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CO.LAB Opens Applications for Summer Startup Accelerators

12-week program seeks companies with next-gen internet apps and concepts in food, beverage and outdoors sectors

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (February 5, 2018) – Applications are now open for The Company Lab’s Summer 2018 startup accelerators. Entrepreneurs have until April 1 to apply for CO.LAB’s new Lifestyle & Consumer Goods Accelerator and its annual GIGTANK Accelerator, which focuses on next-gen internet applications.

Both programs will take place May 15 – July 31. The accelerators are designed for high-growth startups working to scale their companies through the pursuit of pilot partnerships, angel or venture capital, and new customers. Entrepreneurs can apply [here](#), and prospective mentors or corporate partners can get involved [here](#).

Established in 2012, GIGTANK is a boutique accelerator for startups developing applications that thrive on high-speed, low-latency networks. The program invites innovators from across the globe to leverage Chattanooga’s fiber optic network and 10 Gbps internet service to test and develop next-gen internet applications. Past participants have included entrepreneurs working with virtual reality, telemedicine, sensor networks and connected devices, artificial intelligence, big data and more.

Now, with the launch of CO.LAB’s new Lifestyle & Consumer Goods Accelerator, entrepreneurs will enjoy even more opportunities to draw on Chattanooga’s natural advantages.

“Chattanooga is home to a booming outdoor recreation scene and a thriving food and beverage production industry,” said Marcus Shaw, chief executive of CO.LAB. “CO.LAB offers entrepreneurs the ability develop ideas and products with support from a network of mentors involved in these exciting sectors. We believe Chattanooga’s recent growth reflects an opportune moment for companies looking to break into a ripe consumer market.”

Qualified candidates for the Lifestyle & Consumer Goods Accelerator must demonstrate a completed proof of concept. Prospects may include, but are not limited to, those working in the following areas: pre-packaged food and beverages; SAAS products designed for the retail space; outdoor/recreational equipment and apparel; e-commerce platforms; brewery, distillery and restaurant expansion concepts; and 3D printing applications for consumer products, as well as many other consumer goods-oriented spaces.

Entrepreneurs accepted into CO.LAB’s Lifestyle & Consumer Goods Accelerator will work alongside GIGTANK companies, sharing some mentors and resources while also working directly with industry-specific experts.

“As we deepen our understanding of how low-latency networks can transform business models, we are particularly interested in developing opportunities around connected devices, streaming video, artificial intelligence and big data applications,” said Shaw. “We are also excited about other uses for our advanced

network, particularly those related to e-gaming, augmented reality and virtual reality. The TenGIG Festival held in Chattanooga last year, for instance, has already begun illustrating the value of a best-in-class network to the \$12 billion U.S. gaming industry.”

To qualify for participation in GIGTANK, entrepreneurs must have a minimum viable product and a technical lead on their team.

Some housing will be intermittently available to summer program participants, courtesy of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Entrepreneurs will also enjoy access to free workspace and web services, such as HubSpot for Startups, SendGrid, Amazon Web Services and Zendesk. The program will culminate with a Demo Night, where entrepreneurs will pitch their companies to an audience of potential investors, corporate partners, media and members of the public.

To learn more about CO.LAB’s GIGTANK Accelerator and Lifestyle & Consumer Goods Accelerator, [click here](#).

About The Company Lab (CO.LAB)

The Company Lab (CO.LAB) is a nonprofit organization that supports entrepreneurial growth in southeast Tennessee. Established as the region’s front door for entrepreneurs, CO.LAB works to increase the viability of startups and strengthen the ecosystem of support behind them. In doing so, the organization helps entrepreneurs refine their business models, test their ideas with customers, pursue capital and partnerships, and connect with a community of mentors, peers, and business experts. To learn more, visit colab.co.

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