Accelerate.
Facilitating the emergence of a local, equitable, and sustainable economy.
Promoter.
SCAD Design for Sustainability Program
Accelerate Savannah

Funder to date.
SCAD

Acknowlegdements.
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Context.

Savannah is known for its human-scale city planning and its historic beauty. What’s less known is that it’s a city with endemic poverty. The city also experiences creative ‘brain drain,’ due to a lack of work opportunities for recent college graduates. Leveraging the city’s industrial past and the above-mentioned ‘liabilities’ can lead to an inclusive green jobs economy in this port city.
The project. Accelerate Savannah is developing an equitable prosperity initiative by facilitating a series of broad-reaching collaborations that creates new jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities around a comprehensive and inclusive ‘green economy’ framework.
The design process.

| 2011 – 2013:  |
Various, co-design initiatives with impacted communities

| Feb. 2013:  |
convening of green economy leaders

| Sept. — Nov. 2013:  |
co-creation of ‘green hub’ model

| Jan. – March 2014:  |
Co-creation of toolkits for convening and facilitating the green economy in Savannah

| March 2014 – ongoing:  |
Continual development
Members of Accelerate Savannah + ongoing SCAD classes are working with officials in the City Manager’s office and the Mayor’s office to define the parameters of a public-private partnership to attract major external funding, and to target relevant changes to ordinances and small business incentives.
Activism and Civic Participation

Ongoing design initiatives and interventions have been designed to maximize community involvement, and input, beginning with an intensive, co-design process that brought international design leaders with local community members, city officials, and design students.
Numerous tools were designed to provide members of various communities in Savannah to speak directly to each other in non-threatening environments, and through generative dialog techniques.
The search for an ideal geographic 'common ground' is being sought to provide a bridge between different communities in Savannah, and create a common vision for a hub that fosters formal and informal learning for all, and with social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability at its core.
Students are working with industry leaders from many sectors to start formulating the strategy, process, and physical spaces needed to create a “physical and intellectual hub for sustainability that increases the quality and quantity of green jobs in Savannah.”
Networks of individuals from various communities are being introduced to each other, and provided opportunities to strengthen their professional connections and social bonds, and empowered to share their skills with the community.
Engaging local craftsmen to teach and learn

Youth job training

A centerpiece of the Accelerate endeavor is the creation of local jobs through innovative partnerships in the green collar economy, as well as fostering social entrepreneurship for local craftsmen and young designers alike. Our initiative involves the demand side as well as the supply side of the equation,
Visualization of complex information and the relationships between stakeholders over time has been at the heart of building a shared vision over the last several years. Iterated visualizations of concepts and relationships have given voice to underrepresented segments of the population even as they have articulated future benefits of new ideas to decision makers.