

1. First name
[Ken](#)
2. Last name
[Granderson](#)
3. Personal email address
ken@blackfacts.com
4. City
[Brooklyn, NY](#)
5. Zip code
[11216](#)
6. We're excited to add more entrepreneurial founders to our portfolio. Tell us about your company and what you are building
 - a. What's your company name
[Blackfacts.com, LLC](#)
 - b. Company website/url, if any
<https://blackfacts.com>
 - c. If you have a demo, what's the url? For non-software, demo can be a video.
<https://blackfacts.com> or <https://blackfacts.com/news>
 - d. Describe your company in 50 characters or less.
[History and News Technology By Us For Us About Us](#)
[We Create Technology That Uplifts The Black Race](#)
 - e. What is your company going to make?
[We have created a content delivery platform that is part of a larger business services technology platform being built to help bring companies and organizations throughout the African Diaspora into the 21st Century.](#)
 - f. Which category best applies to your company?
[A, B, D, F, J, X, Z](#)
A - Consumer
B - Community
C - Crypto
D - Marketplace
E - Developer Tools
F - B2B
G - Enterprise
H - Security
I - Government
J - Education
K - Energy
L - Biotech
M - Healthcare
N - Science
O - Financial Services
P - Hardware
Q - Robotics

R - Drones
S - Transportation
T - Virtual Reality
U - Agriculture
V - Reality
W - Artificial Intelligence
X - Entertainment
Y - Media
Z - Diversity
AA - International Markets
AB - Other

g. Please enter the url of a 1 minute unlisted (not private) YouTube video introducing the founders (optional but strongly recommended)

<https://links.blackfacts.com/founders-intro>

h. Please tell us about an interesting project, preferably outside of class or work, that two or more of you created together. Include urls if possible

BARBInc, the Barbershop Incubator, is a Barbershop scheduling, CRM, Inventory Management and Scheduling Platform that my co-founder Dale Dowdie and I built together around 2015 (<http://www.barbinc.com>)

i. How long have the founders known one another and how did you meet? Have any of the founders not met in person?

Dale and I met in college in the 80s, and have been collaborating on technology projects since 1996, when we put Boston's communities of color online in a project we called Inner City Access. Both of us are featured in this 1996 news story covering the Inner City Access launch:

<https://links.blackfacts.com/inner-city-access-1996>

j. How far along is your company?

The Blackfacts.com web site was originally launched as a Community Technology Awareness Project in 1997, and had been running pretty much on automatic since I shut down my previous company, Inner-City Software, in 2004. In 2018 Dale and I decided to build Blackfacts into a business, and we redesigned and rebuilt the system with that objective in mind. We have grown our repeat visitors to an average (outside of Black History Month) of 1.6MM monthly impressions, and have a social media following of 200K. We are launching our Freemium Membership Growth Campaign for Black History Month 2021.

k. How long have each of you been working on this? Have you been part-time or full-time? Please explain.

I originally launched Blackfacts.com as the Internet's First Black History Encyclopedia in 1997 as a Community Service Project of my former company Inner-City Software (<http://web.archive.org/web/19971017061355/http://www.blackfacts.com/>). After closing down Inner-City Software in 2004 and letting Blackfacts run on automatic for over a decade, in 2018, Dale and I decided to rebuild and expand it, and we

have been working on it part-time since then. Ken will start working on Blackfacts full-time on Nov 1, 2020.

- I. Which of the following best describes your progress?

H

A - Nothing Built
B - Sketches
C - Mocks / Renderings

D - Prototype

E - Private Beta

F - Public Beta

G - Taking Preorders

H - Launched

I - >\$1M Revenue in the Past 12 Months

- m. When will you have a prototype or beta?

Current Site has been running since 2018.

- n. Do you have revenue?

Y - Yes

Y - Yes

N - No

- o. How much money do you spend per month?

i. \$3000 - 4500 per month

- p. How much money does your company have in the bank now?

i. \$42,000

- q. How long is your runway?

i. 4-6 Months Depending on Burn

- r. Are you able to work on this idea full time (or are you already full time)?

Y - We want to work on it full-time.

Y - Yes

N - No

- s. If you have already participated or committed to participate in an incubator, "accelerator" or "pre-accelerator" program, please tell us about it.

We participated in Roxbury Innovation Center's TLE Pre-Accelerator Program in 2017.

- t. Why did you pick this idea to work on? Do you have domain expertise in this area? How do you know people need what you're making?

I picked this area to work on because after over 20 years of waiting, there is still no representation from the Black community in Creating Technology Applications. As a technologist who has created digital urban communities and built pioneering online applications featuring people of color since the mid-90s, and architected and built the web site that powers the digital presence of the government of an entire Caribbean nation, I am a Digital Visionary and Pioneer with few peers in any community, mainstream or minority, and I have done all of this as an Unapologetically Black Technologist, which is unheard of in our past or current conversations about Diversity in Technology and a story that I believe will

be empowering and inspiring to millions once our work gets seen and used by a wider audience.

We know that people are hungry for empowering information about the achievements and challenges of people of the African Diaspora by our growing web site and social media numbers, which have been through organic growth and engagement with our 200K strong social media following, and we believe that when millions of Black people discover the technology we have built and are improving, and learn that it is 100% Conceived, Created, Controlled and Owned by Black Technologists, that they will enjoy a never-before experienced sense of pride and affirmation that as in other areas of endeavor, we are just as capable of demonstrating and creating excellence in the technology industry as anyone else.

- u. What's new about what you're making? What substitutes do people resort to because it doesn't exist yet (or they don't know about it)?

From a technological perspective, what is new about our platform is that it is a modular, flexible and scalable collection of components designed to work together to build content management systems that collect online and curated content on a community or topic, link the content together using any third-party APIs, and then deliver the content to any device, to enable individuals or organizations to self-publish intelligently linked content to their constituents or stakeholders.

From a philosophical perspective, what is new about our platform is that it was created by Black Technologists whose first priority is to use our mastery of technology to 'change the game' of how we tell Our Stories by telling them using Technology that We Own and Control and thus will be able to keep safe for all perpetuity.

- v. Who are your competitors, and who might become competitors? Who do you fear most?

We believe that our biggest threat is User Apathy. If the hundreds of millions of Black and Black-allied people across the globe stopped caring about learning of the past achievements of Black people, and lost interest in the current events impacting Black people, then we would need to identify another demographic or area of activity that we do not have lived experience nor deep community roots in to collect and deliver content on.

Potential direct competitors could be companies who had the combination of both content that serious-minded people were interested in, AND world-class technology expertise that is necessary to architect a technology platform that is future-proofed and agile enough to quickly adapt to unpredictable future trends and events.

- w. What do you understand about your business that other companies in it just don't get?

Technology, when architected well, can be built, deployed and supported at the fraction of the costs of companies that regularly burn through millions of dollars with zero results. As tech experts who have always spent our own money, we

understand how to build things that can grow large if necessary, without requiring a massive burn rate from the onset.

x. How do or will you make money? How much could you make?

i. **Freemium Site Membership:**

1. We make money by charging a low annual fee for those members who sign up for Higher Levels of Membership (beyond the Free Tier) - those members will get recognition on the site as supporters and get access to additional services and some paraphernalia.
2. The amount varies based upon budget available current projections for 2021 based upon NO outside funding: **Estimates for 2021 - \$50k**

ii. **Freemium Diversity/News/Black History Website Component:**

1. We will make money by delivering content in the form of Widgets that can be plugged into any website. Content can be filtered and customized based on category or type of content. Initial offering will be free but more customizable solutions will be charged monthly based upon the size of the client organization.
2. The amount we will make will start small but we expect this to be a major growth opportunity over time - **Estimates for 2021: \$40k**

iii. **Custom Branded Showcase Sites:**

1. We will make money by offering Schools and Sponsors the option to showcase the diversity of their organization (Staff, students, interns, members, programs, job offerings, etc) with a dedicated searchable site on BlackFacts.com
2. The amounts depend on our efforts in the schools and sponsor we are able to lock in for Black History Month 2021 and beyond.

Estimates for 2021: \$30k

iv. **Corporate Advertising:**

1. We will make money by offering Advertisers the ability to highlight their product/services via in-stream ads on blackfacts.com website and via social media boost to our followers.
2. The amount will start off relatively small as we will have low introductory pricing (other than for sponsors - who will get much more in their packages). **Estimates for 2021: \$10k**

v. **Ecommerce Affiliate Commissions:**

1. We will make money from affiliate fees for products sold in our marketplace and any educational training services offered on 'Wakanda University,' a partnership with JobReady, a Black-owned Ed Tech firm (run by another friend from the 80s), which has access to SkillPath's catalog of 7000 online courses that we will be offering via Netflix-type monthly subscription or iTunes-type a la carte models.

2. This program will be piloted in 2021: **Estimates for 2021: \$0**

- y. How will you get users? If your idea is the type that faces a chicken-and-egg problem in the sense that it won't be attractive to users till it has a lot of users (e.g. a marketplace, a dating site, an ad network), how will you overcome that?
 - i. We have 3 primary targets as "Users":
 - 1. **Members** (Free and Premium) - We will get members via social media marketing campaigns - driving users to our website with posts of "Black History Facts" and "Black News" - then looking to engage them and convert them to premium members. Over time we will have additions teaser items for premium members - giving them preferred access to items and discounts on products as well as other "Stuff" only available to paid members.
 - 2. **Advertisers/Sponsors** - These are entities that want to showcase their products, services or corporate diversity on blackfacts.com - we will reach out to them with direct outreach from our sales team, business development partners and through our personal networks and connections.
 - 3. **Schools** - One of our primary markets are Urban Schools around the country that support a significant base of minority students but who no longer teach black history and what to have a platform to showcase their schools programs and student while educating their students on black history using our base platforms and other contest and games and educational curriculums we will add over time.
 - z. Have you incorporated, or formed any legal entity (like an LLC) yet?
[Blackfacts is a Massachusetts LLC, and will be amending our Articles of Incorporation to become designated as a Benefit Corporation.](#)

Y - Yes

N - No

- aa. If you have not formed the company yet, describe the planned equity ownership breakdown among the founders, employees and any other proposed stockholders.

[Founder equity is: Ken Granderson 55%, Dale Dowdie 45%.](#)

- bb. Please provide any other relevant information about the structure or formation of the company.

[N/A](#)

- cc. Are any of the founders covered by noncompetes or intellectual property agreements that overlap with your project? If so, please explain.

[No.](#)

- dd. Who writes code, or does other technical work on your product? Was any of it done by a non-founder?

[All custom code has been written by Co-Founder Ken Granderson, who also](#)

currently performs all of the technical work to maintain the systems that run Blackfacts.com

ee. Is there anything else we should know about your company?

Due to lack of external funding, we have not moved forward on developing several Black-oriented community and social networking sites on premium domain names we own, including BlackCommunities.com,

BlackGreekSingles.com and Blackpeople.com. Once we have grown the Blackfacts.com user base into the several million level, we will be well-positioned to leverage the [Blackfacts](http://Blackfacts.com) community to launch them as spinoff sites with membership bases large enough to achieve sustainability at significantly lower costs than companies lacking the membership, technical expertise or track record that we have.

ff. If you had any other ideas you considered applying with, please list them. One may be something we've been waiting for. Often when we fund people it's to do something they list here and not in the main application.

Blackfacts.com is the Content Management Application component of our largest platform that we call the Wakanda Technology Platform (named after the concept that the fictional nation of Wakanda used their mastery of advanced technology to protect their culture, which is what we are doing in the Real World).

The Wakanda Technology Platform will build on the modular functionality of [Blackfacts](http://Blackfacts.com) to deliver turnkey online applications and services to Black and allied organizations and businesses, using a strategy of working with Black Technologist Affiliates in local urban markets who will earn passive income from platform subscriptions, as well as get opportunities for custom tech work from Wakanda platform clients.

gg. Have you been exposed to the business model canvas?

Y - Yes

Y - Yes

N - No

7. Do you have co-founders? If so, how many? List their names and roles.

[Ken Granderson](http://KenGranderson.com) and [Dale Dowdie](http://DaleDowdie.com) are the Co-Founders of Blackfacts.com, LLC.

8. Tell us a little more. In 200 words or less, give us your elevator pitch, "Shark Tank" style. Tell us about the problem you are solving, your total addressable market, your business model and traction to date.

[Blackfacts](http://Blackfacts.com) addresses the timeless and global problem of stories, perspectives and accomplishments of Black people being ignored, suppressed or outright destroyed because we haven't been in control of a permanent means of capturing and telling our stories in our own words.

Our market is global, including anyone interested in past or present activities of Black people, within and outside of our communities.

According to Facebook, our present Social Media 'Reach' is 900 Million. We have 200,000 Social Media Followers and 1.6MM average monthly web site impressions. We are the #1 Search Result on major Search Engines for 'Black Facts.'

Our Business Model is 'Build Inexpensively, Price Aggressively, Grow Virally, Profit

Through Scale.'

We were founded by a Black MIT Engineer for whom the technology is the 'easy part.' We create systems inexpensively, architected to be agile enough to adapt to new opportunities and to broader audiences (i.e. Diversity writ large) after we fully leverage our network which gives us access at national levels to corporate and organizational leaders within the Black community.

We are positioning to be the Tiger Woods and Williams Sisters of Tech, as Blackfacts is By Us, For Us, About Us and Created and Owned By Us.

9. Are you working on a minimum viable product?

N - No

Y - Yes

N - No

10. Have you attended any of the following types of entrepreneurial programs?

A - Pre-Accelerator

A - Pre-Accelerator

B - Accelerator

C - Incubator

D - Pitch Competition

E - Demo Day

11. Name the entrepreneurial programs you have participated in or completed?

We completed Roxbury Innovation Center's TLE Pre-Accelerator Program in 2017.

12. Are you looking (or ready) for startup investment capital?

A - Yes

A - Yes

B - No

C - Maybe

13. How much capital have you raised to date? How much capital are you looking to raise for your startup and at what valuation? If you don't know or aren't sure, it's OK to say I'm not sure.

a. We have been self funded to date. We would be looking to raise \$500k in capital with an estimated Valuation of \$10M

14. How would you utilize a \$5,000 grant in your business?

a. We would use the \$5k exclusively on Social Media Marketing Campaigns and press releases as part of an Awareness campaign to drive membership heading into the holidays and Black History Month.

15. How would you allocate a \$50,000 equity investment to grow your business?

a. We would split this into 2 areas.

i. \$30k focused on an even broader Awareness campaign

ii. \$20k focused on paying for Sales/Business Development resources to increase our outreach to potential sponsors and to kick off outreach to schools. We are already a vendor for the NY Department of Education, we would need to do the same in other major school districts around the country but our initial outreach would focus on independent and private

schools that can make decisions without needing to be a state approved vendor (which is almost always needed for public schools).

16. If given investment, would you relocate your business to a city outside of metro SF, NY or Boston?

B - No

A - Yes

B - No

C - Maybe

17. If you have one, please upload your company pitch deck (10 slides max) or executive summary (2 pages max).

<https://links.blackfacts.com/angel-pitch-deck>

18. Use this space to tell us more about your entrepreneurial journey in your own passionate words.

I have been on a passionate entrepreneurial journey for over 20 years, when I wrote these words:

"Inner-City Software, located in the Grove Hall section of Dorchester, Massachusetts, USA (basically, dead smack in "The 'Hood"), is a cutting-edge software development company that is committed to bringing the "historically disadvantaged minorities" of America (better known as Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans) into the Information Age. Our primary strategy for pulling this off is to develop as much ethnically oriented computer software as we can.

We believe that this is the most realistic way to get people of color interested in and using computers and information technology."

(<http://web.archive.org/web/19970107150950/http://innercity.com/>)

This passion led me to create online forums that introduced thousands of Black Bostonians to online community in the 90s, and put Boston's inner-city communities and Boston's Empowerment Zone online in the early 00s. I have made the focal point of my professional career creating software tools and systems where the primary beneficiaries were communities of color, and often at times when few to none from ANY community were doing similar work.

At the dawn of the Information Age, based on nothing but my own vision, creativity and raw ambition, I was able to create technology products and systems that improved the lives of thousands, and ran a Black-owned, operated and staffed Software Development Shop from 'dead smack in the 'hood' for a dozen years.

With a million+ monthly visitors, a 200K social media following and #1 position on all the major search sites (for 'Black Facts'), Dale and I have positioned Blackfacts.com as a Technology Unicorn that stands alone in our current national conversation about the lack of Diversity and Inclusion in the Technology field.

While others are clamoring today to get 'let into' the technology industry, we never asked anyone to 'let us in' - rather, we have been calling our own shots since the beginning as Unapologetically Black Technologists, and today are ready to make Blackfacts.com into the 'Black Wikipedia,' or for older folks like us, Blackfacts.com is the Realization of W.E.B. DuBois' lifelong dream, the Encyclopedia Africana.

Our past history of being self-funded has prepared us to be incredibly efficient by architecting solutions that can be built at modest cost, and our international footprint has us always thinking globally, so our profitability strategy for Blackfacts and its follow-on applications is the same: build an efficient, lean architecture that can provide online services at low cost, and make it highly profitable by operating at a global scale.

We are ready, willing and able to take Blackfacts to the next level as an innovative platform that promotes information that informs and uplifts the Black world, with the unique 'unfair advantage' that it represents 'Something New under the Sun:' World-Class Technology that gives us Control over Our Stories - Technology Conceived and Created not only 'For Us, By Us,' but also About Us and most importantly, OWNED By Us.

For convenience, our application is also available at
<https://links.blackfacts.com/100-black-angels-application>