

# 2024 SFIA Excelerator Program

## OVERVIEW

In 2023, SFIA's Excelerator Program marked its inaugural year – a groundbreaking initiative for emerging sports and fitness industry leaders, specifically catering to young professionals with eight years or less of cumulative experience and representing diverse communities.

Seven individuals, recognized as “Associates,” were carefully selected by member organizations for the program's initial rollout, which included an immersive industry experience.

The program aims to grow and include ten Associates in 2024, contingent upon the ongoing support from SFIA membership. Guided by principles of accessibility, diversity, and robust industry engagement, the Excelerator Program is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of emerging leaders in the sports and fitness sector.



## PROGRAM DELIVERABLES

- Complimentary access to SFIA events such as the Super Regionals, Team Sports Conference, Webinars, etc.
- Exclusive meetings with SFIA leadership, including President and CEO Tom Cove, and interaction with Board members
- Engage in between four and six career development and personal growth sessions
- Monthly Lunch 'N Learn sessions with industry leaders and past Excelerator Associates
- Industry networking “mixers”
- Monthly mentoring sessions with SFIA COO Glenn Horine and/or with industry leaders
- Hospitality at all in-person events
- Associate travel reimbursement if necessary

## BENEFITS

- Unite the sports and fitness industry by conveying a crucial, “all are welcome” message to young professionals eager for career opportunities and development
- Recognize and expedite the growth of high-performing young professionals for industry leadership roles
- Facilitate access to SFIA industry members and leaders through events, thought-provoking leadership initiatives, networking activities, and potential mentorship opportunities



## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### January-February '24

- Formalize member-wide application process with the People & Culture Committee

### February-March '24

- Membership request for Associate applications

### April '24

- Review and selection of 2024 Associate cohort

### Mid May '24

- Launch 2024 cohort program

### May-November '24

- Program period

## 2023 INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS AND ASSOCIATE WEBINAR

- **Associate Webinar: Professional Growth/Development**
- **Bruin Capital (Lunch 'N Learn):** David Abrutyn, Partner
- **Clarks (Lunch 'N Learn):** Jon Ram, CEO and Chairman, SFIA Board
- **Endeavor (Host, Professional Development Workshop):** Katie Foley, Vice President, Business Development, 160 Over 90; Norris Scott, Senior Vice President, Business Development, Endeavor Analytics
- **GameChanger/Dick's Sporting Goods (Super Regional Featured Guest):** Sameer Ahuja, President
- **Kroenke Sports & Entertainment (Lunch 'N Learn):** Declan Bolger, Chief Marketing Officer
- **Michigan State (Lunch 'N Learn):** Ashton Henderson, Deputy AD, Championship Resources & Culture
- **National Football League (Host, Professional Development Workshop):** Lindsey Arnold, Director, Sponsorship Management; Ashley Daniel, Senior Marketing Manager, Consumer Products Manager; Belynda Gardner, Senior Director, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Roman Oben, Vice President of Football Development Strategy & SFIA Board Member and Chair, People & Culture Committee
- **National Hockey League (Host, Professional Development Workshop):** Kim Davis, Senior EVP, Social Impact, Growth Initiatives & Legislative Affairs & SFIA Board Member; Jim Haskins, Senior Vice President, Consumer Products Licensing; Kate Watson, Vice President, Legal; Rob Wooley, Vice President, NHL Foundation & Legislative Affairs
- **Teamwork Online (Lunch 'n Learn):** Buffy Filippell, Founder
- **The Venn Collective (Career and Leadership Development Facilitator):** Eric Guthoff, Co-Founder + Head of Growth; Jacqueline Leamer, Co-Founder + Head of Strategy
- **United States Tennis Association (Host, Professional Development Workshop):** Kaitlin Petersen, Director, US Open Merchandise; Chris Studley, Senior Director, Events Services, USTA National Tennis Center; Lauren Tracy, Senior Director, Strategic and Business Operations; Danny Zausner, Chief Operating Officer, USTA National Tennis Center

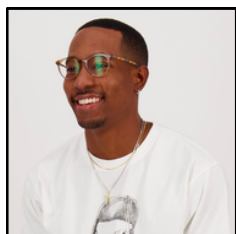


## 2023 ASSOCIATE TESTIMONIALS



"The SFIA Excelerator Program was a unique opportunity that helped me grow in several professional and leadership capacities while also providing me with specialized industry experience and exposure to leading executives and mentors. I am grateful for the chance to be a part of this pilot program and look forward to implementing the skills and advice I have received as I further my career in the sports industry."

**Kassi Farmer** Retail & DTC Planner



"Participating in the SFIA Excelerator program not only provided me with the chance to expand my understanding of the sports industry but also allowed me to establish connections with experienced leaders in the field. This valuable experience has significantly enriched my skill set as a creative leader in the sports industry. Thank you for the incredible opportunity!"

**Jordan Johnson** Associate Product Manager/Designer (Collaboration & Energy)



"The SFIA Excelerator program was a great experience for me to enhance my professional skillset, grow my network within the sports industry and improve my leadership skills. I am thankful for this opportunity and look forward to seeing the next group of talented Excelerators."

**Michelle Kalupski** Associate Sales Manager, Consumer Products

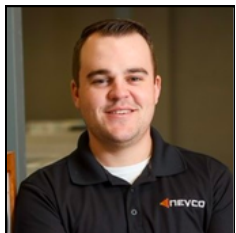


## 2023 ASSOCIATE TESTIMONIALS



"The Excelerator program helped me develop both personally and professionally. I learned to change my mindset about networking; it helped develop me as a leader and made me realize the importance of personal development. I look forward to using these skills as I progress through my career and hope that other young leaders can have the same opportunity."

**Erin Kelly** Area Sales Manager



"Leaders aren't born, they are made. The Excelerator program has given me a fresh perspective when it comes to tapping into resources that are already available to me. It has also given me an opportunity to expound upon my leadership skills while growing my professional network in the process."

**Tyler Klostermann** Regional Sports Video Consultant



"I would recommend the SFIA Excelerator Program to any young professional looking to grow within the Sports & Fitness Industry. The skills I was able to develop during my time in the program, in addition to the connections I was able to make with industry leaders, are things that I will take with me the rest of my career."

**Brian Morrison** Recruiter



"The Excelerator Program gave me the opportunity to learn directly from executives across a wide range of companies and roles. I was able to create connections and step into rooms I otherwise wouldn't have been able to, and it has helped inform where I will take my career from here."

**Kweku Quansah** Social Media Innovation Coordinator



Please contact Glenn Horine at  
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for more information and  
sponsorship opportunities on the  
Excelerator Program.

