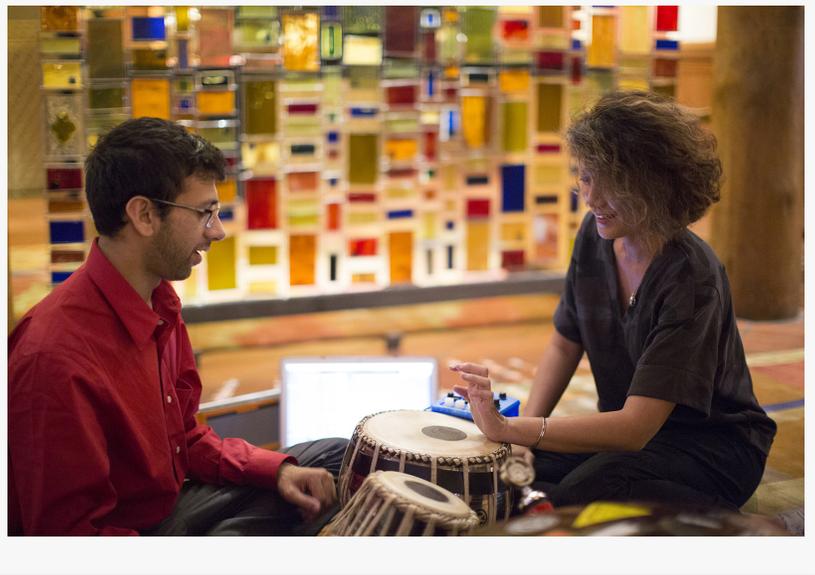


Creative Startups accepting applications in New Mexico for "Libraries as Launchpads"

New Mexico entrepreneurs looking to take their idea to action can apply now through February 17th for this free program.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, UNITED STATES, January 17, 2019
/EINPresswire.com/ -- Have a Business Idea? Visit Your Library to Get Started!

Beginning this week, startups across southern New Mexico will have access to a new business pre-accelerator program, Libraries as Launchpads, offered by [Creative Startups](#), the globally recognized New Mexico-based business accelerator. Launchpads is a partnership of the [New Mexico State Library](#) and Creative Startups and will



serve entrepreneurs in nine communities: Lovington, Hobbs, Anthony, Las Cruces, Hatch, Deming, Silver City, Los Lunas, and Socorro. The program aims to highlight public libraries as information hubs for startups and expand the depth of their entrepreneur services while serving over 50 entrepreneurs this year. Applications are open now through Sunday, February 17th.

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New Mexico State Librarian Eli Guinee

Today, with digital information easily available, one might - mistakenly - assume libraries are no longer relevant. National data, however, tells a different story. Visitorship to public libraries has risen over the past decade to meet the demands of navigating an increasingly complicated online world. Librarians are experts professionally trained in navigating through vast inventories of facts and fallacies to direct people to accurate and pertinent information. That’s what makes libraries the perfect place for entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business. Indeed, according to the American Library Association (ALA), 48% of libraries

across the US report offering services to small businesses.

“New Mexico libraries” explains New Mexico State Librarian Eli Guinee, “are quickly growing their capacity to empower community members, and we recognize the critical role we play as trusted democratic institutions in sustainable economic development. We want to see more opportunities for our talented young people to stay in New Mexico and raise their families with a high quality of life, and libraries are an important part of that equation.” Libraries are ready to refresh their image, “I like what [Launchpads] did for the profile of our little library,” said one participating librarian. “We want to stand up and say, ‘we’re not quiet anymore!’” said another. Libraries as Launchpads will transform libraries in to vibrant economic development hubs

through:

-Entrepreneurship education: Creative Startups LABS Pre-Accelerator is a 5-week business bootcamp for creative entrepreneurs to be hosted in participating libraries.

-Regional capacity building: Creative Startups Educators Circle trains regional educators on curriculum and pedagogical approach, enabling educators to become a resource for entrepreneurs in their communities.

-Collections development: The New Mexico State Library is assessing current collections and working to buildout business resources available in libraries across the state. A reference interview will be created for librarians to guide entrepreneurs to the resources they need.



Of the 19 entrepreneurs who went through the pilot program in 2018, 94% reported an increase in access to the startup resources needed to take the next step. Participants also saw substantial gains in knowledge with increase from 55% to 93% of participants reporting an average of level 3 or higher (on a scale ranging from 1:Never Heard of it, to 5:Expert) in all business knowledge areas. "This is an incredible program. The concepts I learned have, already in just weeks, improved the way I am running my business," expressed a Libraries as Launchpads alum..

Entrepreneurs with an idea they want to bring to life, a prototype they want to take to market, or a small business they want to grow are all invited to [apply!](#) Applications are open now through Sunday, February 17th.

Participating NM libraries include: Anthony, Deming, Hatch, Hobbs, Las Cruces, Los Lunas, Lovington, Silver City, and Socorro.

For more information and to apply visit: <http://www.creativestartups.org/libraries-launchpads>
Questions? Stop by a participating library or contact Ginny at: ginny@creativestartups.org.

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