

# KENTUCKY STARTUP PIPELINE



## ENTRY POINTS



## PRE-SEED FUNDING



## ACCELERATE AND SCALE



## SEED CAPITAL



## TECH RESOURCES



## VENTURE CAPITAL



## CELEBRATED SUCCESS



# KENTUCKY STARTUP SUPPORTERS

## 5 Across Entrepreneur Pitch Competition

[5across.org](http://5across.org)

Bi-monthly startup pitch competition for entrepreneurs.

## Airwing Ventures

[airwing.vc](http://airwing.vc)

Airwing Ventures provides determined entrepreneurs, seeking resources to grow, with the capital and connections to build successful companies and impactful legacies.

## Amplify Louisville

[amplifylouisville.com](http://amplifylouisville.com)

Amplify Louisville is a place for tech-enabled startups and founders to explore ideas, build solutions, launch products, and grow businesses.

## Aviara Accelerators

[aviaraaccelerators.org](http://aviaraaccelerators.org)

Aviara Accelerators enable women to start and sustain businesses by giving them the resources they need to be successful.

## Awesome Fellowship Lexington

[fellowship.awesomeinc.org](http://fellowship.awesomeinc.org)

Mentor-driven program designed to accelerate high tech startups; provides mentorship and a variety of tech talent for up to 1 year.

## Awesome Fund

The Awesome Fund exists to invest in high potential startups from Kentucky and the Midwest.

## Awesome Inc

[awesomeinc.org](http://awesomeinc.org)

Exists to create and grow high tech startups by hosting community events, leading technology education courses and offering a shared workspace environment.

## Awesome Inc U Lexington

[awesomeinc.org/learn](http://awesomeinc.org/learn)

Coding school designed to help people learn how to create software (websites, mobile apps, or video games) through hands-on, in-person classes, online classes, office hours memberships, and on-site training.

## Base Here (4 KY locations)

[basehere.com](http://basehere.com)

They are entrepreneurs, creatives, techies, startup founders, side hustlers, remote workers and everything in between. Check out thier member and non-member offerings for coworking, offices and event space.

## Blue North

[bluenorthky.com](http://bluenorthky.com)

Blue North serves as the ,Äüthread,Äü for the Northern Kentucky regional ecosystem by building a close-knit community that provides entrepreneurs with outsized connectivity to mission-critical resources and reduced barriers to opportunity.

## Bluegrass Angels

[bluegrassangels.com](http://bluegrassangels.com)

Organization of local angel investors interested in fostering the growth of start-up businesses in Kentucky by investing time, knowledge and money into new, cutting edge, startup companies.

## Chef Space

[chefspace.org](http://chefspace.org)

Chef Space is a food business accelerator located in Louisville,Äôs West End that provides commercial kitchen space and business training for entrepreneurs to start food,Äêrelated ventures.

## Cherub Fund

[cherubfund.org](http://cherubfund.org)

Provides small amounts of funding to early stage startups; comprised of entrepreneurs, angel investors and supporters of entrepreneurs.

## Chrysalis Ventures

[chrysalisventures.com](http://chrysalisventures.com)

Manages one of Mid-America,Äôs largest funds for early-stage investments with approx. \$400 mil under management, partnering with entrepreneurs primarily in the Healthcare and Technology sectors.

## Co.Starters

[costarters.co](http://costarters.co)

CO.STARTERS is an invaluable cornerstone of our work with aspiring and early stage entrepreneurs, helping us to turn local talent and dedication into new businesses.

## Code Kentucky

[codekentucky.org](http://codekentucky.org)

Code Kentucky is a state-funded workforce program that prepares residents of northern and eastern Kentucky ages 18+ for a quality career in the technology field.

## Code Louisville

[codelouisville.org](http://codelouisville.org)

Collaboration of employers who want Louisville to be a place of technological innovation; offers free 12-week coding courses & resources to connect developers to employers.

## Commerce Lexington

[commercelexington.com](http://commercelexington.com)

Commerce Lexington,Äôs goal is to represent our members, creating the environment and opportunity for economic prosperity and quality living in Central Kentucky.

## Commonwealth Seed Capital Kentucky

[ced.ky.gov/Entrepreneurship/Commonwealth\\_Seed](http://ced.ky.gov/Entrepreneurship/Commonwealth_Seed)

The Commonwealth Seed Capital Fund is an independent fund that invests in early-stage Kentucky businesses to facilitate the commercialization of innovative ideas and technologies.

## Community Foundation of Louisville

[cflouisville.org](http://cflouisville.org)

The Community Foundation of Louisville brings together individual donors, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and civic partners to transform our community through charitable giving.

<p><b>Connetic Ventures Covington</b></p> <p><i>conneticventures.com</i></p>	<p>Connetic is an early-stage VC firm that leverages AI &amp; data to change how startups are evaluated and funded.</p>	<p><b>Create (Central Region Ecosystem for Arts, Technology, and Entrepreneurship)</b></p> <p><i>centralregionicc.com</i></p>	<p>The Innovation and Commercialization Center,Âs mission is to facilitate the creation, growth, recruitment and retention of scalable companies in Kentucky. Offices are located in Bowling Green, KY and Elizabethtown, KY.</p>
<p><b>eGateway Capital</b></p> <p><i>egatewaycapital.com</i></p>	<p>eGateway Capital investment and advisory partners enabling entrepreneurs to shape the future of digital commerce.</p>	<p><b>Endeavor</b></p> <p><i>endeavor.org</i></p>	<p>Endeavor selects, mentors, and supports high-growth entrepreneurs in 37 countries and 8 U.S. markets, driving job creation, wealth creation, &amp; inspiration into underserved, growth markets globally. Our office supports Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio entrepreneurs.</p>
<p><b>Endeavor Scale up</b></p> <p><i>endeavor.org/ireland/scaleup</i></p>	<p>Endeavor Scale up works by connecting ambitious women with high-calibre global mentors, we aim to provide a series of personalised and strategic mentorship calls that are tailored to guide the entrepreneurs through their specific challenges.</p>	<p><b>Entrepreneurs Bootcamp 1.0 &amp; 2.0</b></p> <p><i>vace.uky.edu/bootcamp/overview</i></p>	<p>The University of Kentucky welcomes you to Entrepreneurs Bootcamp: a program for creative and collaborative entrepreneurial learning, growth, and innovation.</p>
<p><b>Governor,Âs School For Entrepreneurs</b></p> <p><i>kentuckygse.com</i></p>	<p>The Governor's School for Entrepreneurs (GSE) identifies and enables Kentucky high school students to become our Commonwealth's next generation of entrepreneurs.</p>	<p><b>GroWest</b></p> <p><i>kyinnovation.com/hubs-growest</i></p>	<p>GroWest is a coalition of communities committed to growing the digital economy in Western Kentucky. The coalition provides a variety of entrepreneurial services and programs, from early idea stage pre-accelerators to mid-stage startup recruitment and seed funding.</p>
<p><b>Incubator Kitchen Collective</b></p> <p><i>incubatorkitchencollective.org</i></p>	<p>The Incubator Kitchen Collective is a community-driven support system that combines resources, knowledge, and experience to help local food entrepreneurs succeed. They provide education, promote food access, and offer support to our kitchen members and to the community around us.</p>	<p><b>Interapt</b></p> <p><i>interapt.com</i></p>	<p>Interapt is dedicated to solving tech talent challenges and accelerating growth. They do this by working with organizations to develop innovative technology solutions built by top-performing and diverse teams.</p>
<p><b>Invest 606</b></p> <p><i>invest606.org</i></p>	<p>Invest 606 is a non-profit with a mission to catalyze business growth in the 606 by connecting entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed today and grow tomorrow.</p>	<p><b>Kentucky Seed Capital Fund</b></p> <p><i>kyseedcapital.com</i></p>	<p>Invests in early-stage Kentucky or Louisville metropolitan-based businesses that specialize in biomedical and health care services, medical device development, and health care information technology.</p>
<p><b>Keyhorse Capital</b></p> <p><i>keyhorse.vc</i></p>	<p>Keyhorse Capital is a seed-stage venture capital firm supporting a thriving community of Kentucky-based entrepreneurs willing to build and grow innovative companies.</p>	<p><b>KSTC Kentucky</b></p> <p><i>startups.kstc.com</i></p>	<p>Provides pre-seed and seed-stage funding and other resources to Kentucky-based companies with the goal of building successful technology-related companies in KY.</p>
<p><b>KY Angel Investors</b></p> <p><i>kyangels.net</i></p>	<p>Brings new ventures and investors together across KY. Monthly online meetings provide investors access to early-stage deal flow on a statewide basis. Access to investors with a passion for investing in Kentucky's companies of tomorrow.</p>	<p><b>KY Innovation Network</b></p> <p><i>kyinnovation.com</i></p>	<p>Creates a network of business leaders and mentors to grow companies through the thirteen offices throughout Kentucky.</p>
<p><b>KY Pitch</b></p> <p><i>kypitch.com</i></p>	<p>The KY Pitch competition is designed to inspire our innovators and entrepreneurs by providing an inclusive platform for our future leaders to develop and pursue their ideas. Students from Kentucky,Âs post-secondary colleges and universities are given an opportunity to pitch their business or idea stage concept to a large audience composed of investors, community leaders, and the public.</p>	<p><b>Launch Blue</b></p> <p><i>launchblue.org</i></p>	<p>Launch Blue,Âs mission is to support promising technology startup founders and university innovators in Kentucky and beyond.</p>
<p><b>LaunchIT</b></p> <p><i>launchitcorp.com</i></p>	<p>LaunchIT is a leading provider of next generation software and technology services. They identify, plan, develop, and deploy technology initiatives and solutions that help clients reach their goals!</p>	<p><b>Lincoln Trail Venture Group</b></p> <p><i>lincolntrailventure.myblogginstead.com</i></p>	<p>The Lincoln Trail Venture Group is a diverse group of central Kentucky citizens interested in angel investing for early stage development or start-up companies.</p>

<b>Louisville Institute of Technology</b> <i>louisvilleit.org</i>	The Louisville Institute of Technology,Âs mission is to prepare students and apprentices, through intense, immersive practical training, so that they may qualify for and attain employment in high-demand Information Technology technical fields and professions.	<b>Lunsford Capital</b> <i>lunsfordcapital.com</i>	Lunsford Capital,Âs mission is to invest in individuals with great ideas. In addition, Mr. Lunsford believes in providing leadership as companies make their journey to success.
<b>Marshall Ventures</b> <i>marshallventures.com</i>	Marshall Ventures is based in Owensboro KY. We have access to a variety of resources from a wide range of industries and markets through our established contacts all across the state of Kentucky and beyond.	<b>Narwhal Ventures</b> <i>gonarwhalventures.com</i>	Narwhal Ventures is located in Louisville. Narwhal and their sister fund, Sixth Event, focus on Reimagining Spaces & Growing Things; Distributed Work & Democratized Education; Decentralized Technology & the Ownership Economy.
<b>Poplar Ventures</b> <i>poplarventures.com</i>	Poplar Ventures is a venture capital firm investing in early growth stage companies delivering recurring revenue cloud-based software services. Poplar supports its portfolio companies by leveraging the proven operating experience of its team and advisors.	<b>Render Capital</b> <i>render.capital</i>	Render Capital,Âs mission is to establish the greater Louisville region as a national leader in innovation, entrepreneurship and creative capital essential for our collective success.
<b>RSLP</b> <i>rslpventures.com</i>	RSLP invests in founders and funders with audacious ideas.	<b>RTBI</b> <i>louisvillessmallbusiness.com/main-blog/2022/3/1/russell-technology-business-incubator</i>	The Russell Technology Business Incubator (RTBI) is the first business incubator for black entrepreneurs in West Louisville.
<b>SBDC (13 KY Locations)</b> <i>ksbdc.org</i>	Grows Kentucky,Âs economy by cultivating existing companies, nurturing new ventures, fostering the creation of jobs and increasing business profitability. Offers business planning, consulting, training, and resources.	<b>Scalable Ventures</b> <i>scalable-ventures.com</i>	Scalable Ventures helps companies navigate through the challenges of achieving product-market fit, growth strategies and avoiding the common pitfalls that most first-time founders experience while building their early-stage ventures.
<b>Sheltowee Business Network</b> <i>sheltowee.com</i>	Their mission is to build value for investors and entrepreneurs by investing in innovative companies that can make this world a better place	<b>Small Business Innovation Research National</b> <i>sbir.gov</i>	Encourages Federal Research/Research and Development (R/R&D) that has the potential for commercialization. The Cabinet will match awards received by Kentucky high-tech small businesses and those willing to become Kentucky-based businesses.
<b>SOAR</b> <i>soar-ky.org</i>	Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) is a regional nonpartisan nonprofit that champions local projects, programs, and advocacy for the 54 ARC-mandated counties in Eastern Kentucky. Our mandate: To fill the economic gaps left by the decline of the coal industry. Our task: To rally our communities to help us achieve these goals together for the good of all.	<b>Sprocket</b> <i>sprocketpaducah.com</i>	Sprocket has a mission to turn innovative ideas into great companies by creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Paducah that supports talent, tech enabled companies, and venture capitalists.
<b>Startup Grind</b> <i>startupgrind.com</i>	Their mission is to give startups everywhere the education and opportunities they need to build, grow, and scale their companies.	<b>Startup Lexington</b> <i>startuplexington.org</i>	Startup Lex is an entrepreneur focused community made for encouraging growth, education, and giving first. We're non-profit lead and here to help you immerse yourself, and your business, into the Central Kentucky scene.
<b>Startup Louisville</b> <i>startuplouisville.com</i>	Startup Louisville is the hub for startups and high-growth companies in the greater Louisville area. Their goal is to be the first stop for anyone interested in connecting with the startup community.	<b>Startup Weekend Lexington &amp; Louisville</b> <i>startupweekend.org</i>	54-hour events where developers, designers, marketers, product managers and startup enthusiasts come together to share ideas, form teams, build products, and launch startups.
<b>Strike Ventures</b> <i>strike.ventures</i>	Strike focuses on investing in strong coachable teams with technology-driven business models; demonstrable traction ,Âi usually \$1M+ in revenue; and structures that allow ,Âwin-win,Â opportunities for everyone involved.	<b>TEKY Eastern Kentucky</b> <i>interapt.com/teky</i>	A paid training and hiring program that covers the latest programming languages and technologies being used to develop cutting-edge mobile and wearable solutions.

### Thornton Capital

Located in Louisville, Kentucky, focused on long-term, growth investments in real estate, venture capital and private equity.

[thorntoncapital.com](http://thorntoncapital.com)

### Unbridled Ventures

Unbridled Ventures fund consists of accomplished angel investors who provide funding and expertise to help entrepreneurs fulfill their American dream.

[thinkkentucky.com/entrepreneurship/funding](http://thinkkentucky.com/entrepreneurship/funding)

### Wild Duck Investments

Invests time, energy and money into people and their ideas that help the community and make Kentucky and our world a better place to live in.

[wildduckinvestments.com](http://wildduckinvestments.com)

### UK OTC

The University of Kentucky's Office of Technology Commercialization's mission is to advance innovation that makes a difference.

[research.uky.edu/office-technology-commercialization](http://research.uky.edu/office-technology-commercialization)

### Venture Connectors

Venture Connectors is an incorporated, not-for-profit organization. It was originally formed in 1995 to bring entrepreneurs and investors together in a professional but relaxed forum.

[ventureconnectors.org](http://ventureconnectors.org)

### Xlerate Health

13-week training course that connects startups to mentors and leading health and wellness companies and offers a \$20,000 stipend for 6% equity stake.

[xleratehealth.com](http://xleratehealth.com)