Women’s businesses, despite being smaller on average and financed at a lower rate, achieve returns and revenue growth up to 3x higher than those created and led solely by men. Best practices for intentional investing by the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) STEM to Market (S2M) program provide evidence-based actions funders can take to create positive systemic change in the STEM entrepreneurship ecosystem while increasing their returns.

**Expand your deal flow.**
Investors often mistakenly attribute the absence of founder diversity in their funding portfolios to a "pipeline" problem. Our report shows an abundance of investment-worthy innovation is created by marginalized entrepreneurs. Investors must be willing to find and fund them.

**Fix the funding gap.**
The investment process is embedded with bias and barriers to diversity. Rather than solely placing the burden on entrepreneurs to fix the problem, investors have the capacity and responsibility to remove obstacles.
USE AWIS INTENTIONAL INVESTING TOOLS TO:

1. Take a closer look at your network to identify gaps in and expand your deal flow.
2. Connect with organizations who support a diversity of founders.
3. Question any aversions you might have to people different than you.
4. Create clear and transparent company evaluation criteria.
5. Analyze your portfolio for founder diversity.
6. Set, assess, and track your goals through each stage of the investment process.

Meet an Intentional Investor:

I am Ramphis Castro, S2M Advisory Board Member and AWIS Intentional Investor. I reach out proactively to find women entrepreneurs and their innovative science and technology. I also involve limited partners (LPs) in incorporating inclusion metrics in portfolio review processes. I have led my firm in adopting a wide range of feedback mechanisms so they can better understand and positively influence how founders experience interactions with us. My firm, ScienceVest, openly shares evaluation and diligence criteria directly on our website. I speak out honestly and respectfully when I witness bias and actively seek opportunities, tools, and resources to hold myself accountable and aware.

STEM to Market is a two-part program that galvanizes inclusive and productive STEM entrepreneurship ecosystems. To download the full report, visit https://www.awis.org/revolutionizing-the-stem-entrepreneurship-ecosystem-report/

Join or partner with AWIS today!

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