



STARTUPTN

RESOURCE NETWORK LAUNCHED

Anyone in Tennessee who wants to build, help, or work with startup businesses should join Startup Tennessee at www.StartupTN.com.

Startup Tennessee is a public-private partnership designed to connect and align entrepreneurial efforts across Tennessee. The program was launched in 2011 as part of Governor Haslam's effort to make Tennessee the number-one state in the Southeast in which to start and grow a company. Startup Tennessee was the second state in the nation to join the Startup America Partnership. The program operates as the first-ever, statewide regional accelerator, launching, linking and leveraging nine regional accelerators across the state.

Through the StartupTN.com website, the program equips startups and entrepreneurs with the resources they need to launch, grow, and raise capital for high-growth potential companies, with the goal of building businesses that create jobs for Tennessee. In October 2011, StartupTN was selected by the Startup America Partnership to host and train 15 other states on cultivating entrepreneurial ecosystems. Governor Haslam appointed Michael Burcham, serial entrepreneur and CEO of the Entrepreneur Center, to lead Startup Tennessee and entrepreneurship across the state.

"Our research tells us that a significant number of jobs in Tennessee come from people starting new companies. If we can create a system which helps entrepreneurs develop a sustainable business model and grow their company, we can make a significant impact on job growth in our state."

—ECD Commissioner Bill Hagerty

StartupTN.com connects entrepreneurs with training opportunities, mentors, and investors across the state who could potentially provide capital to early-stage companies. Startup

Tennessee will regularly convene business accelerators from across the state to share best practices and will provide entrepreneurs with access to free or low-cost resources from companies such as Hewlett-Packard, IBM, and Salesforce.com. These latter benefits are possible through Startup Tennessee's partnership with Startup America, a national public-private partnership focused on growing entrepreneurs across the nation.

ECD posted a request-for-information (RFI) on the agency's website in June 2011 to gather feedback on a number of questions including best practices in recruiting and training entrepreneurs, strategies for measuring the success of business accelerators, and strategies for helping business accelerators become financially self-sustaining over time.

Resource Network

Startup Tennessee has launched the Startup Tennessee Resource Network, a database to connect entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, and business partners throughout Tennessee. Entrepreneurs with access to resources and personal networks build businesses that create jobs.

The Startup Tennessee Resource Network connects entrepreneurs with the ECD regional accelerator for their county who can assist them with launching their business and connect them to the statewide resources that are in place to help startup companies launch and be successful. The network is the front door and entrepreneurs' first stop for all entrepreneurial activity in the state.

"By connecting Tennessee entrepreneurs, trained mentors, business partners that want to



STARTUP TENNESSEE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP CREATES JOBS

work with startup companies, and investors, the network can help drive entrepreneurial and new business growth throughout every region in Tennessee,” said Burcham. “By joining StartupTN.com, entrepreneurs get connected to the network, which allows us to connect them with the people and resources that are in place to help them succeed.”

Regional Contacts

Startup Tennessee helped each of the nine Tennessee ECD economic regions to launch a business accelerator and provide the technical support to connect entrepreneurs throughout the state. Both Startup Tennessee and these regional business accelerators are part of the Governor’s INCITE Initiative, a key component of the Governor’s Jobs4TN plan. The following regions have had successful launch sessions and designated a primary point of contact for its region.

- **Northern Middle Tennessee** - Nashville - Entrepreneur Center
- **East Tennessee** - Knoxville - ETRAC
- **Southeast Tennessee** - Chattanooga - Company Lab
- **Greater Memphis** Regional Accelerator
- **Southern Middle** - Tullahoma - SMTEC (Southern Middle Tennessee Entrepreneur Centers)

Nashville’s Entrepreneur Center

The Entrepreneur Center serves as a gateway that fuses training, relationships, and resources to cultivate economic development and drive Nashville’s future as the epicenter of entrepreneurial endeavors. The center opened its doors in August 2010 after recommendations from the

Nashville Chamber of Commerce. It has been successful as a partnership of local and state government support, private interests, and the middle Tennessee business community at large to raise the quality of resources available to the Nashville entrepreneurial and small business community. In 2011, it was named the North Middle Tennessee StartupTN Regional Accelerator for area entrepreneurs.

Resources to help middle Tennessee’s entrepreneur community include:

- accelerator space,
- training,
- networking,
- educational materials, and
- mentoring.

Startup America Partnership

The Startup America Partnership was launched at the White House in response to President Obama’s call to celebrate, inspire, and accelerate high-growth entrepreneurship throughout the nation. The partnership is bringing together an alliance of major corporations, funders, service providers, mentors, and advisors working to dramatically increase the prevalence and success of high-growth enterprises in the U.S.

AOL co-founder Steve Case chairs the partnership, and the Kauffman and Case Foundations are founding partners. American Express OPEN, Dell Inc., Intuit Inc., and Microsoft are sponsors. The partnership will identify, measure and report on the effectiveness of cross-sector collaboration in support of entrepreneurial ventures and its effect on job creation and growth. ■

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