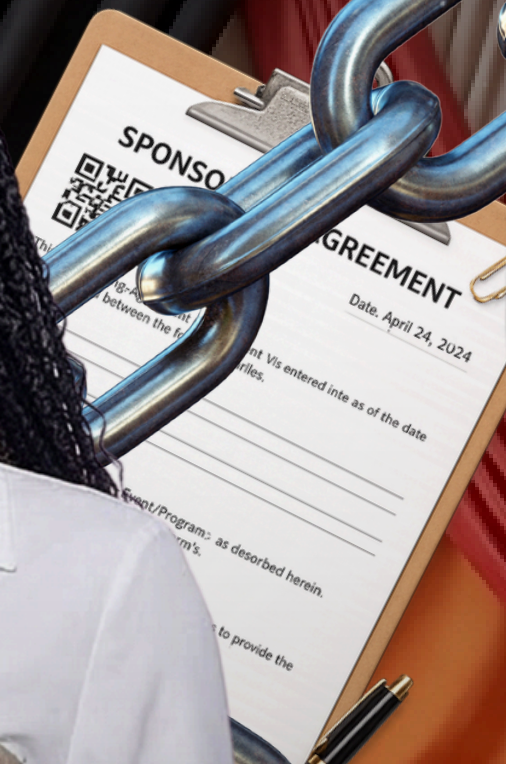


Brilann Coleman
\$7 STRATEGY *drop*
45MIN LIVE MASTERCLASS SERIES

STRATEGY

drop UNIVERSITY



ALIGNMENT
OVER
FUNDING
THE ALIGNMENT FUNDING VAULT



Brilann Coleman
\$7 STRATEGY
45MIN LIVE MASTERCLASS SERIES

STRATEGY

drop UNIVERSITY

WELCOME TO STRATEGY DROP UNIVERSITY

Hi, I'm Brilann Coleman.

I'm an entrepreneur, nonprofit founder, & community leader building at the intersection of business, creativity, & civic impact.

Over the years, I've had countless conversations with people asking the same questions:

How do you find grants?

How do you secure sponsors?

How do you build partnerships that actually last?

And what I realized is this, most people aren't lacking opportunities.

They're lacking strategy.

That's why I created Strategy Drop University (SDU).

WHAT IS STRATEGY DROP UNIVERSITY?

Strategy Drop University is a growing platform designed to make high-level strategy accessible, practical, and actionable.

Through live sessions, digital resources, and strategic frameworks, SDU is where I break down the real methods I use across:

- entrepreneurship, nonprofit development, brand partnerships, community and civic leadership

Why \$7?

Because access matters.

I believe strategy shouldn't feel out of reach.

The goal of the Strategy Drop series is to:

- lower the barrier to entry
- create real value at an accessible price
- bring the right people into the room

This is about building a community of people who are serious about growing with intention.

This resource is designed to help you think differently, move strategically, and build with alignment.

Welcome to Strategy Drop University.

— Brilann Coleman





STRATEGY

drop UNIVERSITY

HOW TO USE THIS VAULT

THIS VAULT WAS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU MOVE FROM LEARNING TO ACTION.
EVERYTHING INCLUDED IN THIS RESOURCE IS MEANT TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE PROCESS OF:

IDENTIFYING ALIGNED OPPORTUNITIES

RESEARCHING THE RIGHT SPONSORS & FUNDERS

TAKING YOUR FIRST STEPS TOWARD OUTREACH

POSITIONING YOUR WORK STRATEGICALLY

HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS RESOURCE

THIS VAULT IS BROKEN INTO 4 KEY SECTIONS:

1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY DATABASES

WHERE TO FIND REAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND HOW TO SEARCH STRATEGICALLY.

2. SPONSOR RESEARCH TOOLS

HOW TO IDENTIFY BRANDS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PARTNERS ALREADY ALIGNED WITH YOUR WORK.

3. SPONSOR OUTREACH FRAMEWORK

A STRUCTURE TO BEGIN REACHING OUT AND POSITIONING YOUR WORK FOR COLLABORATION.

4. ALIGNMENT OPPORTUNITY WORKSHEET

A TOOL TO HELP YOU EVALUATE OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE YOU APPLY OR PITCH.

BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD, WRITE THIS DOWN:

WHAT AM I CURRENTLY BUILDING?

NOW ASK YOURSELF:

WHAT TYPE OF FUNDING OR PARTNERSHIPS WOULD ACTUALLY SUPPORT THIS?



GRANT OPPORTUNITY DATABASES

WHERE TO FIND ALIGNED FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES – STOP GUESSING. START SEARCHING STRATEGICALLY.

Finding grants isn't about applying to everything you see.

It's about identifying opportunities that are designed for what you already do.

The platforms below will help you find real funding opportunities, but how you search matters more than where you search.

1. GRANTS.GOV

Website: <https://www.grants.gov>

Best For: nonprofits, educational programs, community initiatives, large-scale funding opportunities

WHAT IT IS:

The official database for federal grant opportunities.

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Start by filtering for eligibility (nonprofit, individual, etc.)
- Use keywords related to your mission (ex: "youth development," "entrepreneurship")
- Pay attention to deadlines and required documents

EXAMPLE:

A youth nonprofit searching "youth workforce development" to find grants aligned with their programs.

3. HELLO ALICE

Website: <https://helloalice.com>

Best For: entrepreneurs, minority founders, startups, small businesses

WHAT IT IS:

A platform that connects founders to grant opportunities and business resources.

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Create a profile to receive curated opportunities
- Look for corporate-backed grants
- Apply to opportunities aligned with your stage of business

EXAMPLE:

A startup founder applying for a grant specifically designed for early-stage minority-owned businesses.

PRO TIP:

THE GOAL IS NOT TO APPLY TO THE MOST GRANTS.
THE GOAL IS TO APPLY TO THE RIGHT ONES.

2. GRANTWATCH

Website: <https://www.grantwatch.com>

Best For: small businesses, nonprofits, women founders, local and niche funding opportunities

WHAT IT IS:

A curated database of thousands of active grants.

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Filter by category (business, arts, education, etc.)
- Narrow by location to find local funding
- Avoid applying to grants outside your niche just because of the amount

EXAMPLE:

A content creator searching for "creative arts grants" instead of general business funding.

4. CANDID (FOUNDATION DIRECTORY)

Website: <https://candid.org>

Best For: nonprofits seeking foundation funding, long-term grant research

WHAT IT IS:

One of the largest databases of philanthropic foundations.

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Research foundations that already fund work similar to yours
- Look at past grants they've awarded
- Identify patterns in what they support

EXAMPLE:

A nonprofit researching foundations that consistently fund youth entrepreneurship programs.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

FIND 2–3 GRANT OPPORTUNITIES THAT ALIGN WITH
YOUR MISSION, AUDIENCE, & GOALS.

DON'T ASK – WHERE THE MONEY
ASK – WHERE IS THE FUNDING THAT ALIGNS WITH WHAT I ALREADY DO?



SPONSOR RESEARCH TOOL

HOW TO FIND ALIGNED SPONSORS & PARTNERS
STOP GUESSING WHO TO PITCH. START RESEARCHING STRATEGICALLY.

Most people struggle with sponsorships because they're reaching out to the wrong brands. The key to securing sponsors is identifying organizations that are already aligned with your audience, mission, or type of work. The tools below will help you find sponsors who are already investing in spaces like yours.

1. LINKEDIN

Best For: Finding decision-makers

WHAT TO SEARCH:

Search titles like: Partnerships Manager, Brand Marketing Manager, Community Engagement Director, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Lead

WHAT IT IS:

The official database for federal grant opportunities.

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Look for people who handle partnerships or community initiatives
- Check what companies they work for
- Pay attention to posts about sponsorships or events

Ex: Searching "Partnerships Manager Memphis" to find local brand decision-makers.

3. EVENTBRITE

Best For: Discovering real sponsor activity

WHAT TO DO:

- Search events in your niche
- Open event descriptions
- Look for sponsor sections

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Identify companies that sponsor similar audiences
- Pay attention to recurring sponsors
- Focus on brands already investing in your space

Ex: Finding a conference in your industry and identifying repeat sponsors.

PRO TIP:

THE EASIEST SPONSORS TO SECURE ARE THE ONES WHO ALREADY SPONSOR SIMILAR WORK.

2. INSTAGRAM

Best For: Identifying active sponsors

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Event pages
- Creator collaborations
- Tagged brand partners
- Sponsored posts

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Search events similar to yours
- Look at who sponsored or partnered with them
- Make a list of those brands

Ex: Looking at a local business event and identifying 3 brands that sponsored it.

4. GOOGLE RESEARCH METHOD

Best For: Finding brands already funding initiatives

WHAT TO SEARCH:

[brand name] + sponsorship
[brand name] + partnership
[brand name] + community initiative

HOW TO USE IT STRATEGICALLY:

- Look for press releases or articles
- Identify what types of initiatives they support
- Match their past partnerships to your work

Ex: Searching "Nike community partnership" to see what type of programs they support.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

IDENTIFY 3-5 BRANDS OR ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE ALREADY ALIGNED WITH YOUR WORK.

DON'T ASK: WHO CAN SPONSOR ME
ASK: WHO IS ALREADY INVESTING IN WORK LIKE MINE?



SPONSOR OUTREACH FRAMEWORK

INTRO → AUDIENCE → OPPORTUNITY → ALIGNMENT → CTA
HOW TO REACH OUT TO SPONSORS & PARTNERS

Stop overthinking it. Start positioning your value.

Most people never secure sponsorships because they get stuck at one step: Reaching out. They overthink the message, wait for the “perfect time,” or feel like they need everything figured out first.

The truth is sponsors aren’t looking for perfection. They’re looking for alignment and value.

STEP 1: INTRODUCTION

Who you are and what you lead.

My name is [Your Name], and I lead/own/founded [your business, nonprofit, event, or platform].

STEP 2: AUDIENCE

Who you serve.

We serve [describe your audience clearly].

STEP 3: OPPORTUNITY

What you’re working on.

We are currently working on [event, program, initiative].

STEP 4: ALIGNMENT

Why you chose them.

Because your brand focuses on [shared value], I believe there’s a strong opportunity for collaboration.

STEP 5: CALL TO ACTION

Invite them to connect.

I’d love to explore a partnership that creates value for both our audiences. Would you be open to a quick conversation?

To:

Subject: Full Example (Plug & Play)

Hello [Brand Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I lead [organization/brand]. Our platform serves [audience]. We are currently planning [event/program/initiative], which will reach approximately [number] people. Because your brand focuses on [alignment], I believe there is a strong opportunity for collaboration. I’d love to explore a partnership that creates value for both our audiences. Would you be open to a quick conversation?

Best, *BrilannC.*

PRO TIP:

YOUR FIRST MESSAGE DOESN’T HAVE TO BE PERFECT — IT JUST HAS TO BE SENT.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

WRITE YOUR FIRST OUTREACH MESSAGE USING THE FRAMEWORK ABOVE. THEN SEND IT

AVOID:

- WRITING LONG PARAGRAPHS
- ASKING FOR MONEY IMMEDIATELY
- BEING UNCLEAR ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE
- PITCHING BRANDS THAT AREN’T ALIGNED
- WAITING TOO LONG TO SEND THE MESSAGE



ALIGNMENT OPPORTUNITY WORKSHEET

ALIGNMENT OPPORTUNITY FINDER
NOT EVERY OPPORTUNITY IS FOR YOU, AND THAT'S A GOOD THING.

Before applying for a grant, pitching a sponsor, or entering a partnership, you need to evaluate if the opportunity actually aligns with what you're building. This worksheet will help you slow down, think strategically, and make better decisions.

1. MISSION ALIGNMENT

- Does this opportunity align with what I do?
- Does it support my purpose or goals?
- Does it make sense for my brand, business, or organization?
- Would I still pursue this if the money wasn't attached?

2. AUDIENCE ALIGNMENT

- Does this serve the people I'm building for?
- Does it benefit my audience?
- Does it connect to their needs or interests?
- Will this opportunity add value to their experience?

3. ECOSYSTEM ALIGNMENT

- Does this strengthen my network and growth?
- Does this connect me to the right partners?
- Does this open doors for future opportunities?
- Does it build long-term relationships or just a one-time win?

EVALUATE YOUR OPPORTUNITY:

- Opportunity Name: _____
- Mission Alignment:
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
- Audience Alignment:
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
- Ecosystem Alignment:
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

FINAL DECISION

Based on your answers:

If you answered YES to all three → Move forward.

If you answered NO to one or more → Re-evaluate before pursuing.

PRO TIP:

SAYING NO TO MISALIGNED OPPORTUNITIES
CREATES SPACE FOR THE RIGHT ONES.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

LIST ONE OPPORTUNITY YOU ARE CURRENTLY
CONSIDERING AND EVALUATE IT USING THIS
FRAMEWORK.

THE GOAL IS NOT TO CHASE EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

THE GOAL IS TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT ONES.



Brilann Coleman
\$7 STRATEGY
45MIN LIVE MASTERCLASS SERIES

STRATEGY

drop UNIVERSITY

YOUR NEXT MOVE
STRATEGY MEANS NOTHING WITHOUT ACTION.

Now that you understand the difference between chasing funding and building aligned opportunities, the next step is simple:

Apply it.

This vault gave you the tools to:

- find aligned grant opportunities, identify potential sponsors and partners, position your work with clarity, evaluate opportunities before pursuing them, But the real results come from what you do next.

START HERE:

1. Identify 2–3 aligned opportunities
2. Research 3 potential sponsors or partners
3. Send your first outreach message

STAY CONNECTED TO THE STRATEGY

This is just the beginning.

The \$7 Strategy Drop series was created to give you ongoing access to real, actionable strategies across:

- funding and partnerships
- branding and marketing
- creator opportunities
- events and activations

Each drop builds on the last.

Strategy Drop University is growing into a space for founders, creators, & community leaders who want to:

- build with intention
- move strategically
- and create aligned opportunities

More resources, sessions, and tools are on the way.

You don't need more opportunities.
You need better alignment.

Brilann Coleman
\$7 STRATEGY
45MIN LIVE MASTERCLASS SERIES

