Startup Sherpas Unveils Obama Administration Alumni, Natalia Olson-Urtecho, as New Director of Government, Innovation & Growth

Monday 26 February, 2024

Barcelona, Spain – 26th February 2024: In a significant boost to its global initiative, social enterprise, Startup Sherpas, proudly announces the appointment of Natalia Olson-Urtecho as Director of Government, Innovation & Growth.

Startup Sherpas is a forward-thinking organisation committed to empowering the next generation of entrepreneurs through paid work experience opportunities, with offices in both the UK, and Barcelona.

Olson-Urtecho, whose illustrious career includes serving as a Presidential Appointee during Barack Obama's administration, brings a wealth of experience in fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable development on a global scale.

Having served as the Regional Administrator for the U.S. Small Business Administration under President Obama, Natalia Olson-Urtecho oversaw critical initiatives that supported entrepreneurship and small businesses.

Her tenure is notable for managing significant federal contracts and loan programmes, enhancing infrastructure for small business growth across the Mid-Atlantic region. This experience is particularly relevant to Startup Sherpas' mission to empower young entrepreneurs globally, especially following its recent announcement of the company’s new Barcelona office that has just opened at Tech Barcelona.

"Welcoming Natalia into our team underscores our commitment to drawing on diverse, high-level expertise to enrich our successful programme and extend its reach to more young people worldwide," said Katherine Walker, Chief Impact Officer at Startup Sherpas.

"Her unique blend of experience in both the public and private sectors will help us tailor our approach to meet the needs of our future young entrepreneurs in different cultural and economic contexts - particularly as we look to Latin America and the Mediterranean."

Olson-Urtecho's extensive background in international, regional, and local government operations, digital transformation, and sustainable development makes her an invaluable asset to Startup Sherpas as it expands its startup training platform globally.

Her proven track record of leveraging technology for societal benefit aligns with Startup Sherpas' vision of creating a generation of innovators ready to tackle global challenges such as climate change, sustainable food systems, and economic stability.

Reflecting on her new role, Olson-Urtecho said: "I am excited to join Startup Sherpas and to leverage my experience to empower young people with the entrepreneurial skills they need to make a difference.

“Together, we can build a network of innovative leaders poised to solve the world's most pressing problems."

Professor Ger Grauss OBE, a renowned global education consultant and adviser to Startup Sherpas, added: "The addition of Natalia Olson-Urtecho to the Startup Sherpas team is a game-changer.

“Natalia's expertise and vision will undoubtedly accelerate our efforts to empower young entrepreneurs to tackle the world's most pressing challenges."

Mayor Collboni of Barcelona emphasises the local commitment to youth and innovation that made Barcelona such a good match for Startup Sherpas "We know that for every sector of our economy, we need the very best talent to support them. And we know our young people need to see opportunities to work, to create startups and have a vibrant career in Barcelona. Paid work experience while they are still at school and the ability to create their own startups even before they leave school mean they have real experience. They have developed workplace skills and that will meet both these needs."

Startup Sherpas' expansion into the Mediterranean and Latin America marks a significant step in its

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journey to create a global community of one million young entrepreneurs by 2029.

With the support of the British Embassy, the Spanish Government, and now Natalia Olson-Urtecho, the organisation is well-positioned to inspire and nurture the next generation of global innovators.

For media inquiries, partnership opportunities, or more information about Startup Sherpas and its mission, please contact:

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About Startup Sherpas:

Startup Sherpas is a pioneering organisation dedicated to equipping teenagers with startup skills through a unique model that blends paid work experience with junior startup training.

Committed to addressing global challenges through innovation, Startup Sherpas has educated almost 5000 teenagers in the UK, and is now poised to expand its influence internationally. The organisation champions the power of a global generation of innovators to solve the world's most pressing problems.

About Natalia Olson-Urtecho:

Natalia is a serial entrepreneur, Obama Appointee, Venture Capitalist and triathlete with a deep understanding of global politics and the practicalities of startup life. You can find out more here:

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