



# If the Right Tool Does not Exist, then You Have to Build It: The ProvenBase story

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## The Beginning

After years of being one of few diverse knowledge workers in the rooms he was in, Ravi Tandra pondered, “Why?”. His hypothesis was that many qualified, diverse candidates were being sidetracked by hiring managers’ unconscious bias. Tandra knew that increased diversity representation and diversity of thought boosted company performance, however he was not seeing enough company stakeholders take meaningful action to change the way they hired talent.

At that time, Ravi had a coveted job as a developer at IBM. He knew he had to make a stand for change, a stand to fix the root cause of unconscious bias in hiring...he had to take bold action. Armed with the belief that there had to be a better way, Tandra quit his job and began driving for Uber and Lyft.

This might not be the origin story you were picturing, and yet it was a brilliant move. This allowed Ravi to his discovery with the people who were in his back seat. He jokes, “I had a captive audience”. Most passengers were happy to engage in the topic of increasing diversity in companies. What Ravi discovered is that organizations were three times more likely to hire diverse candidates if those candidates were already in the pipeline.

## Sourcing diverse candidate pools

Using his background as a developer at IBM, Ravi and his team tackled the process head on. Tandra believes that sourcing diverse candidates is an art that needs to be supported by science.

He explains, "We saw a deep need for a diversity first sourcing tool. There are some very good sourcing platforms on the market for talent professionals, but diversity was an afterthought for them. We set out to solve the challenge of finding diverse talent pools directly." With that vision, ProvenBase was born.

ProvenBase launched in April and is the first ever sourcing technology that provides direct access to millions of qualified candidates focusing exclusively on **skills** and qualifications, thereby mitigating unconscious bias. Candidate profiles on the platform hide potentially identifying information such as age, name, address, and/or university. The platform also provides features to allow users to focus solely on the candidates' current job or the past two jobs.

The ProvenBase platform sources broad categories and pipelines of talent including veterans and underrepresented groups. The platform has robust underrepresented filters for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), tribal colleges, and Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI). ProvenBase is one of the few, if not the only platform in the market that include these filters.

Soon, ProvenBase will include filters for other traditionally underrepresented groups, such as parents re-entering the work environment, military spouses, disability groups and talent that has taken an alternative educational path. As Ravi states, "As a society we have many 'isms' to tackle."

ProvenBase's advanced **technology** offers global public profile sourcing with deep diversity insights in addition to customized search filters and the ability to add "weight" to individual requirements and technical skill sets. This Sourcing Laboratory in the system empowers companies to leverage diverse sources of global candidate information beyond any other sourcing tool available. ProvenBase's advanced technology uses algorithms with machine learning, neural networks, and natural language processing to provide sourcing and recruiting teams with the high-level data they need.

## **What is next? Supporting the future of work...**

ProvenBase is leveraging their partner organizations to advance the development of the platform and ensure rapid response to the ever-changing needs of the talent market. Enhancements are coming every few weeks with the first major evolution right around the corner offering ProvenBase to global customers. We can also expect the addition of hybrid and remote indicators, advanced messaging features, e-mail/contact analytics, and historical statistics as these features are added this summer.

The ProvenBase team is hoping to partner with development and training companies to help candidates develop skills that can be readily applied to current job openings

and rapid changes in the labor and job markets. ProvenBase is most certainly poised to meet the dynamic shifts in markets anticipated this fall.

Tandra's goal is to bring all available diverse talent to the front of the pipeline so that everyone gets a fair opportunity. His team is focused on intentional diversity as the output, so their success depends on the outcomes achieved for individuals and organizations. As he so simply puts it, "Diversity is not an option, it's the future."