



# Entrepreneurs Bootcamp Handbook



Von Allmen Center for Entrepreneurship  
Gatton College of Business and Economics  
[vace.uky.edu](http://vace.uky.edu)



### Overview

The Entrepreneurs Bootcamp program is designed to provide an opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience in the entrepreneurial process. With a schedule of programs created to foster collaboration among UK students, faculty, staff, clinicians, postdocs, and community mentors/entrepreneurs, the Entrepreneurs Bootcamp is open to those interested in an immersive learning environment. Bootcamp is operated and organized by Gatton's Von Allmen Center for Entrepreneurship (VACE). This booklet provides general guidance on matters related to the Entrepreneurs Bootcamp. For all topics not covered in the booklet, please refer to the website for additional information: [www.vace.uky.edu](http://www.vace.uky.edu)

### Section 1: Admission & Online Application

Because of Bootcamp's demanding time commitment outside of regular classes, freshmen typically won't be admitted into the program. The Entrepreneurs Bootcamp is open to most students from any college (undergraduate, graduate, PhD), and community members. Bootcamp focuses on forming cross-discipline teams working on real world projects based on ideas from students, faculty research, clinicians, or business concepts from community entrepreneurs. Bootcamp begins in the Fall semester. All interested applicants must apply online and be pre-screened. International students may participate in Bootcamp. International students seeking to form a startup in the United States should be aware that Visa/Citizenship status may affect their ability to start a company in the U.S. However, this status does NOT affect their ability to participate in the program, or join as a team member.



## Section 2: No Class Credit

The Von Allmen Center for Entrepreneurship does not offer Bootcamp for class credit. Bootcamp is an experiential & practical learning program activity outside of students' primary course curricula and graduation requirements. It is the responsibility of students & faculty to work internally with their departments (Dean's office, staff, etc.) to offer the Bootcamp program for class credit. The Von Allmen Center does not grade students, nor is it responsible for enforcing Bootcamp participation if class credit is offered by participants' departments. Faculty members are responsible for contacting their students for any progress updates within Bootcamp, excused absences, or any related graduation requirements. Materials and resources are provided by VACE for all Bootcamp participants. A "one-time" observation is allowed, however, individuals **MUST** commit to joining a team after observing the Bootcamp session in order to participate further in the program.

## Section 3: Schedule, Weekly Sessions, and Milestones

Bootcamp meets once a week (except as noted on the online schedule) during the Fall semester, and is divided into 1-2 hour sessions tailored to the entrepreneurial learning experience. Many sessions include guest speakers specializing in the weekly topic. Topics may include, but aren't limited to: (1) developing your business model or plan, (2) customer validation (3) creating your pitch, (4) how to build your prototype and/or early stage program, (5) go-to-market strategy, (6) intellectual property strategies, (7) other commercialization strategies, (8) the value of networking, etc. Throughout the program, teams **will be required to meet specific milestones**, such as developing written executive summaries, presenting at various sessions,



delivering their final pitch at the Venture Challenge Finale, and attending the Bootcamp Graduation. Written executive summaries will also count towards each team's final scores of the Bootcamp Finale.

### **Section 4: Projects**

Projects are collected from a variety of sources – UK research, student ideas, or community entrepreneurs. Projects can range from Smart Device Apps, Consumer Products, Medical devices, Agricultural technologies, Software/services, Video Games, etc.

### **Section 5: Team Composition**

Teams are constructed based on interest, skill level, degree major, and commitment to completing the program. Teams must be diversely composed to mirror real world expectations of an investor pitch and how a real company team structure would be divided – i.e. technical expert, financial analyst, business advisor, marketing representative, software expertise, legal development, faculty member, etc. Teams cannot be composed specifically of one discipline and should have a minimum of 2-3 members for balance.

### **Section 6: Team Dynamics & Attendance**

Working in a team can be fun, challenging, and rewarding. The Von Allmen Center coaching staff observes team dynamics, and if it is evident that team members are not committed, individual team involvement will be addressed. Lack of participation and poor performance reviews within a team can result in removal of a team member from the program. Team members are also responsible for addressing any concerns with their teammates and seeking resolution. If a team member drops out of Bootcamp, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter the program, receive any competition prize money if awarded, and will relinquish any



rights, if any, to all intellectual property (unless other agreements are made within the team).

## Section 7: Mentors

Bootcamp students gain access to a vast array of Kentucky mentors including, but not limited to: Angel Investors, Community Business Owners, Legal Counseling, FDA Regulatory Experts, Mobile App and Gaming Developers, Engineering & Technical Researchers, 3D Printing & Modeling advisors, Sales and Marketing Experts, Financial advisors, and Medical & Pharmaceutical researchers. For privacy reasons, initial contact with mentors must go through the VACE coaching staff.

## Section 8: Awards & Competitions

All Bootcamp teams have an opportunity to access up to \$500 in awards for idea development. Teams must provide a written budget of expenses that must be approved through the Von Allmen Center coaching staff. Team members **MUST** keep all receipts for reimbursement – no exceptions will be made and all vendors must be approved through UK. This process takes time and communication is key to receiving reimbursement. Expenses beyond the \$500 award must be paid by the team, and will not be reimbursed by VACE. **Any funds distributed to University of Kentucky students, staff, or faculty members will go into either a student account and/or the university's payroll system.**

## Section 9: Signing NDA's & Disclosing Intellectual Property – Bootcamp Participant Responsibility

All participants in Bootcamp will be required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). This is to protect all information



being disclosed in the program. It is highly recommended that each student team with a UK employee originated project idea contact the University of Kentucky's Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC). If you have questions regarding intellectual property, or lack thereof, its best to make an appointment with the Von Allmen Center staff to review any questions or concerns. Projects originated by UK employees must be given acknowledgment in all (1) student team presentations, and (2) written business plans/proposals. UK employees are responsible to fully disclose any intellectual property to the university if/when appropriate. As stated under Section 6, if a team member drops out of Bootcamp, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter the program, receive any competition prize money if awarded, and will relinquish any rights, if any, to all intellectual property (unless other agreements are made within the team). Absent an agreement with the original idea owner (i.e. inventor or project originator), participants gain no rights to any intellectual property / equity / company filings / ownership.

### **Section 10: Tracks**

Bootcamp may have multiple business track options for various business models: for-profit, ongoing company, and ongoing Bootcamp teams. Depending on the team's needs, Bootcamp projects can fit into any of these tracks.

### **Section 11: Business Plan Competitions & Prize Money**

Bootcamp teams will compete in the Bootcamp finale at the end of the Fall semester, and continuing/qualifying teams will participate in business plan competitions in the Spring semester. Competitions are an optional track for Bootcamp teams, but are highly encouraged if the team/project is eligible.



The competition circuit is fun, collaborative, and offers many opportunities for teams to meet others working on interesting projects from across Kentucky. In most instances, prize money awarded goes back to the team and is usually split equally between members (this is often up to the team). Note the distribution of funds as indicated in Section 8 of the handbook. A percentage of prize money may be deferred to The Von Allmen Center & Venture Studio, depending on total team awards. Note, that competitions have specific team composition requirements that must be met. Teams composed primarily of community entrepreneurs may not be eligible for these types of competitions, but other pitch opportunities will be available.

## **Section 12: Venture Challenge Finale & Graduation**

All participants in Bootcamp are required to pitch at the Bootcamp Finale, which is typically held at the end of the fall semester. Teams that are “no-show’s” or drop out of the program prior to the finale and/or graduation, forfeit all prize money, funds, and resources previously made available. Teams will also be held accountable to meet specific milestones throughout the program, as noted in Section 3 of the handbook.

## **Section 13: Benefits**

By the end of Bootcamp, students, faculty, staff, and community entrepreneurs should walk away with real world expectations for launching a startup company; gaining exposure to the regional entrepreneurial community, developing skills needed to write a business plan, learning how to pitch to investors and community leaders, gaining an improved sense of creative thinking, building networking skills, and enhancing overall “soft skills” for future employment.



**[vace.uky.edu](https://vace.uky.edu)**