

**For Immediate Release**

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## **EDPA announces 12 startups are semifinalists in revamped Alabama Launchpad Startup Competition**

Birmingham, AL, Oct. 6 --- The Economic Development Partnership of Alabama today announces that judging has begun to determine the early-stage companies that will compete in its Alabama Launchpad Startup Competition Finale on Nov. 15.

On Tuesday, a judging panel selected 12 startups to advance as semifinalists for the redesigned Alabama Launchpad Startup Competition, a program of EDPA started in 2006 to help companies start, stay and grow in Alabama.

Startups are competing along two tracks: concept stage for entrepreneurs launching businesses and seed stage businesses accelerating growth.

The semifinalists for the concept stage are:

- Axle Advertisements, based in Birmingham, allows carriers to earn money by advertising on the exterior of their trailers.
- Cycle Rate Performance, based in Huntsville, offers software solutions aimed at streamlining the material flow towards construction projects.
- Edify Online Corp., based in Birmingham, is an exchange of independent teaching talents from universities and communities that work together to achieve important milestones for higher education students.
- Social Health, based in Birmingham, is building a low-cost, web-based service to support healthcare and community organizations addressing social isolation harms.
- Walker Enterprises ALA, LLC, based in Prattville, has developed a web-based cumulative tracking tool that forecasts student progress to graduation.
- XUBIFIT, based in Huntsville, is an ecommerce website that connects individuals seeking affordable fitness.

The seed stage semifinalists are:

- Farm Bowl & Juice Co., based in Birmingham, aims to introduce a fun and convenient way to consume plant-based nutrition.

- Influencer (INFLCR), based in Birmingham, equips innovative college athletic programs with critical social media tools to empower their student-athletes to be brand ambassadors on social media.
- InnovaPure, Inc., based in Anniston, provides the evolution of dry cleaning through the iClean professional dry-cleaning machine for commercial purposes.
- NextStorm, Inc., based in Decatur with an University of Alabama in Huntsville affiliation, is a weather data services company that focuses on short-term weather prediction.
- Sycamore Physician Contracting, based in Florence, is an online portal that matches physicians and facilities based on proposals physicians submit.
- Yellow Card Financial, based in Auburn with an Auburn University affiliation, is a digital currency exchange and remittance platform for the cash market.

On Oct. 16, the judges will choose six finalists, three in each of the two tracks, to advance to the Finale Competition set for Nov. 15 at Iron City Birmingham. At the finale, judges will select a concept startup winner to win a \$50,000 cash prize and a seed winner to receive a \$150,000 cash prize.

Alabama Launchpad uses a judging panel comprised of five individuals representing investors, entrepreneurs, and corporate stakeholders of varying experience from across the state. The judging panel remains the same through each phase of the competition.

Judges for this competition round are:

- Matt Hottle, CEO, Redhawk Consulting, Birmingham
- Trent Kocurek, CEO, Airship, Birmingham
- Brandon Kruse, founder, Huntsville West Coworking, Huntsville
- Rebekah Lathan, president, Lathan Legals, Birmingham
- Michael Stone, vice president, Porter White & Company, Birmingham

Thirty-two startups from across the state submitted applications to compete in this round of competition, and 25 met the criteria to be reviewed by the judges and considered to become semifinalists. Since its inception, Alabama Launchpad has invested \$4 million in companies that have created more than 500 jobs and gone on to raise \$50 million in follow-on funding.

**About the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA):** Now in its 26<sup>th</sup> year, the non-profit Partnership represents the private sector's contribution to economic development in Alabama. EDPA is supported by more than 60 partners from across the state and works to attract, retain and grow jobs in Alabama, while also encouraging innovation through its Alabama Launchpad program.

**About Alabama Launchpad:** Since 2006, Alabama Launchpad, a program of EDPA, has helped high growth companies start, stay and grow in Alabama while also supporting, advocating and recognizing entrepreneurship statewide. [www.alabamalaunchpad.com](http://www.alabamalaunchpad.com)

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