StartingBlock Project Overview

Startingblock Madison will be a 50,000 sq. ft. startup hub where entrepreneurs, investors, educators, advisors, and community members can connect, share innovative ideas, and create next-generation businesses that service global needs & markets.

Mission: StartingBlock Madison's mission is to fuel the rapidly growing entrepreneurial space in software application development, engineering, and healthcare IT by bringing together critical components of mentorship, capital, and start-up density to a collaborative location. This hub aims to help start and grow businesses, reduce gender and race barriers in entrepreneurship, leverage research from three universities, develop partnerships with existing businesses, and integrate Madison into the worldwide entrepreneurial network. StartingBlock has raised over $10 million to support the hub—one of the largest public-private partnerships in Madison in the last decade.

Physical Space: StartingBlock will house critical resources for a startup to be successful. The space itself will include affordable, flexible workspaces from single desk coworking to 1,000 sq. ft. office suites and a few larger anchor tenants. The space will also include lecture hall, pitch room, and rooftop space overlooking the Capitol. The project will integrate the resources of gener8tor (a nationally ranked accelerator), the Doyenne Group's Evergreen Fund (a city-backed $1.5 M. seed fund for women and minority entrepreneurs), Bunker Labs (targeted programming for veteran entrepreneurs), and shared equipment labs under one roof. Inside StartingBlock, tenants will have access to investors, professional advisors, and educational programming.

Partners: The project has received significant community support through academic, corporate, and nonprofit partners including the University of Wisconsin - Madison, Madison College, and Edgewood College. The State of Wisconsin (WEDC) has named StartingBlock a Center of IT Excellence and the US Economic Development Administration recently awarded StartingBlock an i6 grant.

Events and Programming: StartingBlock regularly hosts events in the greater Madison community. Recent programming included hosting speakers such as philanthropist Ibrahim AlHusseini and former X-box president Robbie Bach. These major events are often co-branded with other organizations and free for the public to attend. Future topics include artificial intelligence, cryptocurrency, driverless vehicles, alternative energy and impact investing.

Regional Interplay: StartingBlock will be a regional focal point for entrepreneurs in Milwaukee, Chicago and Minneapolis hoping to connect with new talent, ideas, and corporate partners in Madison.

Timing: StartingBlock will break ground in the first quarter of 2017 and is expected to open in 2018.