

For Immediate Release

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Six finalists chosen for Nov. 15 Alabama Launchpad Startup Competition

Birmingham, AL, Oct. 20 --- Six Alabama early-stage companies have been selected to compete on Nov. 15 in the finale for Alabama Launchpad, which is Alabama's largest seed fund for startups.

On Tuesday, judges chose the six companies from 12 semifinalists. The finale teams will compete along two tracks: concept stage for entrepreneurs launching businesses and seed stage businesses accelerating growth.

The finale will be held at Iron City, 513 22nd Street, South, Birmingham. Startups will get five minutes to pitch his or her business before a judging panel and an audience for top investments. Up for grabs is a \$50,000 cash prize for a concept winner, while the seed winner will receive a \$150,000 cash prize.

The finale event, which begins at 4 p.m., is a continuation of imerge, the state's annual celebration of innovation in Alabama. It is open to the public. Admission is \$10 to \$20. A panel discussion on how to start and fund your company also is a part of the finale, which also features food, networking, live music and entertainment. For more information on the event or to buy tickets, visit alabamalaunchpad.com.

Competing at the finale in 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.

Competing in the seed stage category 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.
- Sycamore Physician Contracting, based in Florence, is an online portal that matches physicians and facilities based on proposals physicians submit.

“We are extremely impressed with the startups that came to us from across the state,” said Greg Sheek, Alabama Launchpad programs director. “Through this two-month rigorous process, we are putting promising, innovative young startups on a trajectory toward success to create future jobs for the state.”

Alabama Launchpad, a program of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, is in its 11th year and helps young companies start, stay and grow in the state. It is a public-private partnership made possible through support from the state’s research universities, the Alabama Research Alliance and the Alabama Department of Commerce.

“The Alabama Launchpad competition plays a critical role in our shared goal of creating a thriving ecosystem of business startups that inject new levels of vitality and innovation into the state’s economy,” said Greg Canfield, secretary of the Alabama Department of Commerce. “We fully support Launchpad’s efforts to stimulate start-up activity, foster entrepreneurship, and spark job creation across the state.”

Since Alabama Launchpad’s inception, \$4 million has been invested in companies that have created more than 500 jobs and raised \$50 million in capital.

Alabama Launchpad uses a volunteer 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

About the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA): Now in its 26th 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

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