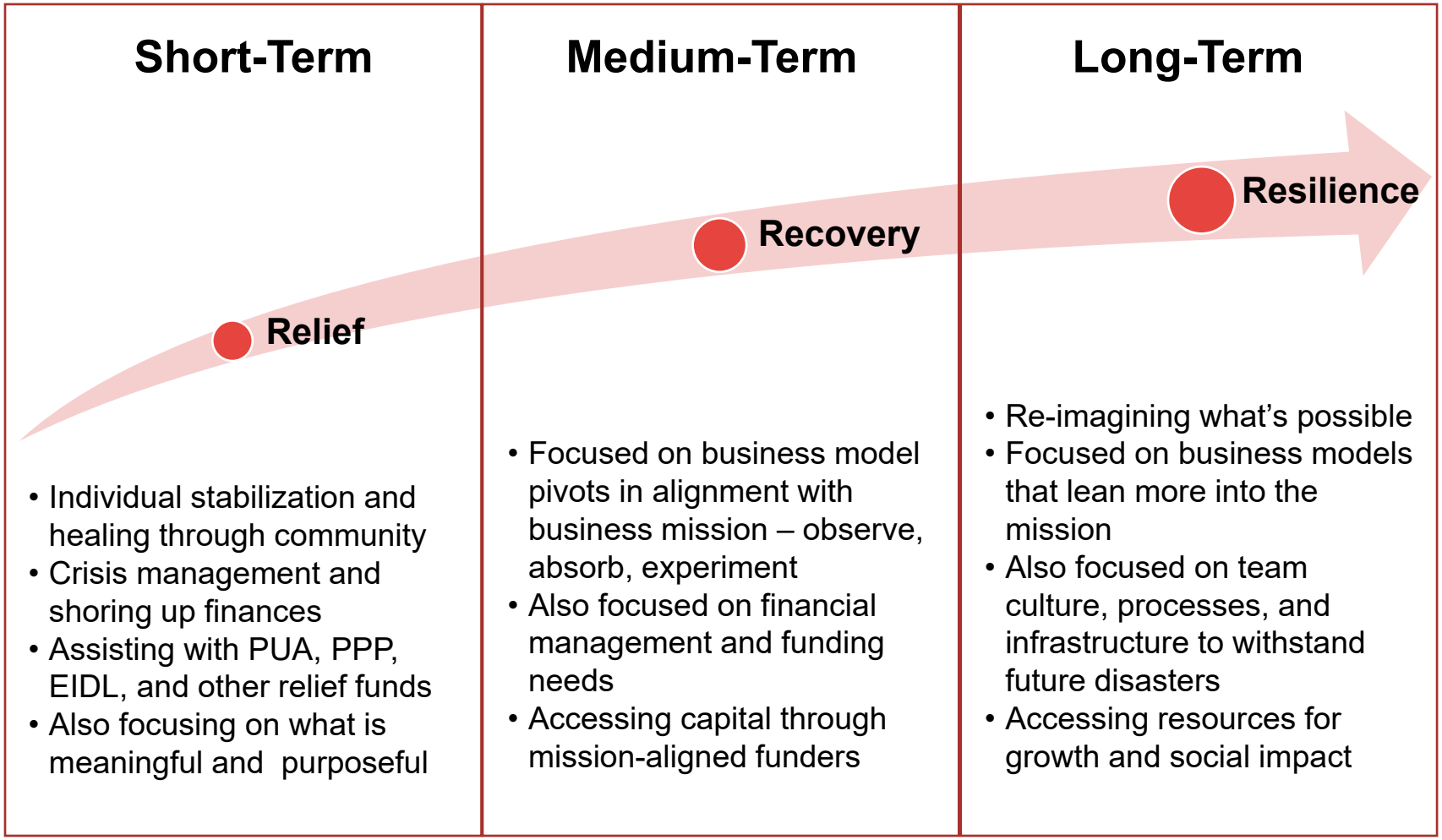

Business Advising Outcomes

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- Provided 702 hours of 1:1 business advising to 20 businesses

- Retained 16 businesses
  - One lost prior to COVID-19 due to lack of affordable and actionable kitchen space to grow in Berkeley
  - Three lost due to their challenges pre-dating COVID-19

Success Stories

Berkeleyside

Berkeley Flea Market ready to reopen with city help, despite ...

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Mar 7, 2019

Berkeleyside

Displaced BBQ restaurant Smoke Berkeley finds a new home ...

Berkeleyside relies on reader support so we can remain free to access for everyone in our community. Donate to help us continue to provide you ...

Jul 19, 2019

Berkeleyside

Black-owned businesses in Berkeley demonstrate the city's ...

All the clothing at Lola's African Apparel is designed and made in Nigeria by Nigerians. Owner Ifafunke 'Lola' Oladigbolu has been in the ...

Jun 26, 2020

Business Advising Findings

- Small businesses and non-profits were facing serious financial challenges prior to the pandemic, but for some, relief funds have been game-changing
- Relationship with property owners is key to retention success
- Having a long-term advising support is critical
- Successful retention advising requires a breadth of technical skills and emotional intelligence
- Lack of confidence in current plans has to do with uncertainty around COVID-19
- There is a desire to have more advising time through recovery

Recommendations

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- Create additional grant relief funding
- Increase marketing of small businesses and non-profits
- Provide more support in landlord negotiations
- Improve city support in commercial corridors
- Extend and refine business retention program to support more at-risk businesses during COVID-19 recovery
- Increase networking and peer support opportunities
- Improve visibility of city services that support business owners

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Thank you!

https://uptimacoop.com

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