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Media Contact // [Tia Capps](#), 423.618.5073

Applications Open for Eighth Annual ‘Will This Float?’ Competition

Business pitch competition to award \$1,000 and ticket to SXSW for best idea

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (September 19, 2017) – The Company Lab (CO.LAB) is currently seeking applications for its eighth annual ‘Will This Float?’ competition, which showcases up-and-coming startup ideas in southeast Tennessee. Prospective participants must submit their business concepts by Oct. 3 to enter into consideration.

The competition will take place Oct. 16 from 6—9 p.m. at River Place. Tickets cost \$5 in advance or \$7 at the door. [Click here](#) to register for a free media pass.

The 2017 edition of ‘Will This Float?’ will highlight new, high growth potential business concepts in a variety of industries. Entrepreneurs working in all fields and focus areas are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to novel, early-stage ideas that have the potential to grow into highly-successful companies. Submissions will be narrowed to a maximum of eight finalists that best meet a set of [five assessment criteria](#). Cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$500 and \$250 will be awarded to three winners at the culmination of the competition.

“Over the years, some of Chattanooga’s most promising entrepreneurs have debuted their companies at Will This Float,” said Marcus Shaw, chief executive of CO.LAB. “Startups like Variable, Inc., Bellhops and RootsRated pitched their early-stage ideas at this competition, so we’re looking forward to seeing which up-and-coming companies step out into the spotlight this time around.”

Established in 2010, ‘Will This Float?’ is an annual business pitch competition that celebrates the spirit of entrepreneurship in southeast Tennessee. Participants each get three minutes to pitch their startup idea before a panel of judges and an audience of local startup leaders, general attendees and potential mentors and business partners. Once all the presentations are complete, the judges will deliberate backstage. At the end of the evening, CO.LAB will announce first and second place winners. The top honoree will receive a cash prize of **\$1,000** and an **Interactive Pass to SXSW**, the first runner up will receive **\$500** and the recipient of the most audience votes will receive **\$250**. The first and second place winners will also receive a package of free business services to continue developing their ideas. Those packages include:

- 10 hours of legal services from Chambliss Startup Group or Miller & Martin
- 10 hours of accounting services from Henderson, Hutcherson & McCullough
- Three months of access to co-working space at Society of Work
- A spot in the CO.LAB Accelerator, GIGTANK Accelerator, CO.STARTERS program or Roadmap program

Over the last seven years, ‘Will This Float?’ has showcased approximately 67 entrepreneurs who have raised more than \$42 million in combined capital. The event attracts an average of 250 attendees annually, making it one of the most prominent business pitch competitions in the region. A number of notable entrepreneurial successes have grown out of Will This Float?, including SupplyHog, NODE (Variable, Inc.), RootsRated,

Chattanooga Sports Leagues, Granola and Innovasan. [Click here](#) to learn more about ‘Will This Float?’ or to submit an application. To register as a general attendee, [click here](#). A recap of last year’s event is available [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. Visit colab.co to learn more.

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