

For Immediate Release

Contact: Val Walton
205.943.4715 | vwalton@edpa.org

Eleven teams chosen for the 2015 Alabama Launchpad Start-Up Competition

Birmingham, Ala., Dec. 11 --The Economic Development Partnership of Alabama Foundation today announces that 11 early-stage companies have been selected to compete in the first round of the 2015 Alabama Launchpad Start-Up Competition.

Twenty startups met the Nov. 16 deadline to compete in this latest round of “Proof of Commercial Relevance” competition.

Judges selected the 11 early-stage companies Wednesday after reviewing submitted applications.

The teams are in the “pre-seed” phase and are competing for a share of up to \$250,000 in award money. The competition is geared to promote, reward and increase the pipeline of high-growth, innovative ventures that have the potential to create and keep jobs in Alabama. The teams will make their first pitch presentations on Jan. 23 at Evonik Industries, 750 Lakeshore Parkway, Birmingham. The free event begins at 9 a.m. and is open to the public.

Greg Sheek, Launchpad Programs director, said Alabama Launchpad looks forward to working with this innovative group of early-stage companies for commercialization.

“Innovation is the key to being competitive in the global market,” Sheek said. “Alabama Launchpad remains committed to fostering innovation and helping Alabama’s aspiring businesses grow. We are not just a start-up competition. We support entrepreneurs through this competition as well providing federal grant writing assistance and assisting them to build networks to access capital investment to take their ideas from concept to high growth jobs.”

Startups selected to proceed are:

- Abel Healthcare Enterprises, based in Birmingham with a University of Alabama at Birmingham affiliation, has a product, SendMedicalImages.com, which is a cloud based medical image transfer and viewing solution that solves the universal problem of access to medical images, minimizing wasted resources, saving lives, and making life better for doctors, patients, and healthcare facilities.
- Bama Mine and Milling, based in Birmingham with a University of Alabama at Birmingham affiliation, has developed a new, patented diamond coating process for rock mining/drilling that produces tools with a higher performance to cost ratio than traditional carbide without the need for new training.
- Brewery Buddy, based in Tuscaloosa, is an affordable web-based brewery management platform designed to automate business so customers can get back to what they love, brewing delicious craft beer.

- Conductive Chemistry, based in Tuscaloosa with a University of Alabama affiliation, produces a new, novel material that has many of the electrical properties of platinum but is less than half the cost.
- In the Sports Zone, LLC, based in Birmingham, creates sports team activity books, activity pads and apps.
- Lawditor, based in Birmingham, automatically asks employees about their current practices and relays problematic answers to the business' attorney to sort out the problems in regular, privileged communications.
- NextStorm, Inc., based in Huntsville with a University of Alabama in Huntsville affiliation, develops applications and customizes satellite-focused hyper-local forecast products (severe weather, lightning, rainfall) that mesh with existing weather prediction and forecasting systems whereby doubling the accuracy and lead time of currently used weather methods.
- Skills For Success LLC, based in Birmingham, provides practical, hands-on materials and resources to teach children with special needs basic safety and life skills.
- Wires, based in Birmingham, is a notebook for app ideas. Wires believes inspiration is spontaneous, and wireframing should be too. The Wires iPhone app creates sleek wireframes for app ideas while helping a customer focus on the big picture.
- Wizard Lounge Software, based in Birmingham, gives not only accurate real time reporting on where a developer is spending his or her time to project managers, but it will shift the responsibility of time entries to the project manager, freeing up valuable development time.
- Xplendid Research LLC, based in Mobile, with a University of South Alabama affiliation, offers an unobtrusive, sensor embedded within high-value and operationally critical carbon-fiber components, ensuring structural integrity and product quality ; the sensor provides production cost savings and enhanced quality control for composites manufacturers and aerospace companies.

The Alabama Launchpad Competition, started as a pilot project in 2006, is financed by business, the state of Alabama and seven universities. Since its inception, more than \$1.5 million has been awarded to 35 companies through the competition.

Judges for this second round competition are once again comprised of entrepreneurs, investors and corporate stakeholders:

- Tanveer Patel, serial entrepreneur, CEO, Concert Care
- Nate Schmidt – co-founder/CEO, Instagift
- Mel Washington – director and lead counselor, University of South Alabama Small Business Development
- Avery Tucker – senior wealth director, BNY Mellon Wealth Management
- Robert Hergenrother – director, Southern Research Institute's Medical Technology Department

Alabama Launchpad is aligned with the state's larger economic development plan, Accelerate Alabama, which focuses on recruitment, retention and renewal. For more information, please visit www.alabamalaunchpad.com.

About the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama: The non-profit Partnership represents the private sector's contribution to economic development in Alabama. Fully funded by 70 leading companies invested in the state's long-term economic success, EDPA provides leadership and services that recruit new businesses to the state, retain existing businesses and renew Alabama's economy by encouraging innovation both within existing industries and through the commercialization of new technologies. www.edpa.org

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