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Gray Matters Capital Establishes coLABS to Take Bets on Ambitious Social Start-Ups that will Drastically Improve the Lives of Women Globally

(Wednesday, February 1, 2017) – [Gray Matters Capital \(GMC\)](#) believes the best investment strategy is to bet on people, and more specifically, women. GMC’s vision is to create an empowered and purposeful life for 100 million women globally by 2036. Over the last ten years, the Atlanta-based impact investor has devoted \$160 million USD into microfinance and education initiatives, primarily in South Asia, Africa and Latin America. To accelerate its progress toward that vision, it is excited to announce its latest Initiative, [coLABS](#), which seeks to develop bold, new social ventures with the potential to drastically improve the lives of women and girls on a large-scale.

GMC coLABS’ objective is to challenge the status quo through rigorous early-stage acceleration. Anna Cable, Innovation and Business Development Lead for GMC commented, “We have given ourselves \$1 million over the next 12 months to move the needle on critical social issues for women. We will consider any sector, any geography; but, we want an uncompromising focus on the most vital issues that affect women around the world. We want to push ourselves, and our entrepreneurs, to really break the boundaries of existing impact investing models.” One of coLABS’ first pilots is Aulas Amigas, headquartered in Colombia; Chief Financial Officer George O’Kane commented, “GMC coLABS has been a catalytic push for Aulas Amigas as it helped us jump start our international expansion, providing us with both risk capital and local expertise to build out a promising market entry pilot into India.”

GMC coLABS will focus on supporting pilots by providing capital, rapid prototyping and advisor support. They will look for unique and creative solutions to complex social issues and hard-to-reach populations. On a micro scale, these solutions will forge sustainable and scalable models that make women’s lives exponentially better. On a macro level, they will change societal attitudes that systemically keep women and communities from progressing. For example, how do you create entrepreneurial opportunities for incarcerated women in the U.S. to build financial security and fight recidivism? How do you structure educational and livelihood interventions for human trafficking survivors in Nepal? How can a reproductive health enterprise provide economic growth to rural Uganda while also fighting social stigma that threatens girls’ school attendance?

To take on those social challenges, GMC coLABS seeks passionate, savvy, trailblazing entrepreneurs hungry to get their ventures off the ground. Drawing from GMC's entrepreneurial culture, coLABS takes a rigorous approach to enterprise acceleration, including early-stage investment capital and advisor support. Ms. Cable notes, "We want entrepreneurs who are ready for a do-or-die type challenge; you've got 12 months to make this into something, so how are you going to use these funds wisely to that end?" So, what does it take as an entrepreneur to join coLABS? The initiative is looking for entrepreneurs who are:

- ✓ Tackling hard-to-reach markets, demographics, and complex social issues;
- ✓ Ready for seed funding (\$10,000 - \$100,000 USD) to launch an investment-ready pilot;
- ✓ Piloting revenue-generating, market-scalable models;
- ✓ Able to eventually scale your model to help GMC reach its mission: *improving the lives of 100 million women globally!*

The GMC coLABS investment cycle occurs every two months; the next investment decision will be made on February 22, 2017. We encourage you to share this announcement with ambitious entrepreneurs in your network who are passionate about changing the lives of women and girls through disruptive innovation.

For further inquiries, please contact Anna Cable at acable@graymatterscap.com.

To learn more about GMC coLABS, please visit <https://gmccolabs.com/>.

Gray Matters Capital invests in entrepreneurs who develop sustainable, market-based solutions for low-income customers globally with a focus on education. Its founder, Bob Pattillo, is also a founder of Gray Ghost Ventures, First Light Ventures, Gray Ghost Microfinance Fund, and an early investor in Bellwether Fund, ASA Intl, Village Capital, and dozens of individual enterprises. <http://www.graymatterscap.com/>