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## **New Creative Industries Startup Accelerator Welcomes Statewide Applicants**

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New Mexico is home to the first U.S. startup accelerator aimed at entrepreneurs in the Creative Industries. That Albuquerque-based business, Creative-Startups <[www.Creative-Startups.org](http://www.Creative-Startups.org)>, is accepting applications through the end of August for its inaugural class of startup candidates. Acceptance into the accelerator includes six online classes modeled after the Stanford University curriculum and a five-day “deep dive” with mentors.



The new accelerator aims to bring business sensibilities and savvy into fields dominated by “creatives,” including the fields of advertising, architecture, crafts, design (fashion, graphic, product), film, music, the performing arts, photography, publishing, games and apps creation, television and radio.

Taken as a whole, these sectors of the economy are among the most vibrant, judging by a 2013 United Nations report, which found that global trade in creative fields grew at an average rate of 8.8 percent each year between 2002 and 2011 and that the annual growth rate of creative exports from developing countries in that period was 12.1 percent.

Until now, few resources existed for startups in these professions to get the mentorship they need to start and sustain commercial enterprises based on creative products or services.

Creative-Startups is a project of the Global Center for Cultural Entrepreneurship ([www.culturalentrepreneur.org](http://www.culturalentrepreneur.org)), an economic development organization with headquarters in Santa Fe. GCCE was launched in 2008 to support ambitious cultural and creative entrepreneurs, advocate for cultural entrepreneurship and connect cultural entrepreneurs from around the world.

Project organizers have planned the accelerator model to attract entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial teams or partnerships whose idea for a product or service includes a technological element — for example a product that’s delivered online or through a mobile device.

Creative-Startups will invite up to seven individuals or teams from the applicant pool. These finalists will receive an online “crash course” starting Sept. 22 in how to develop a business model, acquire customers and pitch a proposal to investors.

The teams and individuals then participate in a five-day “deep dive” beginning Oct. 20 at the Hyatt Regency in Albuquerque, where they apply lessons from the three-week virtual classes and receive feedback from mentors and peers as they develop a pitch for their product or service. On Oct. 25, entrepreneurs demonstrate their proposal to invited investors and creative industry leaders. The group as a whole will select the top three candidates, who will divide \$50,000 in seed money and receive ongoing expert mentorship through April.

Event sponsors promise that participants will come away with leadership and communication skills and be exposed to a network of supporters and resources that can help them move forward.

Even participants who don’t win the top prize can attract the attention of angel investors on the lookout for promising proposals.

## How to Participate

Applications are being accepted until Aug. 31 at [www.creative-startups.org](http://www.creative-startups.org). Selected startups will be notified by Sept. 7.

The \$495 forum fee includes lodging at the Hyatt and all meals and mentors. Scholarships are available for exceptional applicants who might otherwise be unable to attend.

The accelerator’s initial seed money was provided by the National Science Foundation through New Mexico's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, or NM EPSCoR.

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