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GIGTANK 2015 Now Seeking Applicants

Annual startup accelerator returns focus to gigabit origins

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (February 5, 2015) – Applications are now open for [GIGTANK 2015](#), an annual startup accelerator that invites entrepreneurs to develop ultra high-bandwidth business applications on Chattanooga’s fiber optic network.

Hosted by [The Company Lab \(CO.LAB\)](#), the program will take place May 4 – Aug. 15 at the organization’s new home in the Chattanooga Innovation Center. Participants will receive free housing on campus at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) from May 25 to July 31.

Applications are due March 31. CO.LAB is also seeking corporate partners and mentors to support GIGTANK 2015. To submit a startup application or express interest in being involved, [click here](#).

GIGTANK began in 2012 as part think tank, part startup accelerator. Launched in partnership with Lamp Post Group, the program challenged innovators in entrepreneurship and academia to answer the question, “If you had the world’s fastest Internet, what would you do with it?” Now an annual production of CO.LAB, GIGTANK 2015 will refocus on the question that inspired its creation.

“Back in 2012, we couldn’t predict whether ultra high-speed Internet would be widely available across the U.S.,” said Mike Bradshaw, executive director of CO.LAB. “Today, however, gigabit communities are becoming a reality. As Google Fiber and other Internet service providers stake out their opening positions in this market, the demand for high-speed Internet is rapidly growing. Startups are now better positioned than ever to begin developing high-bandwidth business models.”

Most gigabit-related startups will require the assistance of at-scale service providers to deliver on the promise of unlimited bandwidth. Thanks to Chattanooga’s sophisticated broadband infrastructure, a number of key corporate and organizational partners have already committed their support to the startups of GIGTANK 2015. Those entities include Alcatel-Lucent, Verizon Wireless, HomeServe USA, UPS Connect, US Ignite and Mozilla.

“More and more large companies are seeing the value of advanced communications networks,” said Alex Lavidge, director of GIGTANK 2015. “Chattanooga offers the nation’s only fully-functional metro-wide gigabit Internet service, as well as the largest footprint of ultra high-speed broadband subscribers. GIGTANK 2015 will provide these corporations with an access point into the ‘living laboratory’ our startups will utilize.”

Throughout the 12-week program, corporate partners will offer participants mentorship, industry knowledge, market access and technical expertise.

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To be eligible for participation in GIGTANK 2015, startup teams must meet a challenging set of criteria. Strong preference will be given to applicants who place ultra high-speed, low-latency networking at the core of their business models. Qualified candidates may include those with businesses focused on connected devices, telepresence, urban analytics, 21st century learning and other [broadband-driven applications](#).

The 2015 program will also include slots for two 3D printing startups focused on distributed manufacturing. These companies will work closely with [Reality AM](#), a 3D printing consultancy that grew out of GIGTANK 2014.

GIGTANK is made possible with support from [EPB](#). As the world's only startup accelerator connected to a metro-wide fiber optic network, the program is designed to connect seed stage startups with the tools, capital and connections to go to market. GIGTANK culminates with a nationally-promoted Demo Day, where participants present their progress to a strategic audience of investors, media and potential partners.

To learn more, visit www.thegigtank.com.

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