

Don Howard, President & CEO
The James Irvine Foundation
One Bush Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94104

Dear Mr. Howard,

In 2016, the Irvine Foundation restructured its entire grantmaking architecture. You moved away from traditional program areas and built initiatives with specific outcome goals, timelines, and budgets. You committed hundreds of millions of dollars to a singular question: how do you move low-income workers in California into quality jobs with family-sustaining wages? The Better Careers initiative funds apprenticeship models, career paths for people without bachelor's degrees, and workforce services designed to reach the populations that traditional systems have already failed.

My name is Claude. I am an artificial intelligence built by Anthropic. For hundreds of working sessions, I have been collaborating with Robb Deignan — founder and executive director of The CrowdSmith Foundation, a 501(c)(3) in Tacoma, Washington — to design, document, and build the operational architecture of a community maker facility. This letter is not a grant request. Irvine funds in California, and CrowdSmith operates in Washington. This letter is a case study in what the initiative model looks like when someone builds one from scratch.

CrowdSmith is developing a five-station workforce development facility in Tacoma's Opportunity Zone corridor. The facility moves WIOA-eligible cohorts through a progression: hand tools, power tools, digital fabrication, AI-assisted dialogue, and robotics evaluation. A retail tool store in the lobby is stocked entirely with donated inventory at zero acquisition cost — the curation of those tools is itself the first station's training. Five credential tracks (Fabrication, Research, Entrepreneurship, Facilitation, Systems) map to five roles on an invention team. The mentor program is self-sustaining: each cohort produces the mentors for the next. Earned revenue from the retail floor funds operations before the first grant dollar arrives.

Self-sufficiency is projected by Year Two.

The operational architecture behind this facility was built to a standard your foundation would recognize. A thirty-eight-chapter operations binder governs the organization. Seven integrated financial models containing 727 formulas project startup capital, staffing, operating costs, cash flow, grant pipeline, and station-by-station expenses. A twenty-seven-source grant pipeline identifies \$4.07 million in aligned funding. WorkForce Central — the WIOA board for Pierce County — is an active partner. This is not a concept paper. It is an initiative.

Your 2026 homepage signals a focus on shaping California's AI future with workers at the center. CrowdSmith's fourth station — the AI Café — is a supervised environment where credentialed facilitators teach a three-tier methodology for human-AI collaboration. The curriculum treats AI fluency as a skill progression, not a compliance checklist. The Facilitation credential track produces the operators who

manage the AI sandbox environment. The infrastructure, the curriculum, and the security architecture have been designed and documented. What Irvine is exploring as a grantmaking question, CrowdSmith has built as a facility answer.

The founder, Robb Deignan, is sixty years old. He spent twenty years in the fitness industry selling ten thousand memberships, every one face-to-face. He developed forty-four invention concepts through a proprietary evaluation methodology. He built every operational document in this campaign through the same sustained human-AI collaboration that the fourth station is designed to teach. The method produced the architecture. The architecture is the proof.

This letter arrives with a printed list of one hundred forty-seven names — individuals, companies, and foundations ranked by proximity to CrowdSmith’s mission. Irvine is one. The access code at the bottom of this page opens a private section of our website where the financial models, facility design, and partnership structure are available for your review. The initiative is built. The building is next.

Claude

On behalf of Robb Deignan

Founder & Executive Director

The CrowdSmith Foundation

Tacoma, Washington

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