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**ADVISORY**

# Kansas City Business Accelerator Targets Early-Stage Startups

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**SparkLabKC** will support early-stage Internet startups using a proven business accelerator program adapted to the Kansas City region. The program also builds on public-private partnerships and the strengths of the region's vast entrepreneurial community.

“Our accelerator solves the two fundamental problems for early-stage startup companies—the experience gap and the capital gap,” said Kevin Fryer, SparkLabKC managing director and Kansas City entrepreneur. “We provide a deep pool of mentors who are seasoned entrepreneurs as well as seed capital and access to investors. Startups that have been through this kind of program have a superior track record of generating new companies, new jobs and achieving a significant impact in their communities.”

SparkLabKC will select 10 early-stage Internet startup companies from across the region each year for a 90-day accelerator program that provides:

Seed capital of up to \$18,000  
More than 80 mentors with deep experience across virtually every industry  
Free workspace  
Legal, accounting, financial and human resources advisory services  
A formal prototype demonstration day for potential investors

The program will focus on early-stage Internet startups working in industries that are driving the Kansas City regional economy such as telecommunications, engineering, health care, agriculture and energy.

“I have seen this approach generate some remarkable startup companies including Dropbox and Airbnb,” said Evan Conway president of OneLouder, a mobile app developer and SparkLabKC sponsor. “As an entrepreneur in the Internet space, I genuinely wish the many startups I have known could have had this advantage. This is a good day for startup companies in Kansas City.”

SparkLabKC’s mentors, sponsors and partners come from the public and private sectors, and provide the depth of resources, experience and knowledge needed to help startups on their path to success.

SparkLabKC sponsors and partners include: Polsinelli Shughart Meara. Welch. Browne. Mid-America Angels Missouri Bank OneLouder HR On-Call Solutions MRIGlobal University of Missouri-Kansas City Innovation Center University of Kansas Center for Technology Commercialization University of Missouri

“Like many Kansas City corporations, MRIGlobal cultivates and celebrates an innovative spirit,” said Thomas M. Sack, Ph.D., senior vice president and director, Technical Operations, MRIGlobal. “We believe our organization and the Kansas City region will be enriched by associating with these promising technology startups and supporting their development.”

SparkLabKC is also intent on supporting and enhancing the region’s reputation as one of the fastest growing startup cities in the world (source: StartupDigest.com). Graduating SparkLabKC companies will be well equipped as they move into the market for the first time to benefit from organizations such as the Kauffman Foundation, the Helzberg Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program and the region’s many private and university programs.

“We are pleased to partner with SparkLabKC to accelerate the success of early-stage businesses through a proven accelerator model,” said Maria Meyers, Director KCSOURCELINK at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Innovation Center. “It’s good to see another strong group has stepped forward to help make Kansas City America’s most entrepreneurial city by providing both funding and support to young companies.”

### How the Program Works:

SparkLabKC will take applications at [www.SparkLabKC.com](http://www.SparkLabKC.com) from Feb.1 through March 31 and will select 10 companies and the accelerator program will begin May 29.

Month one is heavy mentoring to help refine business and product strategy. Month two is product focused with work on prototype development. Month three focuses on refining the prototype pitch for Demo Day. Aug. 23 is Demo Day when each company presents its prototype product to Angel investors and venture capitalists.

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