

# Delaware Startup Launchpad

## About the Program

The Delaware Founders Initiative's Delaware Startup Launchpad program, which is co-produced by Horn Entrepreneurship at the University of Delaware and the Delaware Small Business Development Center, is a mini-accelerator which provides training and mentorship to support team-based customer discovery research aimed at investigating the commercial viability and societal impact of novel products, processes, or services.

## Who Should Apply

All teams consisting of at least two team members who are interested in exploring the commercial potential of their technology or idea or who want to innovate within their established company. Teams may include additional members, including an external mentor, as desired. Teams applying without an external mentor may be assigned to a mentor for the duration of the training program.

## Benefits

**TRAINING:** Four sessions introducing the lean startup methodology and guiding teams through customer discovery research – customer, problem, solution and value proposition testing.

**MENTORSHIP:** Hands-on mentorship from experienced business owners and entrepreneurs in the Delaware area.

**RESOURCES:** Access to Horn Entrepreneurship's Startup Village, which is a group of service providers in categories such as Human Resources/Payroll, Accounting/Finance, Legal, Fundraising, Marketing/Advertising, and Prototyping/Manufacturing that provide free 30-minute one-on-one advising sessions to entrepreneurs. Teams will also be invited on tours to local innovation spaces.

**FOLLOW-ON OPPORTUNITIES:** Upon completion, teams will have access to advanced startup educational workshops and additional mentorship.

## Application & Award Process

Apply online: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4686422>

Applications due: **March 1<sup>st</sup> by 5:00pm**

All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed by the DFI Review Committee and evaluated based on project potential and team commitment. Decisions will be announced by March 6<sup>th</sup>. Accepted teams must then participate in the training program beginning on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

## More Information

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## Curriculum

| Date | Sessions   | Description  |
|------|--|--|
| 3/25 | Welcome  | Review program goals and teams introduce their projects  |
|      | Introduction to Lean LaunchPad and Customer Discovery                      | Introduction to customer discovery, customer development and business model design. What's a business model? What are hypotheses? What experiments are needed to test business model hypotheses? What's "getting out of the building"?   |
|      | Finding your Problem/Solution Fit: Value Propositions and Customer Segment | What is your proposed solution? What problem does it solve? Why will people want it? Who's the customer? User? Payer? How are they different? Why do they buy? How can you reach them? What's segmentation? What's an archetype?   |
|      | Get out of the Building!   | Each team must meet with potential customers   |
| 3/28 | Sizing your Opportunity: Market Types/Size and Competition                 | A market analysis is a quantitative and qualitative assessment of a market. It looks into the size of the market both in volume and in value, the various customer segments and buying patterns, the competition, and the economic environment in terms of barriers to entry and regulation. Who's the competition and how does your customer view these competitive offerings? Where's the market? What's the market type? What's a multi-sided market? What unique insight do you have into the market dynamics or into a technological shift that makes this a fresh opportunity? |
|      | How to Prepare to Get out of the Building<br>The Art of Interviewing       | Designing effective interview and survey questions is among the most important elements of research, but interview and survey response psychology is complex and there are many potential sources of bias that poorly designed questions can introduce. Teams will learn best practices in constructing effective questions and minimizing bias.   |
|      | Get out of the Building!   | Each team must meet with at least 10 potential customers   |
| 4/15 | Team Presentations   | Teams present their interview findings including: Business Model Canvas (BMC), business thesis, hypothesis tested, 10-15 interviews, market size w/ TAM/SAM/SM (for each market/application); competitive analysis   |
|      | Evidence-Based Decisions<br>Pathways to Market                             | Analyzing the data and making pivot/perish/persist decisions. Exploring pathways to different markets and ecosystems.  |
|      | Get out of the Building!   | Each team must meet with at least 10 more potential customers  |
| 4/29 | Team presentations   | Teams present their Lessons Learned including: BMC, business thesis, hypotheses tested, 10-15 new interviews, market size w/ TAM/SAM/SM (for each market/ application); competitive analysis, SWOT analysis, next steps  |
|      | Minimal Viable Products<br>Next Step Opportunities                         | Designing and testing solutions through prototypes/Minimal Viable Products (MVPs). NSF I-Corps Teams, co-working spaces, NextFab, Small Business grants (SBIR/STTR), etc.  |