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Launch Minnesota Newsletter: March 2023 Edition

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DEED Creates New Office of Small Business Development

DEED has created a new Office of Small Business Development which brings together four offices of DEED: the Small Business Development Centers, Office of Small Business Partnerships, Small Business Assistance Office and Launch Minnesota. This change will help small businesses better navigate the resources of DEED and its partners.

Neela Mollgaard, the former Executive Director of Launch MN, will now lead the DEED initiatives that serve Minnesota's startups and small businesses, and the organizations across the state that support their efforts.

Launch Minnesota will seek a new director.

[Learn more](#)

UMN Startup Classes Kick off Next Month

Launch Minnesota is proud to power [MIN-CORPS'](#) Value Proposition Courses. These classes help early-stage technology entrepreneurs translate their innovations into high-growth businesses.

UMN's free Value Prop Course utilizes the Lean Startup framework to quickly assess and refine business concepts, thus avoiding costly mistakes and accelerating the progress to market. MIN-CORPS offers these classes in two forms: one "in-depth" format that meets five times, and another "overview" format that meets four times.

[Learn about the in-depth Value Prop Course](#)

[Learn about the overview Value Prop Course](#)

MN Cup Applications Now Open

MN Cup, the state's largest startup competition, is now accepting applications for its 2023 season. Companies that apply will receive expert feedback from a group of judges with deep experience in MN Cup's nine industries. Whether you move forward or not, you'll have a risk-free opportunity to obtain valuable insight that can move your idea forward.

Startups that continue in the competition have the chance to connect with mentors and receive prize money. During the 2022 MN Cup season, 18 companies split more than \$400,000 in cash prizes. Grand Prize winner BKB Floral received \$85,000 for its development of a new compostable and non-toxic foam brick to serve the global flower market.

Launch MN highlighted BKB Floral and other past MN Cup participants in [last month's Friday Forum](#).

Details about the regional MN Cup feeder competitions are available on [Launch MN's calendar](#).

[Learn more](#) about MN Cup 2023



Friday Forum: Pitching Angels and VCs -- March 24

Launch Minnesota's Friday Forums are an opportunity to discuss topics in Minnesota's startup community. This month's topic is "Pitching Angels and VCs" and features investors from [Tundra Ventures](#), [Sofia Fund](#) and [Groove Capital](#). Join us to learn what goes into a successful pitch.

[Learn more](#)

ConnectUP! Summit -- April 14-15

The ConnectUP! Summit is a two-day gathering of curated underestimated entrepreneurs and investors. Attendees will learn and share with each other, engage in relationship-building, and provide best practices. The goal is to build thriving, diverse, and sustainable enterprises, and co-design an ecosystem that prioritizes equitable access to resources, capital and networks.

[Learn more](#)

Bunker Labs Veterans in Residence

[Bunker Labs](#), an organization supporting entrepreneurs from the veteran and military spouse communities, is accepting applications for its [Veterans in Residence](#) incubator. This program is targeted to early-stage startups and growth-oriented small businesses, and is intended veterans, military spouses and military family members who have launched a business and are ready to grow.

Bunker Labs is accepting applications for Veterans in Residence until March 31. [Apply here.](#)



Welcoming Wednesdays

for Startups and Small Businesses

Make Connections. Get Answers.

Welcoming Wednesdays

Launch Minnesota is partnering with coworking spaces and economic development agencies across the state to welcome startups and small businesses to make connections and get answers through a new initiative called Welcoming Wednesdays.

There are experts at each host location, including business coaches, Launch Minnesota regional leaders, support organizations, and consultants from [Small Business Development Centers](#). All sessions are free with no registration required.

More than a dozen spaces participated in Welcoming Wednesdays on March 8. In every region, entrepreneurs connected with mentors and discovered new resources. Founders and angel investors in Bemidji braved a blizzard to attend a talk on equity financing hosted by Brian Huch, and many stayed long after the event concluded.

Other hosts from across the state shared similar stories of connection and knowledge sharing. We look forward to the **next Welcoming Wednesday on April 12!**

[Learn more](#)

Northland Hackathon -- April 15

The Northland Hackathon is for high school students in Minnesota who want to learn how to make their own apps, websites or learn more about technology. Students and mentors will gather virtually for networking and short talks throughout the day. It is free to participate.

[Learn more](#)

Green Chemistry and Engineering Internship Grant

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is offering a grant to underwrite the cost of a 2023 Green Chemistry and Engineering Internship. The intern's time can be applied to improving one or more of a company's products or components, or to develop tools which support wider use or sales of products with green and safer chemistries.

MPCA encourages applicants to [visit this page](#) and view examples of possible projects and summaries of past grants. The deadline to apply is March 31.

[Learn more](#)

Upcoming Events

March 16: [MinneAMA: ChatGPT – Possibilities, Ethics & the Future of AI](#)

March 22: [Empowering Women in Entrepreneurship](#)

March 23: [Minnestar Tech Career Day](#)

March 24: [Startup Job Market](#)

March 30: [Ignite Cup Pitch Session](#)

[More events on Launch Minnesota's Startup and Small Business Calendar](#)

Resources for Entrepreneurs:

- [5 Steps to Start Your Business in Minnesota](#)
- [Launch Minnesota's Startup Resource Guide](#)

- [Guide to Incubators & Accelerators](#)
- [Friday Forums](#)
- [SciTech Internship Program](#)
- [List of Investors](#)
- [Join the Minnesota Exchange](#)
- [Get to Know Launch Minnesota’s Innovation Grantees](#)
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