

OPEN

NOW OPEN PROJECT

CHICAGO | LOS ANGELES | WASHINGTON DC | LAS VEGAS | NEW YORK

INCUBATOR & ACCELERATOR

Now Open Project is a hospitality accelerator and incubator.

We incubate and accelerate ideas from up-and-coming chefs or established restaurateurs who want to open new culinary concepts. We've launched more than 50 restaurants from fast casual to hotels, bars, and fine dining.

Our team of savvy mentors is a combination of operators, investors, restaurateurs, award-winning and Michelin star chefs that provide critical resources and expertise needed to develop and bring successful restaurant and hospitality concepts to life.

For additional information please contact:

ANSHUL MANGAL

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CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

MARKETING

OPERATIONS

CONSTRUCTION

FINANCE

MENU & OPERATIONS

LEGAL

HUMAN RESOURCES

OUR EXPERTISE & SERVICES

- Social Media
Branding
Public Relations
Web Development
- Site Selection
Licensing
Facility Design
Interior Design
Kitchen & Bar Layout
- Menu Development
Food & Beverage
Vendor Selection
Staffing & Training
Pre & Post Opening Support





TYPES OF CONCEPTS

One of the first steps in opening a new restaurant is defining the concept and standing out from the competition.

Now Open Project's expertise and support spans across a wide range of restaurant types and concepts. We are able to connect your vision with what we do best.

Together, our team has opened over 50 concepts.

FOOD HALLS

FAST CASUAL/QSR

FULL SERVICE

MICHELIN STAR CONCEPTS

COCKTAIL DRIVEN

BAR FOCUSED

EXPERIENCE DRIVEN CONCEPTS

HOTELS

A group of four men are standing behind a table. The man on the far left is wearing a dark jacket. The man next to him is wearing glasses and a light-colored shirt. The man in the center is wearing a dark shirt and an apron. The man on the far right is wearing a striped shirt. They are all smiling. In front of them on the table are several bowls of food. The entire image is overlaid with a red semi-transparent filter.

THE TEAM



ANSHUL MANGAL
PARTNER / GENERAL COUNSEL

Anshul Mangal is the co-founder and managing partner of Now Open Project, a hospitality accelerator and incubator. From 2012 to the end of 2017, Anshul will have opened 15+ restaurants, including full service, fast-casual restaurants and bars that have earned the praise of national and local culinary critics alike. During this time, he has co-founded a marketing firm and a hospitality accelerator and incubator.

Under Now Open, he has developed and grown several brands including Furious Spoon Ramen Shop, FireFin Poké Shop, Deadbolt Bar, new food markets coming to Chicago, and even a new taco concept and bar. From 2012 - 2015, he was the founder and managing partner of Takito Kitchen, and Bar Takito, an upscale Latin American Restaurant. His diverse concepts have been developed with Michelin-star chefs, James Beard winners, leading mixologists and notable restaurateurs.

Anshul has been involved in all aspects of the restaurants he founded. He has served as general counsel and been intimately involved in fund-raising, licensing, design and construction marketing, operations and finance. He has been recognized and featured in numerous national publications and recognized with the Illinois Restaurant Association.

Shin Thompson is the co-founder, executive chef and managing partner of Furious Spoon. Chef Shin was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, spent most of his childhood in Japan, and was inculcated with a love for Japanese food early on, both from these dual island cultures and the internationalism of his father's career with United Airlines. He graduated with a culinary arts degree from Kendall College in Chicago in 2001 and earned a second degree in Hospitality Management from Chicago's Roosevelt University. In the years that followed, Chef Shin culled together a resumé full of fine-dining kitchens and hotels across the United States.

Chef Shin returned to Chicago and began hosting a series of underground dining parties in 2005, which led to the opening of Bonsoirée in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood. Chef Shin's interpretation of French and Japanese fare in degustation format quickly garnered attention, and in 2008, Food & Wine included the restaurant in its "Go List" of "Best Local Dining Destinations in the World." Bonsoirée received a three star rating from the Chicago Tribune, and it was named one of the "Best American BYO Restaurants" by Travel + Leisure. In 2011 and 2012, Chef Shin earned a Michelin Star. In 2013, Chef Shin opened an upscale Japanese restaurant called Kabocha in the West Loop neighborhood in Chicago, Illinois. Shortly thereafter, Chef Shin realized his dream to open a ramen noodle shop like his grandfather, who owned a shop in Japan in the 1960s.

SHIN THOMPSON
PARTNER / MICHELIN STAR CHEF



FRANK FRONDA
PARTNER / OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

Chef Frank Fronda is a first-generation Italian American from Brooklyn, and his passion for cooking was inspired early on with his mother's home cooking. He graduated from the New York Restaurant School with honors at the age of 18 and was an Executive Chef at Napa Valley Grille by age 23.

Frank has been working with individual and large-scale chains for the last 18 years. He likes to say, "The food comes first, because the profit comes first doesn't sound right from a man wearing a chef's hat." Frank's food focuses on all five senses, which only makes sense when you've seen him in action.

He has been instrumental in consulting and assisting the creation of all aspects of the business, from concept to execution, design, and launch.

Frank's restaurant experience ranges from Palio Restaurant and the Metropolitan Opera House in New York & Napa Valley Grille in Paramus, NJ, which was given three stars and named "Restaurant of the Year". Frank has been acknowledged by the James Beard Foundation multiple occasions. He is also the managing partner of FireFin Poké Shop in Chicago.

Known as “The Food Buddha” Rodelio Aglibot has been featured on many national television programs for his New Asian cuisine, and Italian and American cooking. His ascent into chefdom began in 2001, after becoming the founding executive chef of the celebrity studded juggernaut Koi Restaurant. After two years at Koi, he developed his own concept, Yi Cuisine, named one of the “Best New Asian Restaurants” by Food & Wine Magazine. Aglibot consulted and conceptualized Chicago’s Sunda New Asian restaurant in 2009, overseeing the culinary program until 2011. He then partnered with BLT Restaurant Group, creating concepts from Italian to Asian Gastropubs and served as corporate executive chef, directing 15 restaurants nationwide.

Frank Fronda and Rodelio launched Pilot Light Hospitality in 2005. Pilot Light owns and operates a pasta production company and has consulted on 20+ restaurant openings and large chains globally.

Rodelio’s is also Partner/VP of Culinary Operations for Intrestco, LLC, a lifestyle hospitality company that owns, creates and operates restaurant concepts such as E+O Food and Drink. In 2013, Rodelio was also responsible for a Japanese-inspired menu at Me Geisha in Salerno, Italy. Shortly after, he opened Me Geisha in Rome, and Me Geisha Express in Naples, Italy. He is also the managing partner of FireFin Poké Shop.



Charlie is just as comfortable in-front of a classroom as he is in front of the boardroom. In addition to brokering quarter-billion dollar deals, he’s delivered presentations to standing-room- only lecture halls. Continuous and successful track record in directing multi-million dollar turnarounds and start-ups. He’s worked with entertainment themes and concept environments, and sporting venues, in addition to household name brands including the Olive Garden, Wolfgang Puck, and Darden Restaurants.

Charlie has worked extensively throughout the country concentrating on success with operations through pro ling leadership at pro t building in operations, systems enhancement and implementation. He created success through accountabilities in P&L performance, adherence to budgets up to \$270 million, and corporate asset management and development. He’s particularly proud of having saved over \$6 million annually through contract negotiations and securing 17% savings through bulk buying on purchases up to \$3 million and on inventories up to \$18 million.

He’s created and implemented successful multi-million dollar marketing plans and sales proposals from concept through fulfillment; forecasted field sales, set product pricing; created successful advertising and promotions.

Reuben Rischall leads the Buyers Realty Chicago office and works with a range of national, regional, and local clients to meet their commercial real estate needs.

Throughout his real estate career, Reuben has partnered with both established and start-up tenants and buyers to drive their site selection, leasing, development, and sales process through the Midwest and nationwide. He currently represents Furious Spoon Ramen Shop and Firefin Poké Shop as their in-house real estate department, growing their brand through site selection nationally. Additionally, Reuben services numbers cross-industry retail clients in Chicago.

Reuben also represents high-profile landlords and developers by marketing, negotiating, and executing their leasing and sales needs. He recently completed a redevelopment of a vacant 100,000 square foot shopping center and is now in the process of another shopping center redevelopment. Reuben is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Madison with a degree in Finance and Investment Banking.



Raised in a small farm town in Northern Wisconsin, Dustin Drankiewicz's hospitality career began at age 14 at the only sit-down restaurant in town. A short-lived opportunity, Drankiewicz—who was a teenage drummer at the time—was fired after dying his hair green. His passion for the industry carried him to successful stints managing bars in both Milwaukee and Las Vegas.

Drankiewicz made his way back to Chicago where he landed a bartending gig with Dusek's Board & Beer. Given the opportunity to embrace his originality behind the bar, his knack for creating and curating craft cocktail menus has since flourished. Though he insists he's simply making spirits palatable for guests, his approach, rooted in bringing creative twists to classic drinks, owes its success to sound technique bolstered with proper garnishing and glassware.

He was the director for the group of venues comprising 16 on Center (Dusek's, the Promontory, Punch House, Tack Room & Moneygun). Most recently, Dustin launched Deadbolt Bar with Anshul Mangal and Shin Thompson in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood. It has made the lists of the best bars in Chicago and nationwide since opening early 2017.

DUSTIN DRANKIEWICZ

PARTNER / BEVERAGE DIRECTOR



SUSAN FISCHER

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Susan Fischer has been in the restaurant business for nearly 20 years. She began her career in operations as a General Manager for over a decade before making the switch to accounting for many great restaurants including Rock Bottom Brewery and Chef Bill Kim at Belly Group, before joining Now Open Project.

NICOLE NASSIF

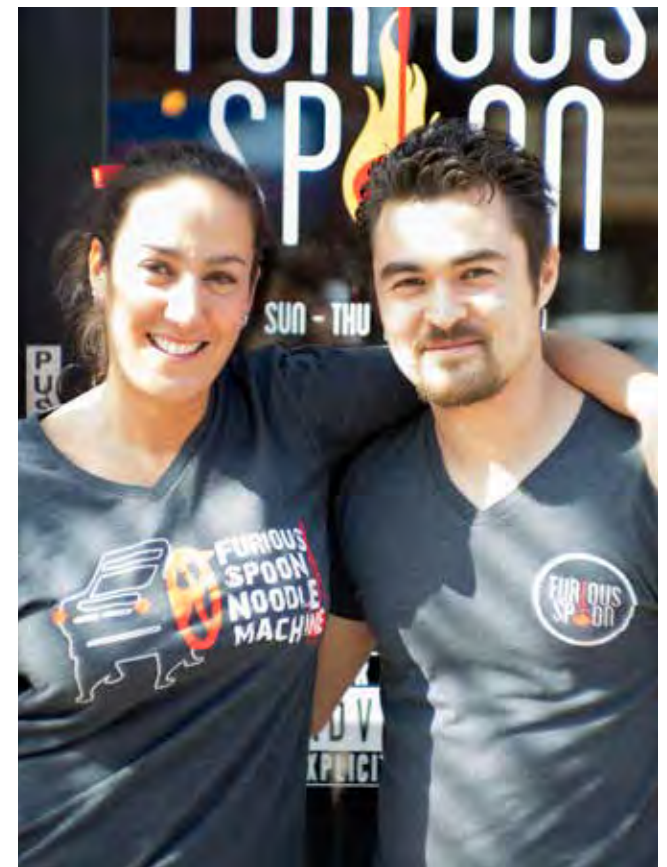
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Nicole Nassif is the Director of Operations for Now Open Project. She has operated and opened over 50 restaurants worldwide, from construction turnover to opening, for major brands including Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., Chuck E. Cheese's and Bistro 24. She has authored corporate training programs and been responsible for new product development and rollout nationwide. Nicole's expertise is in restaurant and retail operations management, process reengineering, standard operating procedures, cost management, and new unit openings.

LINDSEY WAGNER

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Lindsey Wagner comes to Now Open Project with nearly a decade of experience leading global marketing and communications efforts. An expert in developing partnerships and marketing plans for brands experiencing rapid growth, she has spearheaded innovative projects and campaigns resulting in high-value stakeholder engagement for nonprofits, startups and established brands within the lifestyle, restaurant and entertainment industries.



The background image shows a blurred interior of a restaurant or cafe. In the foreground, there are two large, light-colored ceramic bowls on a wooden table. The bowl on the left contains a salad with green herbs. The bowl on the right is empty. To the right of the bowls, there is a small square dish containing a salad. In the background, several people are seated at tables, and a wooden bench is visible. The entire image is overlaid with a solid red color.

INCUBATED CONCEPTS



FireFin Poké Shop is a chef-driven, fast casual style restaurant that serves healthy, Hawaiian-style poké bowls and salads. The concept currently has 5 locations open or under development throughout Chicago, with plans to expand nationally this year.

More than just poke and seafood, FireFin Poké Shop is a destination for anyone seeking a healthy and “craveable” quick service food experience. The concept offers an array of customizable poké bowls that feature fresh-cut proteins, topped with healthy ingredients and gluten-free sauces. Each bowl is made to order, using fresh, high-quality ingredients, along with neighborhood hospitality and love.

Chef Rodelio Aglibot opened FireFin Poké Shop in order to spread Aloha (meaning peace, compassion and love) and share his Hawaiian roots with the mainland – starting with Chicago. Combine his island flair with partner Chef Frank Fronda’s Pacific Rim influences and operational experience, and a formidable culinary prowess is born. Restaurateur and entrepreneur Anshul Mangal completes the team with local ties and respected business experience.



Furious Spoon is a fast-casual Tokyo-style Japanese ramen noodle shop. It is currently open in Chicago’s Wicker Park, Logan Square, Pilsen & Downtown Loop neighborhoods. There are three additional Chicagoland locations being built by the end of 2017.

The restaurant features handmade ramen noodles and sides created by Executive Chef/Partner Shin Thompson. It is similar to the traditional ramen noodle shops in Tokyo, Japan. They chose the name Furious Spoon to educate guests on the culturally proper way to eat ramen – “furiously,” and to promote faster table turn times. In Tokyo, guests slurp the noodles furiously so that the noodles and other ingredients do not overcook in the steaming broth. As you near the end of your bowl, it is also common and accepted to pick it up and sip the last of the broth directly from the bowl.

Chef Shin, and restaurateur Anshul Mangal’s concept continuously ranks as one of the top ramen restaurants in Chicago and the country.



LAKEVIEW MARKET

3833 N BROADWAY AVE

Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood will be getting a new 16,000 – 17,000 sf food market in 2018. It will feature an upscale cocktail bar, a sports bar and a third bar concept. In addition to the bar concepts, the food hall will feature 22 separate food-centric concepts including Furious Spoon Ramen Shop and FireFin Poké Shop.

Lakeview Market will be the only food market or hall in Chicago that will be open seven days a week with a heavy emphasis on lunch, breakfast and dinner. Expect a lively late-night component due to its three bars. The market will be developed and operated by Now Open Project.





Located on the edge of Chicago's Logan Square, Table, Donkey and Stick is a neighborhood restaurant offering seasonal fare and a unique selection of beer, wine and spirits honoring the eating and drinking traditions of the Alps. The restaurant has been recognized as one of the best new restaurants in the city by Chicago Magazine, Fodor's and the Zagat guide and was awarded a Bib Gourmand by the Guide Michelin.

The name is derived from a Brothers Grimm fairy tale about a lying goat, a donkey that poops gold, and a magic table that fills with food on demand.

The menu features creative, seasonally driven dishes inspired by the mountain cuisines of France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Slovenia. It includes a rotating selection of charcuterie and artisan cheeses. The kitchen works with local farmers and whole animals whenever possible, and all breads and charcuterie items are made in-house.



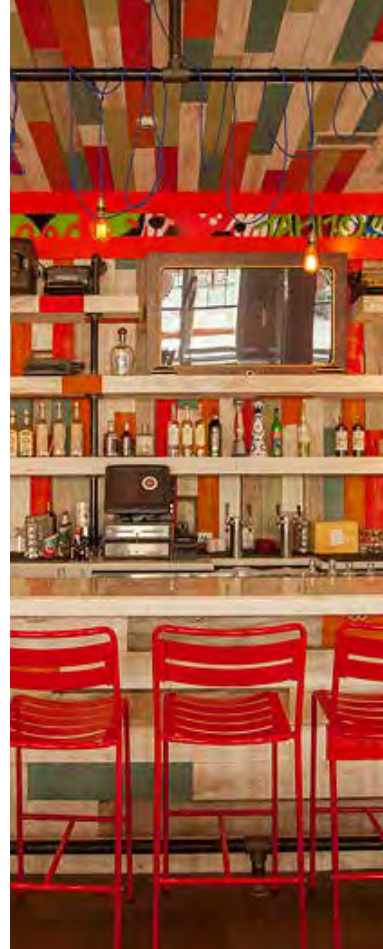
TRU Bird is a modern take on the fast casual restaurant appealing to the feel-good emotions of eating healthy. Their commitment to sourcing antibiotic-free heritage birds will impact guests daily diet and create a healthy alternative to fast casual dining.

The concept will be located in Manhattan Beach and offer an environmentally and health-conscious experience from the food to service-ware to décor. Created by Frank Fronda, Charlie Candelas and Rodelio Aglibot, TRU Bird will bring a true high-quality dining experience to the neighborhood it serves, helping to drive consumers to the growing geographic market.



This West Loop Chicago restaurant and bar features live music, vibrant colors and a menu filled with Latin-inspired plates and cocktails. Restaurateur Anshul Mangal opened the doors in 2014 with his partners.

Located just a block away from Google's Chicago headquarters, the 3,000 square-foot casual restaurant seats nearly 160 and features an open, airy patio. Guests sit at reclaimed wood tables featuring a modern and industrial design and a menu focusing on classic, Latin small plates made with local and seasonal farm ingredients.



A Logan Square dive bar is reinvented by the team behind Furious Spoon – restaurateur Anshul Mangal and Chef Shin Thompson, along with top barman Dustin Drankiewicz. Deadbolt Bar opened its doors in early 2017 and welcomes guests through a variety of weekly live music, cocktails, art installations and more.

The kitchen is open late and Chef Shin Thompson's menu consists of hand-breaded chicken nuggets, Chicago-style hot dogs and butter burgers.



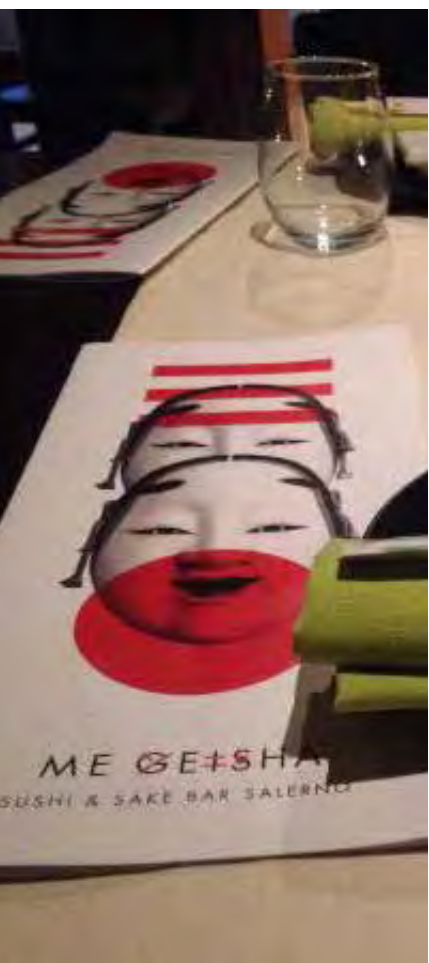
ME GEISHA

JAPANESE FUSION RESTAURANT

ME GEISHA is a luxury Japanese fusion restaurant, decorated in a chic, Asian style, with wooden ceilings and features an open bar to watch as your sushi is created before your eyes. Chef Rodelio Aglibot opened the restaurant in 2015 in Salerno, Italy.

It isn't your usual Japanese restaurant, or a Chinese copy, but a concept of Asian cuisine that mixes different flavors – and which has already depopulated overseas. The cooking philosophy, that of dishes look great, good to eat and that instill well-being. The decisive impulse that convinced Chef Aglibot to open a restaurant in Rome was the quality and variety of local produce, for a fusion infusion, that mixes ingredients Made in Italy with Asian dishes.

“Given the wide availability of ingredients and seasonality, the menu of ME GEISHA will expand and evolve over time. I am in contact with local butchers for meat. I made long walks in the markets in the morning to study seasonal vegetables: Eggplant, mushrooms, onions, peppers, squash, herbs. Also the seafood will be local, the tuna is from Sicily and some specialty fish we catch in Japan.”



Echo & Rig

BUTCHER & STEAKHOUSE

Frank Fronda and his partner introduced a pioneering new concept which transforms the long-held theories behind the steakhouse formula while simultaneously reintroducing the neighborhood butcher shop. The Echo & Rig Butcher Shop is a stunning homage to meat featuring a large open glass meat locker, vertical displays and an exhibition/demonstration area in Las Vegas.

The Echo & Rig Butcher Shop is an integral and distinctive part of the overall restaurant, dining and retail experience. The butcher will artfully showcase his skillful yet traditional butchering techniques, combining the precision of classical training with a modern day approach focusing on a “nose to tail” program. The Echo & Rig Butcher Shop will offer an enhanced expert level of tailored, personalized attention and relationships focusing on customer service that comes complete with beautifully packaged meats in their branded crisp blue butcher-paper with twine and sealed with their signature bull icon.

A hand holding a globe with a magnifying glass over it, symbolizing accelerated concepts.

ACCELERATED CONCEPTS

MENDOCINO FARMS

sandwich market

The sandwich world changed when Mendocino Farms opened its doors. The concepts goal is to enrich the lives of all it touches, whether that's the farms and food artisans they partner with to source ingredients for the menu, the team members they rely upon to provide exceptional hospitality every day, or the guests who choose to seek them out.

Our team's creative and operations involvement with the launch of the original store included: menu development, tastings, recipes, training and the introduction of sandwiches with Chef Influences such as the Pork Bahn Mi.

Involvement with operations included: staff evaluation, creation of kitchen systems for efficiency and executions, implementation of systems and hiring.



DEVOUR

FOOD HALL

Chicagoans will soon have a new dining option in the Loop overlooking the Chicago riverwalk. The 10,500 square foot space will feature upscale casual food and beverage options, ammarketplace and a full bar that will cater to busy professionals, locals and tourists.

The space at 205 West Wacker has many unique features in the works that Chicagoans will enjoy come opening. Potential tenants are still being confirmed.

REBEL

HOSPITALITY

Our team reconstructed restaurants within Chicago's Dana Hotel and the Madison Motel in Memphis. Created with fresh, sustainable ingredients, freestyle food+drink considers every spice, herb, and flavor that goes into each and every menu offering. The restaurant inside the Dana brings an indoor and outdoor shared dining experience to locals and guests looking for a global twist on American cuisine.

Memphis' the Madison features eighty3 food+drink, a local favorite featuring global tastes with southern sensibilities. At eighty3, there is a real passion for extraordinary taste and good times. Utilizing sustainable, fresh ingredients, the vision, inspired by nationally renowned Chef, Rodelio Aglibot, is about globally inspired cuisine with southern sensibilities.



OTHER ACCELERATED PROJECTS

Jeepney Grill – Los Angeles, California and Manila, Philippines

King Café – Chicago, Illinois

Fuzio – San Francisco, California

Koi – Los Angeles, California

Napa Valley Grille – National

Café del Rey – Los Angeles, California

BLT Steak – Global

Sunda – Chicago, Illinois

Simon LA – Beverly Hills, California

Empress – Hollywood, California

Blowfish Sushi – Hollywood, California

Southfin Southern Poké – Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Huntley Hotel – Santa Monica, California

Four Seasons Beverly Wilshire – Los Angeles, California

Boutique Hotel – Havana, Cuba

Metropolitan Opera House – New York City, New York

Torani Syrups – San Francisco, California

Food Buddha Gourmet Frozen Line – Chicago, Illinois

Babas Pasta, Artisan Pasta – Los Angeles, California

Pop Up Pantry – National

Ahi Brothers Tuna Importers – San Francisco, California

Wolfgang Puck – National

Olive Garden – National

CONTACT

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