

How the Venmo Small Business Grant is helping a three-time cancer survivor change lives with Krysalis Kouture

The opportunity.

When Paloma Soledad was battling cancer, she struggled to find clothing that would allow her to feel comfortable during treatment. As a fashion designer, she realized that she was uniquely positioned to help fix this problem. The experience sparked a business idea: Designing quality clothes made to accommodate medical treatment and accompanying symptoms.

“How can I transform clothing, which is one of our fundamental needs, to actually make people feel better?” she remembers wondering.

Her idea crystalized as she underwent multiple surgeries and a successful but physically brutal immunotherapy trial. In one example, she designed her own outfit to account

for severe abdominal bloating while the rest of her body was atrophied post-treatment.

Soledad founded Krysalis Kouture in October 2020, launching with a line of high-style, handmade headscarves to help women with hair loss feel more positive and confident. These gorgeous garments are handmade, sustainable, and meant to last.

As she worked to connect with customers for her headscarves, she designed lines of clothing for men, women, and children facing various medical issues. But producing these additional lines depended on acquiring funding, as did upgrading her website to create a customer experience as compelling as her products.





The solution.

A friend encouraged Soledad to apply for the inaugural round of the Venmo Small Business Grant program, a contest open to Venmo's small business users. Twenty winners each would receive a \$10,000 business grant, promotional help from Venmo and PayPal, business resources, and professional consulting services.

An enthusiastic Venmo user, Soledad was eager to apply. She was thrilled and honored to be named a winner and knew immediately that the grant money would be a game-changer for her business.



The Venmo grant meant the world to me. It helped me get over the first big hurdle and focus on improving lives.

Paloma Soledad
Founder, Krysalis Kouture



The impact.

The funding from the Venmo Small Business Grant allowed Soledad to redesign Krysalis Kouture's website, properly showcasing her products. And it opened up other opportunities for growing the business, such as doing additional marketing.

"I think it's really kicked off the business because, before that, I was searching for a way to generate any kind of movement," she reflects. "So, it was just this beaming light of hope."

With photos of a friend modeling the headscarves and a streamlined checkout process, the new site makes clear the uniqueness and beauty of Soledad's designs. The site also explains how the company's clothing is about far more than having something to wear.

"As you're going through treatment, it's an intense time, and sometimes people don't come out of it. But when you do, you are the butterfly," says Soledad. "You have a new take on life, a new appreciation for everything. I think that's what the name really represents: the kind of cocoon that will hold you and make you feel safe for your metamorphosis."

Venmo is committed to supporting small businesses like Krysalis Kouture, both with grant awards to spark growth and best-in-class payment technology. With Venmo in her corner, Soledad has Krysalis Kouture poised to undergo its own evolution.

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