



## Ventureprise Charlotte Launch NC IDEA Spring 2017 Cohort

### **Accelerator Overview:**

Ventureprise, Inc. was awarded an NC IDEA ecosystem grant to bring the Ventureprise Charlotte Launch program to early-stage, innovation-driven entrepreneurs in metro Charlotte. The program is based on the National Science Foundation's I-Corps curriculum developed out of Stanford. Ventureprise is one of 51 universities across the country selected and trained to offer the curriculum. Currently, 30 innovation teams a year from UNC Charlotte, North Carolina Research Campus, Davidson College, Queens University and Johnson C. Smith University are able to participate. Now thanks to NC IDEA support this FREE program is open to Charlotte metro community entrepreneurs!

Proposed ideas and technologies must involve a technological, business model or business process innovation. This may include but is not limited to proposed ventures related to physical sciences, life sciences, software, informatics, energy, financial services and many others.

**Accelerator Culture:** Ventureprise Charlotte Launch is designed to get right the most critical phase of commercializing an innovation – the opportunity assessment - through customer discovery.

Successful participants and teams are agile. They don't show up to defend and prove out their innovation; they participate so they will emerge with a business model that works and provides the best opportunity to accelerate the commercialization of their innovation and be successful. Successful participants are willing to scrap everything and begin again when the customer discovery process fails to prove out the business model. This is often called a "Pivot".

Ventureprise Charlotte Launch is best described as a boot-camp for innovators and is designed to challenge you at every turn. The teaching team delivers direct dialogue, direct feedback, all designed to accelerate this process. The teaching team and industry mentors are experienced, they have been in your shoes and they realize how difficult this initial phase of a startup is to move an innovation to market.

Each team will be made of at least two Entrepreneurial Leads and will be supported by mentors while in the program. Through a 10-week cohort program, participants will make new

connections and develop an understanding of evidence-based entrepreneurship. Importantly, they will engage directly with potential customers and others to gain the understanding needed to make a go/no-go decision concerning the next step to advance their business innovation.

**Goals** – Ventureprise Launch will directly strengthen innovation-driven enterprise formation in metro Charlotte.

- By leading teams through a customer discovery process
- By teaching teams commercialization and entrepreneurship concepts
- By assisting teams to move toward a Go/No Go decision

The intermediate objective is to increase NC IDEA winners, Charlotte Venture Challenge winners, SBIR/STTR grant winners and angel investor recipients from Charlotte.

**Program Schedule:** Participants in the program will complete weekly activities and should expect to spend 2+ hours a week conducting customer interviews. The selection process is competitive and the program is free.

<i>Tentative Schedule:</i>	<b>Lean Launchpad Curriculum and Customer Discovery</b>	<b>Milestones Completed</b>
Week 1 (Feb. 15) 6pm - 9:00pm	All Afternoon – In-Person Kickoff Meeting	Customer Interview Introduction
Week 2 (Feb. 22 ) 6pm-9pm	Value Proposition and Customer Segment Canvas – Team Customer Interview Updates	5 – 7 Customer Interviews
Week 3 (Mar. 1-3)	Office hours In-person or phone	9-12 Customer Interviews
Week 4 (Mar. 8-10)	Office hours In-person or phone	15-18 Customer Interviews
Week 5 (Mar. 15) 6pm-9pm	Customer Interview Presentations – All Teams	19-21 Customer Interviews
Week 6 (Mar. 22-23)	Office hours In-person or phone	22-25 Customer Interviews
Week 7 (Mar. 29) – 6:30pm-9pm	Customer Interview Presentations - MVP, Market Size, & Telling Your Story for Final Presentations	27-30 Customer Interviews
Week 8 (April. 6) –	Charlotte Venture Challenge Customer Discovery Day Final Presentations	30+ Customer Interviews

**\*Charlotte Venture Challenge Customer Discovery Day:** The final event will include VCL final presentations from NSF I-Corps and NC IDEA participants followed by mentor sessions with industry relevant entrepreneurs, corporate customers and investors. We will hold three of these days a year rather than the traditional one big Spring Charlotte Venture Challenge event.

Applications Deadline Rolling based on availability  
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