



FOOD  
INNOVATION  
NETWORK

# Tukwila Village Food Hall



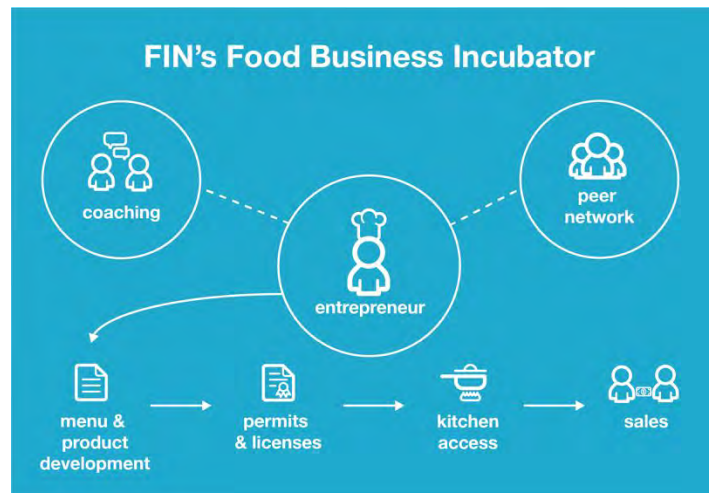
A program of Global to Local, Food Innovation Network's mission is to enhance the local food system, increase access to healthy food, create pathways for success, and support resource- and idea-sharing that engages the diverse communities of SeaTac/Tukwila and South King County. Our **community-led work spans across the local food system**, from farm to fork.

## The Challenge

Through extensive community outreach and a feasibility study, we know at least 200 South King County residents are interested in starting food businesses. Over half of these aspiring entrepreneurs come from families with annual **household incomes under \$25,000**. And although over **two-thirds of these residents already have food industry experience**, they face **barriers to starting a business**. The key barriers they identified include accessing capital and financing, accessing commercial kitchen space, and navigating licensing and permitting.

## The Solution

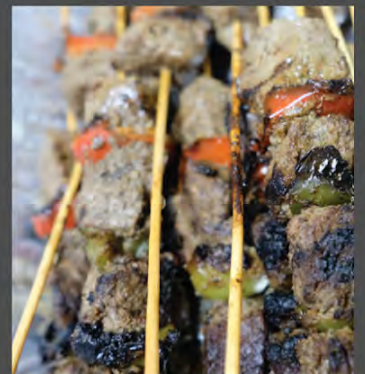
In 2017, with input from many partners and community members, we piloted a **food business incubator for underserved residents**. Most of our participants are part of immigrant and refugee communities. We provide subsidized rent at a commercial kitchen, as well as other business supports including permit assistance and market channel development. We have since helped launch nine businesses.



## Meet Entrepreneur Caroline Musitu

Caroline Musitu grew up helping her mother cater events in Congo. After coming to SeaTac, Caroline cooked for celebrations within the Congolese community. She joined our incubator to formalize her business and extend her reach to a broader market.

Taste of Congo, the only Congolese food business in the region, is now a point of pride for Caroline's community. Her business has also been a hit at farmers markets, where she's generated income to help support her family.



## The Opportunity

Now we have an exciting opportunity to build off this success and expand the program to accommodate more entrepreneurs. **We plan to open a food hall that will be six times the size of our current location.** It will be located in Tukwila Village, a new mixed development and affordable housing project. Community members have guided the design of the food hall, which will serve as the heart of our food business incubator. It will also be a space where **people can gather, learn about, and celebrate the community's rich food traditions** while creating community wealth.



The 2,900-square-foot space is on the ground floor of six-story building. The commercial kitchen will accommodate at least **20 food businesses, including eight that will rent stalls in the food hall.** Others will use the kitchen for off-site sales, such as catering and farmers markets. We have an agreement with the developer, Pacific Northern, and we're now finalizing facility design and equipment layout. We plan to **open for operations in early 2020.**

## Funding Needs

To build out the space and expand the program, we are raising \$700,000 in capital funds. Funds will support designs, construction, and equipment to get the facility up and running.

## Get Involved

Contact FIN Program Director Kara Martin: [kara@foodinnovationnetwork.org](mailto:kara@foodinnovationnetwork.org) or (206) 850-2877. Find more information at [foodinnovationnetwork.org](http://foodinnovationnetwork.org).



## Meet Entrepreneur Lucy Kamau

Lucy Kamau, an immigrant from Kenya, had lots of experience cooking for large groups of friends and family. She worked with FIN to launch her catering company because she needed support to expand beyond her core community.

She says her favorite part of operating Sherehe Kenya Kitchen is “the opportunity to share my ethnic food and social culture with other people, the chance to feed my clients special healthy meals and improve their health and quality of life.”

