

Guest Trifecta: IFundWomen, Social Capital, and Seedlip with Julia Steele

SPEAKERS

Lexie Smith, Julia Steele

Lexie Smith

Hey guys Lexie here, travel enthusiast, lover of puns, pizza and wine connoisseur and founder of THEPRBAR inc., and you're tuning in to the Pitchin' and Sippin' Podcast, from behind the scenes interviews with the media to honest conversations with other PR pros, to a look at inspiring brands and entrepreneurs that are rocking the world of PR. In this podcast, we talk tips while taking sips, and talking about all the things that make those in the world of PR tick. Let's get started. I could not be more excited to welcome today's guest to the show. Julia, welcome. I'm a huge fan of IFundWoman and actually introduce your community to many of my clients. But before we get into more specifics on all things IFundWoman I want to get to know who you are a bit more, so who is Julia outside of work, hobbies, passions, where's home base.

Julia Steele

Thanks so much for having me on the pod. I'm so excited to be here. So I live in Greenwich Village, right in the heart of downtown Manhattan. I'm one of those New York lifers. So I actually grew up in New York City. And I live right now about 40 blocks from where I grew up. I have a husband and Lock and a beagle named Luke. So a lot of my time, especially during the pandemic is spent walking my dog, other dog moms can probably relate. I love to cook, I before the pandemic happened would hold monthly cookbook dinner parties. So we have quite an extensive cookbook library. And we would focus on one particular cookbook and cooking a whole menu out of that cookbook. So can't wait to resume that once we're all vaccinated and it's safe. And one other thing I'll mention is I sing alto and my Church's choir. So that is the St. Paul's Chapel Choir, which is part of Trinity Wall Street Church. And again, I can't wait to get back to it after the pandemic because singing groups is definitely not advised in this climate. And we have been meeting on zoom but it's not exactly the same. So you know, a couple of my hobbies are on hold, I think you know, during the pandemic, dog walks and reading a lot of books is my main focus.

Lexie Smith

Fellow dog mom, so relate to you there, also big time reader, I'm cracking up because I think you relating distance to blocks is very New Yorker, like I live 40 blocks away in my brain. I'm like trying to associate that because in LA a block could be like a mile, essentially. So that's really funny to point out,

Julia Steele

Love it.

Lexie Smith

Okay, so let's break and start talking about your career. So, tell me, let's start with the present day. What is your current role? And then can you share everyone with everyone a little bit more about the organization you work with

Julia Steele

My favorite thing to talk about. So I am currently the Director of Marketing and Communications at IFundWomen. IFundWomen is a funding marketplace geared specifically toward women owned businesses providing them access to capital by connecting them to individual funders, to brands who give grants, to loan providers, to VCs, you name it, we're all about creating those connections between founders and funders. So our number one goal is to close the funding gap for women entrepreneurs. And we won't stop until we do that. And my role as a marketer for them. My remit is to come up with clear concise messaging that really resonates with our partners. Those can be on the enterprise brand side, it can be press partners and media, our customers and then creating marketing programs, from email marketing campaigns, social to speaking engagements that help us get our word out about what IFundWomen is and to reach people who could potentially be customers.

Lexie Smith

Okay, we're gonna circle back to IFundWomen. But first, I'd love to learn what you were doing before today. So let's hear a little bit more about your journey. what came before IFundWomen

Julia Steele

For sure. So right before IFundWomen and the six months leading up to me starting in IFundWomen in December of 2019. I was actually unemployed and living in Maine for six months with my husband, tending to my vegetable garden and reading a lot of books. Why? Because I decided to take a sabbatical for a few months and just sort of figure out how to realign my career to my purpose. I had done this after three and a half years of working in management consulting, so I was running a marketing team for the transformation consultant to the fortune 100 s y partners. So they did a lot of really amazing purpose driven work, but it wasn't aligned with my personal purpose, which is helping women you know, get the access to the same access to capital and power that kind of men have them The world and I decided, that's really what I want my life's work to be. So for the first time in my life in June 2019, I quit my job without having another job and very intentionally decided to do nothing. We talked about how I'm a New Yorker before, it's very hard for me to do nothing. So this is actually one of the hardest stretches of my life. But I came away with it with a really clear pitch on what I wanted to do, which I was looking to join a seed stage startup that was women owned, based in New York City that was working on solving the problem of pay or revenue or investment gap for women. And so if you have that clear pitch about what you want to do, it leads to really easy connections, because people understand who the best people to connect you with are. And just like that, I was introduced to Karen Kahn, the founder and CEO of IFundWomen. And I started working there in 2019.

Lexie Smith

Amazing, and then how did you I'm going to rewind this even further. So because I want to know a little bit more about what got you so passionate about this wage gap and equality in the workplace? And what got you into marketing and communications as well?

Julia Steele

Sure, great questions. So I think my passion for women's issues sort of started from birth, I come from a very male centric family, not in terms of our values about how we raise children in our family, just that there are so many boys, I have 27 first cousins, and most of them are boys, I have three older brothers. But all the men around me are extreme feminists, and, you know, really champions of women's equality. I grew up in a household where my mom was very much the breadwinner in our family. And so I just when I, you know, stepped out after college and went to get my first job and started to read about the pay gap that exists, I really didn't understand it, because I had no context for understanding that within my family where I felt like I you know, even though there were sort of less women around that women were really kind of like highly regarded and, and me being raised with three older brothers, I was raised largely the same as them, I was a huge tomboy when I was growing up, I was, you know, taught to be tough and ambitious. And I would largely credit my dad for that. And so I think I just really got kind of stuck on like, well, it's, you know, at that time, it was 2008 2009. Why are we still experiencing these issues we're so behind. And then, you know, I started off my career working in digital media, actually, on the front desk of Gawker Media, which was a collection of blogs that published that's been Jessica Gawker started there in 2008. And it was really just like the smartest kind of writers, you know, in New York City, and really just this great time to work in digital publishing, where there was just a lot of innovation going on, and a lot of excitement and growth. And I actually started on the front desk where I had gone to school for Media Studies, and had always been drawn to print media specifically, but was sort of graduating at the time when print media was sort of collapsing, and so decided to just run headfirst into digital media. And I ended up actually gravitating a little bit more toward the business side of media, but was really focusing my career on marketing communications, a way to kind of bridge the gap between the writers and the content and the money people and the brands that make it all possible. And I think I see a through line between that and my career today. In IFundWomen, you know, we're working sort of making that connection between the founders and the funders and making sure that women are getting the funding that's needed, and frankly deserved to launch and scale these businesses.

Lexie Smith

I just want to comment that one of the reasons that I love IFundWomen so much is that I personally am very passionate about closing that wage gap. I've seen it within my own professional career. I've also now when I'm in a position of servicing other clients, and working a lot with women see it every single day. And the fact that IFundWomen is addressing i think is phenomenal. I'd love to learn a little bit more, and get some insight from you now that you're working for such a specific company. Do you notice any commonalities, or what are the women owned businesses that are getting funded doing right?

Julia Steele

Yeah, I think that's a really interesting question. And there is definitely a formula to fundraising. You know, they say that to raise a angel investment round, that can be a three to six month process, you need to really put in the work to map your network to hone your pitch, and to make sure that you're hitting the types of investors who their thesis actually supports what your startup is based on. So there's math to it for sure. But just in terms of the numbers that we see, we know that there is systemic bias at

play racism and sexism that exists in the investment landscape and actually all members of the financial services industry. It's no mistake that last year in 2020 Women only gained 2.3% of all venture capital dollars that were deployed in the US. And from 2019 to 2020. Black and Latinx founders only captured point six 4% of the VC capital dollars raised in the US. So you think about that. And you know, that, you know, I'm sure some of those founders were not able to raise were prepared, and they had the formula down, and they did all the work. But a lot of it comes down to first of all systemic bias, but also the network, and the kind of like wealth gap that exists between gender and race between men and women. And if you don't have the network, to be able to rely on to raise the friends and family round, it's going to be very challenging for you to just cultivate those relationships on your own on your own. So I would say definitely, you know, I see startups who are successful in raising capital, doing the homework and putting in the work, but also, you know, a lot of it is about what you know, what sex you were born and what color your skin is, unfortunately, and that's what really working to change in IFundWomen

Lexie Smith

point 64% these are incredibly disheartening figures. So if you're a woman or a woman of color, hearing this right now, and they they're thinking, well, I can't change my gender, I can't change the color of my skin, what is something they can do, maybe to help tip the scale a bit. Today, when they're looking towards funding?

Julia Steele

Yeah, I would say and I hate to sound like an ad, but it's the reason I work in IFundWomen is because I'm so passionate about the way that we solve this problem, I would say, Come to ifundwomen.com. Sign up for our workshops, we have tons of free education and courses on how to market your startup, how to prepare to seek investment, how to crowdfund, which can actually be a great proof of concept, when your early days and your idea stage startup come dive on women and plug into the tools, email me my email is julia@ifundwomen.com, I'd love to hear from you. And just help you along with your journey. We've got something called our startup journey quiz, which is available on our website. And that helps you assess where you're at in your startup and what IFundWomen resources to use to plug into. But I would say find communities that are really going to support you. So you know, digital, undivided is a great resource for women of color founders, IFundWomen is great for women owned businesses, there's a lot of these communities popping up that are, you know, creating funding access for women. And I would say just look around at the landscape and join some of those communities that you can really feel supported. So you're not going it alone.

Lexie Smith

Yeah, I want to definitely link to that. Well, not only IFundWomen, but that quiz specifically in our show notes, just kind of verbally putting a note out there. Because I think that's really cool. I didn't know you guys had that. I so so everyone listening knows, IFundWomen through, IFundWomen through a client and I specifically interact a lot within their Slack channel and their slack community. Some people listening right now are like Slack, what slack? Some people might know what that is? But can you give me kind of a quick overview of how you use that platform within IFundWoman?

Julia Steele

Yes, absolutely. So Slack is our community network of women owned businesses. So we have a ton of channels in there, for example, for sharing your press wins. We also have channels in there for if you're in search of a developer or somebody to help you with your marketing strategy. all day, every day women entrepreneurs are connecting with each other on our slack group to find customers to connect with press to find co founders even, and just help each other kind of cheer each other along. So we say that it's the place to collaborate, commiserate and celebrate each other. I think women in particular, generally, you know, they really need that collaboration. And it can be really lonely and isolating, especially if you're a solopreneur, as many of our entrepreneurs are, and you're kind of truly doing this alone. Maybe you've got some vendors, maybe you've got some freelancers, but you're not yet at the point where you're really building up that team. That's what our Slack community is meant to do

Lexie Smith

Is free right too or is that changing too?

Julia Steele

Yeah, totally free,

Lexie Smith

free. So everyone listening, if you want to check it out, you can access it by going to IFundWomen website, right?

Julia Steele

Yep, you can go to ifundwomen.com and just click on make connections. And you'll see the network which has our slack group there and the submenu.

Lexie Smith

So kind of taking it back to the investment process. And speaking a little bit more specifically to the overarching topic of this podcast, right, which is PR and communications. I'd love to know what you think. What role do you think communication and PR plays within the investment process?

Julia Steele

Yes, it plays a huge role. We would call this like social capital or social proof. It's important specifically as a female founder, which as we know they're invested, there are disparities in terms of the amount of investment that women tend to get. Women have to be even more prepared to say, we have gotten amazing press in courts and ink and Fast Company. And that would be an example of like a social proof type slide that you could have in your investment deck. I also think it could really help you in terms of creating the ultimate thing for investors, which is traction. If people are reading about you and the press and you're getting really great press, then you're probably getting good customers. And I would just say on the marketing side, if you know, you should definitely have your marketing strategy and sort of your house in order. have a way to be collecting people's emails or making sure that you're capturing them if you're going to be pitching press and getting that press because it's like if a tree falls in a forest, does anyone hear it if you have a press mention, but then you don't actually have a mechanism on your site to be able to capture their email and sort of create, you know, create them as a customer, then you haven't done your full job as a marketer.

Lexie Smith

Hey, guys, Lexie here interrupting the show really quick to drop a note. Did you know that in a study produced by Nielsen, it was reported that PR is almost 90% more effective than advertising? Well, it is, I swear, Google it. So if you've been enjoying learning about all things pitching in sippin, I wanted to give you an official invite to visit my website, theprbarinc.com spelled t h e p r b a r i n c . c o m , to learn even more about how you might be able to work with yours truly to increase your influence, impact and revenue with PR. If you're not sure where to start on the site, consider booking a free consultation. All right, I'm done back to the show. Some people will come to me and they'll go well, I'll do press, you know, once I have the capital to be able to afford it or all I'll have my marketing plan, once I have dollars in the bank. And sometimes I think this is a kind of backwards way of thinking, would you agree? Is there a way to do it kind of on the front end if your capital is not really there yet?

Julia Steele

Absolutely. I think we see entrepreneurs who are kind of not PR people who are doing their own press all the time, we actually have some really great workshop content on ifundwomen that helps you hack your own PR strategy. As an entrepreneur, I would say there are two elements to it. Number one is really understanding the landscape and kind of what's the difference between a national publication, a local publication and an industry publication, we see a lot of our entrepreneurs, especially our crowdfunders be successful and getting kind of either that industry or local press. So you know, if you're an entrepreneur in the wellness space, for example, who are the mind body greens are the well and good, the people who are writing those blogs that are more specific to wellness, and then figuring out down to like, who the exact writer is that you want to pitch because they had a story that sort of reminded you of your startup or was in a similar space. So creating that list and kind of understanding the landscape of who your targets are. And then having a great pitch that you can use again and again and add to and that would be sort of a offshoot of your business pitch, but more specific about what is the particular story you're trying to tell now, including some stats about the problem that you're solving any kind of like customer research, or a data type story that you're seeing, and making that pitch sort of as easy and plug and play for the reporter to run with as possible. I also tell entrepreneurs all the time to think about you know, how can they start building up a paper trail for themselves of thought leadership that they write on LinkedIn or Medium and trying to get those contributor spots on places like Forbes, those can be really great ways to sort of get your name out there and then help you build up that profile. So then you can pitch and kind of legitimize yourself in the future to reporters.

Lexie Smith

Yeah, you're making me look really good with my clients right now. See, guys, I'm not the only one who thinks this. But for anyone listening, I think one takeaway I want you to have from that is that you you can do it upfront, and you don't need a 10k a month PR firm to do it. There are plenty out there. So start now start somewhere, start building up that trail, I think that's a great point. And if you're going to be raising capital, then you're going to need that in the process.

Julia Steele

I agree. And I would also say like I get all the Google news alerts for IFundWomen entrepreneurs and I follow it quite closely. There's a great collection of publications called the business journals, they have

them in almost every city in America. Those are really great, kind of like you know, writing about new businesses. printers were sort of on the rise and really early stage people. So I would say look at your local city and see if there's a Business Journal, website. And then also, you know, like for food businesses, I see a lot of eater we mentioned wellness, just try to figure out who those people are and look at what your comps have done. So what were your competitors, you know, where, where your competitors getting written about and the early days and start to really do that research, but put in the work, because it does take time, but it is absolutely worth it from day one.

Lexie Smith

Absolutely. And, oh, if you have that pie in the sky goal of the Forbes and the inks, having those mentions in the business journals, and those more niche placements are going to create a some social proof that will then help you get into larger names, as well. So don't discount a press opportunity just because it's not Forbes, I guess, is what I'm, I'm getting out there.

Julia Steele

I 100% agree with you. And I think even you know, even if you have decided on business journals, I would say look at this specific reporter who's been writing about your industry beat and and figure out what articles one or two, two articles of theirs that you can include in your pitch and say, Hey, this is similar to the startup that I'm working on, I thought you might find this interesting, make it hyper specific, and it almost makes it hard for them to say no

Lexie Smith

Want to jump ahead here because I was gonna ask you and to catch everyone up to speed. On a little bit of Julia's background, she has overseen the pitching and publishing of dozens of bylined articles in public publications like Forbes, The Wall Street Journal, amongst many others. So for entrepreneurs who want to land those larger buy lines, right, let's say they've been doing the business journals, and they're ready to kind of go to that next level, do you have any tips for them in securing these buy lines?

Julia Steele

it's actually mirrors trying to raise investment capital quite similarly. Do you have any personal connections to people with those publications? Even if it's like a second or third degree connection? Can you ask for an introduction to those people? So you should have your kind of larger list. And I think, you know, knowing where you're at in the process, and if you're actually ready to move on to those foreign national publications is smart and being honest with yourself. But if you have a connection, try to go through the connection, how to kind of like your specific pitch of like, why that you know, it's not I want to pitch Eater, well, Eater has a million different Eater sites. Is it Eater Austin? And then what what editor Eater Austin, and what story can you reference in your pitch, and then making sure that there is a mechanism for you to see if they've actually seen your email, so you're not just throwing it into the void. So I recommend a gmail plugin for my Gmail users called Streak. Streak is a really great tool that you can install into your Gmail, and it shows you, it's a little bit creepy. But it shows it shows you when and where based on IP address, somebody has opened your email. So you know, if you send a pitch, and they never look at it, you know that, you know, maybe you have to send a follow up, or maybe they're just not interested. But if you see somebody opening your email once or twice, I would wait a couple days to get back into their inbox, because you know, they're probably interested.

And then I would say in your pitch as well, after you've included kind of like, what's the big idea slash headline? Why is the story relevant to them, particularly, any relevant data or kind of like, you know, interesting news breaking item that you can include, also, including maybe like a Calendly link, for example, Calendly as a tool that lets somebody book on your calendar. And you can say, if you want to chat about this more, here's my Calendly link to book a 30 minute call just so you don't have to do a back and forth to try to get them on the zoom for coffee. And they can just quickly and easily book. So I really like that mixture of having a targeted ask and knowing exactly what person you're writing to having a great kind of like pitch with great content in it that is going to compel them. And then using sort of nerdy stuff like Streak and Calendly to make it super easy for you to tell if they're interested. And for them to book time with you if they want to move forward. I love the nerdy things. I'm all here for it. I use HubSpot, but Streak, for my tracking of emails, I haven't actually heard of Streak. So I'm 100% going to be looking at up after this podcast because the IP addressing the location is super, super interesting as well. So again, everyone we will link to those in the show notes, those were Streak and Calendly. If for some reason, you can't remember that also just head to Google and say email tracking software. There's a ton out there, feel free to kind of vet on your own accord. So I'm gonna go back real quick to raising capital. I know we're kind of jumping all over, but that's okay. One... you were the co founder and CEO of a media startup called Ratter and you have experience in raising capital, so I'd love to learn more about your personal journey in raising capital and maybe learn some of the main takeaways that you had throughout that experience that would be helpful for the audience to hear. I think the biggest theme of my capital raise was my personal confidence gap. In 2013, I was in I was approached by a former colleague of mine from Gawker named AJ Delirio, who is setting out to reinvent local news for the blog world. So his idea was that all these local newspapers are shuttering around the country. And there was really no great kind of local news solution for the internet. And so we set out to create that, you know, I was working at Tumblr at the time working in a marketing role. And I remember getting a G chat from AJ, who I hadn't talked to in a couple years since I left Gawker Media saying, like, hey, I want to talk to you about a job. And I thought he was joking at first. It's so bad by kind of, like, confidence issue was, and he ended up wanting to tap me to be his co founder, and I just couldn't for the life of me understand why. And now in retrospect, I realized like, Okay, I'm actually really good at my job. Everyone loves working with me, like, there are obvious reasons why he would have wanted me to be his co founder. But I think that that confidence gap sort of existed for me throughout our raise, I was really instrumental as a comms person in creating our pitch deck and sort of helping us lay out the story of what Ratter was, I would have been unable to raise the round on my own because as we were talking about before, all the connections really came from a AJ's personal network of people who he built up this Rolodex of investors in the media space over several decades, working at deadspin in Gawker. And it was really quite remarkable to watch, because at that time, you know, I did everything backwards from how I would have done it now or how I will do it. When I took on my next startup. We had no business plan, we had no plan for monetization. We had no, none of that social proof that we talked about. And we were able to just raise, you know, on his personality and our idea alone, which is really remarkable when I think about it in retrospect, and it's certainly not what we advise people to do at IFundWomen. That's why we're so don't get about crowdfunding, because you actually could put your idea out there and see, is this something that people actually want? Is it something that the market is ready for and sort of test it out and get your early beta tester type customers, because they are the early funders of your crowdfunding campaign. So despite no monetization, no traction, no social proof, we were able to close a \$1.1 million Angel round from people like Joanne Wilson, Mark Cuban, Jason

Calacanis, these really well known angel investors. And, you know, unfortunately, the startup is no longer and we ended up failing. But I guess just the fact that we were able to raise that round, I would say, it mirrors a lot of, you know, the issues that I see in the investment world, which is like, I think men do have an easier go at it and do tend to have the network and that was certainly, you know, an AJ is a very gifted media person as well. It wasn't sort of like the right moment for the startup. But we were able to be successful in the raise, which was great.

Lexie Smith

Well, and you said, You think but 2.3% and point six 4% prove that yes, men do have it easier than women in the process. Connections are huge thing in life in business, right? But you have, where do you go to even begin to start to create kind of VC or funding style connections if you're at square zero?

Julia Steele

Yeah, I actually coach on this topic that IFundWomen so and in addition to making connections to between founders and funders, so they can raise capital, we also have a coaching program, where you can sign up for an annual or a monthly membership and get coaching on dozens of topics that teach you how to be a better entrepreneur. And then in addition to marketing, uncommon strategy, I also coach on how to raise a seed round since I've been through that before. And sometimes there are founders who are doing everything right. They have satisfied the time they have built up a great list, they know who they want to pitch, they have a great deck, but they say I have no connections to these people. Perhaps they're in the middle of the country. Perhaps they're a younger entrepreneur or they're switching gears and are not in the industry they used to be. And I tell them, you have to be a little bit stalker, follow the investors on Twitter, what events are they speaking at? Go to the event, ask a question, raise your hand, slide into their DMS I would say accelerator programs are also a great intermediary step to just sort of meet investors, also pitch competitions. So we you know, we have a number of pitch competitions every year IFundWomen, but keep your eye on kind of who are the accelerators that startups like you can join And what are the pitch competitions where you could go and actually pitch your idea Shark Tank style in front of investors. And then just, you know, really you have to get over any kind of introversion that you have, even if you're an introvert, you have to get over it and just put yourself out there, ask the question at the event, subtweet people and just slide into their DMS, that's how to do it.

Lexie Smith

I call this with my clients professional stalking, I'm like, you need to professionally stalk them. So I'm not saying go to their home and hang out outside their window, but do your research, right? Go to their LinkedIn, follow them on Twitter, get to understand who they are kind of professionally, and what they're willing to share personally. So that's kind of what I've called it.

Julia Steele

And I would also say like, look at who is in their portfolio, I once heard a great piece of feedback, watching one of the partners from Union Square ventures speak on a panel, and somebody raised their hand actually and said, You know, I am pitching my startup around, and I was wondering if even square ventures would be interested. And she said, Well, what is your startup? And the woman said, you know, it's this, this and that I forgot what space it was in. And the partner said, you know, that really doesn't

look like anything in our portfolio and it's not in keeping with our thesis. So understanding what are the theses of these firms and are there founders and companies in their portfolio that look like you in terms of the business problem they are solving, if not, you're probably not going to be the first type of business like yours that they are going to fund. So it's probably not a fit. So it's the same as pitching press that degree of like, hyper specificity, and research is going to go a long way,

Lexie Smith

literally, as you were writing and like this is exactly like press, it's like pitching something that's not in a reporter's beat, like they're not all of a sudden, randomly gonna start talking about food if they cover tech. So I think that's really a helpful comparison to see and super powerful transferable skills right there, for sure.

Julia Steele

Absolutely, yeah. And it's just like, you know, if you pitch to the wrong person, it's a waste of their time reading it. And, you know, gonna preclude you from maybe getting written about by them in the future. But it's also a waste of your time. And as a founder, you're busy. So you want to make sure you're efficient with your time and pitching the right people.

Lexie Smith

Speaking of pitching one more question, and then we'll start to kind of wrap it up, I know that IFundWomen, you also are in charge of community partnerships. And partnerships is a topic that we do talk about on the show. So we don't need to spend too long here. But I'd love to learn what types of community partnerships IFundWomen is interested in? And if then someone listening fits into that category, how should they reach out?

Julia Steele

Yeah, for sure. So I will send you for the show notes, a type form survey that we have, that is like five questions that it's just all for people who want to partner with IFundWomen we are getting tons of partnership requests every single day, which makes us feel very special and amazing. But the one thing that we're looking for is are women entrepreneurs in your network? Do you serve women entrepreneurs? We are all about relevance to IFundWomen and our core mission of of funding women owned businesses. So we asked that partnership type forum, if you serve women entrepreneurs, also, what is the size of your audience is this you know, something where we're gonna do an hour long zoom session, and also a prep call. And it's 90 minutes of somebody on our team time, but there's only three people that show up to zoom. That might not be you know, as good of a partnership for us. But I think our main criteria is like, Is there something that our women entrepreneurs can get out of that partner and also, what the partners goals are, we want to make sure that they are feeling sated by the partnership as well. So making sure that their mutual kind of shared goals and synergy there.

Lexie Smith

So for everyone listening, what she just said, is really similar to if you're going to be pitching a podcast, make sure and I think actually Julia, when I reached out to you asking if you'd be on this one, I'm like, my listeners are mainly female entrepreneurs. And I think they can really benefit from learning about IFundWoman. So I think the theme we're seeing throughout this past 30 minutes is there's a lot of

parallels and crossovers and it really comes down to doing your research connections, and being really relevant amongst many other things. But those are kind of three takeaways that I think have been throughout the episode.

Julia Steele

It's so true. And I would say like the nor the world is such a noisy place at this point with all the various social platforms and now we have to be on clubhouse and all the things so just do your research, do the little extra legwork, you know for each each pitch that you're making, whether it's for a partnership for investment, or for press and it will go a long way.

Lexie Smith

Yeah, and for anyone who is listening like what's clubhouse Google it, they just got \$100 million of funding, they're not going away. It's the kind of app of 2021. So check it out. I have a free invite Feel free to slide into my DMS if you need one, which is offering

Julia Steele

10 to 10 employees a billion. So you do the math. It's like several million dollar value per employee in that valuation so interesting. And guess what? No female founders there.

Lexie Smith

So kind of wrap up question all my regular listen, listeners know this one. This is called the Pitchin' and Sippin' Podcast, we talked about all things pitching. Now, I would love to learn what we can find you sipping So do you have a favorite beverage that can be alcoholic or non alcoholic?

Julia Steele

Yeah, definitely. Right now. My jam is Seedlip I don't know if you've heard of that. It's a it's a non alcohol

Lexie Smith

Seedlip?

Julia Steele

Seedlip. One word. Yep. It's a non alcoholic spirit alternative. And I mix it with either ginger beer like a strong ginger beer like a Reed's or orange juice. And it's kind of like screwdriver style. And it has this really yummy like botanical flavor to it. And it's the only kind of like non alcoholic spirit alternative that I've tried that really is interesting and kind of feels like you're drinking a cocktail.

Lexie Smith

I've literally never heard of it. Seedlip Okay, again, I've many things to look up. I love that. I haven't seen a few other brands kind of pop into the market. On that note. I think another one is called toast. Have you heard of toast?

Julia Steele

Yes. So toast is sort of like a highbrow alternative to like a Martinelli's apple cider, like a It looks like a champagne almost the way the bottle is. And the idea is sort of you know, it's like a non alcoholic champagne. I didn't personally love it. I don't have the biggest sweet tooth, which is why I like see love. It's like a little more savory on the palate. But I think it's great that there are so many fun non alcoholic things popping onto the market now and it's just much more common than it used to be.

Lexie Smith

Yeah, I think that's that's great. There was a non alcoholic wine too that reached out to The PR Bar at one point. I'm like, this is so smart for so many reasons. So that's kind of fun to see that emerging into the space. Definitely going to check that out. Julia, you've been amazing. So helpful. Last kind of question is, let's direct people to how they can get in contact with you and IFundWomen website social. Where should people go?

Julia Steele

Absolutely. So IFundWomen is just ifundwomen.com We are @ifundwomen on all the platforms, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn. I'm Julia Schweizer Steele. We can also link it in the show notes. Or send me an email I love to chat my email is julia@ifundwomen.com. I try to stay on top of my inbox and get back to everybody within 48 hours. So I'd love to hear from you.

Lexie Smith

That is impressive. Kudos to you for the 48 hour turnaround. Thank you so much for joining us today and I will see you on slack.

Julia Steele

Thanks so much, Lexie, for having me on. I really appreciate it.

Lexie Smith

Hey guys, if you are enjoying the Pitchin' and Sippin' Podcast, please do me a huge favor and leave a review wherever you are listening. If you want to connect with me to learn more about THEPRBAR inc., you can do so on Instagram @theprbar_inc or you can check out my website at theprbarinc.com. Cheers