

**Key Take-Away:** Austin does a great job at enabling and empowering women in the area of technology. They need to leverage this to provide more opportunities for women and others to learn business skills to enhance the ability to turn technology into value creating businesses.

# Austin

**Overall Score:** 43.0 out of 100. To compare, top-placed New York City had a score of 62.9

**Overall Rank:** 15<sup>th</sup> out of 50 cities measured

## Areas of Strength

On the dimensions measured, Austin does particularly well in the area of technology and market policies including high scores in:

- ✓ Collection of city level data technology use by gender
- ✓ Technology training organizations for women
- ✓ % of women with smartphones
- ✓ % of women who use the internet
- ✓ Presence of a city portal/website for business creation (transparent process, centralized information etc.)

## Areas to Improve

- Maternity/Paternity leave policies are mandated in only a handful of US states and cities. Conservative Texas politics mitigate against action in the near term
- City associations with female leaders are real shortfalls for Austin. The Austin entrepreneurial environment is broad-based, diffused, and decentralized, without strong personal leadership of any gender. A concerted effort to publicize and promote women leaders would be a productive, direct action

## Key Recommendations

- The accomplished and successful women in the tech sector in Austin should become better-known in the general business, financial, commercial, and political arena in the City. Recognition can be driven by their presence in the business press, speaking engagements at business meetings, local chamber events, and social and civic activities throughout the year. Prominent placement as SXSW would be a great example
- Technology is highly relied upon in Austin, and investment in infrastructure will help women entrepreneurs grow their business
- Further policies that improve work/life balance, and a commitment to encourage employees to take advantage of those policies, would help women take on leadership roles
- Policies that give women more access to capital, including working towards equal pay, will be important in encouraging women to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities

## Recent Positive Developments:

- ✓ 6 of the 11 Austin City Council members are women
- ✓ Half of the Austin state representatives are women
- ✓ In 2013, the city government officials offered their municipal employees up to 30 days off for parental leave at 100% of their pay
- ✓ In May 2018, Governor Greg Abbot met with members of the Governor's Commission for Women to discuss ways to create more opportunities for women entrepreneurs
- ✓ The Austin, Texas City Council has enacted a paid sick and safe leave ordinance, becoming the first southern city to pass such a law for private sector employees. Employees who work at least 80 hours in Austin in a calendar year will be covered.