



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **THE INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP IS BUILDING STRONGER & MORE SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH 'ASK THE EXPERT' EDUCATIONAL SERIES**

*Powered By Small Businesses Need Us & Verizon Small Business Digital Ready, The Curriculum Is Designed To Give Businesses The Tools Needed To Thrive In Today's Digital Economy*

**Newark, NJ, May 11, 2022** — In a continuing effort to assist small businesses during the prolonged pandemic, The [Institute For Entrepreneurial Leadership](#) (IFEL) is encouraging small business owners to attend an educational series designed to help them succeed in today's fast-paced digital economy. 'Ask The Experts' is made possible by a generous grant from the [Verizon Foundation](#), which contributed to the expansion of the [Small Businesses Need Us](#) (SBNU) program started by IFEL in May of 2020 to save small businesses impacted by COVID-19.

More than 100,000 small businesses closed due to the pandemic, with a disproportionate impact on Black and Latinx-owned businesses. Many businesses are still struggling today due to the major disruptions they experienced.

IFEL Co-Founder & CEO Jill Johnson stated, "IFEL is excited to partner with Verizon in this effort to coalesce a vast network of resources to assist community-based businesses with recovery and growth. Verizon has enabled us to expand our resources to benefit small businesses, which are the backbone of our communities. Providing them with the necessary learning tools is critical to economic recovery and stability."

In conjunction with the [Verizon Small Business Digital Ready](#) platform, IFEL is hosting 'Ask The Experts' to connect small business owners with industry leaders on a wide range of key business topics including digital marketing, capital access, understanding financial statements, and more. Verizon Small Business Digital Ready is an online curriculum designed to give small businesses the tools they need to thrive in today's digital economy, including access to personalized learning plans, coaching from experts and networking opportunities with diverse, industry-specific businesses. The weekly online sessions are interactive through video-conferencing and provide a deep dive into specific business

topics, giving participants the opportunity to find answers to their questions and most pressing business issues.

To register and access the Verizon Small Business Ready platform, visit [verizon.com/smallbusinessdigitalready](http://verizon.com/smallbusinessdigitalready). To learn more about Small Businesses Need Us, visit [www.smallbusinessesneedus.org](http://www.smallbusinessesneedus.org).

#### **ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP**

Founded in 2002, the [Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership](https://www.weareifel.org) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that supports economic development through entrepreneurship. IFEL envisions a future with inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems in which people from historically excluded populations have equal opportunity for success. In pursuit of this vision, the mission is to eradicate the systemic barriers that prevent people from historically excluded populations from being able to access the knowledge, networks, and capital required for entrepreneurial success and wealth creation. Learn more at <https://www.weareifel.org>.

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