

# Spend a weekend starting your business

I believe that the best things in life are worth waiting for.

But sometimes I'm more human than others, wishing that something amazing would just materialize and save me the exercise in patience and persistence.

If you've ever worked day and night for months or even years to start your own business, you might be nodding your head with special enthusiasm at the thought. Perhaps with some exhaustion.

For those thinking about starting a business, there's a new game in town — more than 300 other towns. It's known as the Startup Weekend, a fast-paced, hands-on experience designed to help entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs quickly determine whether their startup ideas are worth pursuing.

Startup Weekends begin Friday

with open-mic idea pitches by attendees, with the purpose of attracting others to join their teams. Attendees

typically include an even mix of people with technical or design and business backgrounds.

Those lacking in either area have this opportunity to complement their skills with those of others — in addition to finding like minds with which to take an idea forward.

Saturday and Sunday find the teams exploring customer development, validating ideas, practicing LEAN Startup Methodologies and building a minimal viable product.

On Sunday evening, teams demo their prototypes and receive feedback from an expert panel. In total, the entire whirlwind lasts a mere 54 hours, and it's proving to be quite a popular format.

Since inception, almost 600 Startup Weekend events have been held in

more than 90 countries, drawing more than 56,000 entrepreneurs.

Browse through the potential benefits outlined at [startupweekend.org](http://startupweekend.org), and it becomes apparent that opportunity can present itself in any number of ways at one of the events. Sessions include learning while creating and building valuable relationships with potential business partners, employers or investors. There's also potential speed-dating of co-founders for your business.

These events also get you face time with leaders in your own community who serve as coaches and judges. And if past Startup Weekends are any indication, many of them lead immediately to the actual startup of companies. Surveys indicate that more than 35 percent of startups launched from Startup Weekends continue to operate after three months after an event.

And then there's the cost. For less than \$100, event registration includes all meals and access to resources pro-

vided by Startup Weekend's global sponsors, as well as unlimited coffee to help keep the creative juices flowing.

Curious about practical matters such as preparation requirements and intellectual property considerations? The event website provides helpful answers. I would recommend anyone even remotely interested to read through them.

Is anyone in the Tri-Cities compelled to attend or help organize a Startup Weekend in our area? I prefer to think of us as a progressive community striving for continued tech-based growth, and ours is one in where many great technical and entrepreneurial minds reside.

All it would take is enough interest and a highly motivated team of organizers to make it happen. Let's see if we can get the conversation started.

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Economic  
Diversity