Directory of Entrepreneurship in State College, PA

This document is designed as a guide to the rich and diverse entrepreneurship resources that exist in the community that surrounds Penn State. We provide an overview of the organizations, groups, and people in the surrounding community that are also working to help encourage entrepreneurship in the region.

Resources for entrepreneurship in Centre County have continued to flourish over the past few years. We have identified more than 40 nonprofit groups and organizations in the region that support business growth and entrepreneurs and found that an average of 2 events every day are held on entrepreneurship-related activities.

Several of the organizations and groups in this directory now work in direct partnership with Penn State. The emergence of these kinds of partnerships is profoundly significant. It signals a shift in the mindset of the collective entrepreneurship community over the last couple years. Silos are being broken down, and we’re seeing a broad recognition that we can accomplish much, much more collectively than we can working in relative isolation.
Groups are co-funding, co-promoting, and actively collaborating. This dramatically increases the value and accessibility of our community’s resources for the entrepreneurs themselves.

As the collaboration increases between Penn State and the surrounding community, the distinction between what is purely a Penn State effort and what is a community effort often blurs. This is a huge success and signals a step forward for our ecosystem. However, the next edition of this directory should be done in partnership with Penn State, so that we can properly showcase all of the resources that are available to entrepreneurs in the region. If you are in a position at Penn State to help with this collaboration, please reach out to us. Let’s work together to make it easier for entrepreneurs and cultivators to connect in this growing community.

Finally, these organizations and people are here to help. They frequently partner with other organizations, companies, and Penn State, to the benefit of everyone. We have included their names, images, and personal contact information to make it easier for you to recognize and reach out to them. We continue to encourage you to reach out to any of them at any time. We all share a common goal: to see a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem grow from the amazing people and resources in this community.

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“We all share a common goal: to see a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem grow from the amazing people and resources in this community.”

September 2015 Edition

HAPPY VALLEY STARTUPS
happyvalleystartups.com

We connect entrepreneurs with the best resources to help their business grow.

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Space/Real Estate
These are local organizations that provide space and real estate to entrepreneurs and established business. Sometimes, this comes in the form of lots or industrial parks, and sometimes in the form of financial assistance. More recently, several groups are offering a complete package, with a strong cultural and educational component.

Technology Center Building
www.innovationpark.psu.edu/about/facilities/200-innovation-boulevard
The Technology Center Building, located at 200 Innovation Boulevard in Innovation Park, offers 25,000 sq. ft. of office and lab space for entrepreneurs and start-ups seeking incubator space.

co.space
www.thecospace.com
Now in its third year, the co.space is a shared living space in downtown State College for 20 young entrepreneurs and "change makers" in residence, combined with an experienced innovator. The residents are selected each year based on applications, and they live and work together while pursuing their goals. The State College, PA house is their first location, and they are in the process of opening additional locations in other regions.

CCIDC
www.centrecountyidc.org
The Centre County Industrial Development Corporation's (CCIDC) mission is to promote economic development throughout Centre County with the ultimate goal of attracting and retaining family-sustaining jobs. They own two industrial parks in the region and have provided loans and financing assistance in the past.

Zetachron Building
www.centrecountyidc.org/EntrepreneurialDevelopment/IncubatorProgram/Facilities.aspx
The Zetachron Building is a biotechnology company incubator located on Science Park Road in State College, PA. It offers 7,000 sq. ft. of office and lab space for entrepreneurs and start-ups that need incubator space. It is one of two incubators in State College run by CCIDC, which also runs the incubator in the Technology Center Building in Innovation Park.
New Leaf Initiative
www.newleafinitiative.org

New Leaf is a central work, even, and connecting space for young creators, innovators, and leaders in the community. Their beautiful space is located in the 3rd floor of the Borough Building in the heart of downtown State College. They have been successful at fostering collaborations and connections between PSU, the business community, entrepreneurs, and local government. Their primary focus is on attracting and retaining young professionals to the area.

The Make Space
www.makespace.io

A "maker" space in downtown State College, with 3D printers, workbenches, electronics supplies, and room for small events. The State College Borough provided the building space.

Funding

Generally speaking, there are not a large number of funding options in this region for a given business or startup, as is typical for an early-stage entrepreneur ecosystem. That said, the quality and impact of these organizations within their sector has been extremely high. The community has been working towards additional models of funding, so there may be some in the works that are not included here.

Ben Franklin Technology Partners
www.benfranklin.org

Ben Franklin is an economic development program that provides funding, assistance, and expert resources to new and established companies. They are known as being one of the primary stops for high-tech and tech transfer companies. They promote and sponsor a large number of events in the region and founded the successful Techcelerator program.

Ben Franklin Venture Investment Forum of Central Pennsylvania
www.cnp.benfranklin.org/programs-services/vif

Ben Franklin Venture Investment Forum (VIF) is an organization dedicated to promoting entrepreneurship in Pennsylvania. VIF helps entrepreneurs access outside investment, provides essential management training, assists angel investment groups in organizing and provides linkages between investors and promising early-stage companies. It services the 32-county region served by BFTP/CNP and beyond.
BlueTree Allied Angels  
www.bluetreecapital.com

BlueTree Allied Angels, founded in 2003, is Western Pennsylvania’s leading angel network. It is a group of accredited investors who invest in regional, early-stage companies. BlueTree is a members-only organization that operates as a network of private equity investors and meets monthly to evaluate and consider pre-institutional investments.

Centre County Industrial Development Corporation’s Revolving Loan Fund Program  

The Revolving Loan Fund Program provides funding for projects that may not be eligible for traditional funding by partnering with other public and private funding sources. Funding is for the acquisition of land/buildings, rehabilitation, leasehold improvements, machinery/equipment or working capital.

College Township Industrial Development Authority  
www.ctida.com

CTIDA guarantees loans for businesses in the Centre Region, particularly those with ties to College Township.

Innovation Partnership  
www.innovationpartnership.net

The Innovation Partnership is a consortium of economic development and business assistance organizations located throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Their goal is to help early-stage technology companies in Pennsylvania secure federal funding opportunities.

Innovative Manufacturer’s Center (IMC)  
www.imcpa.com

A private-public partnership, IMC is dedicated to driving economic success and profitable growth for the 12 counties they serve and the entire state. Objective, expert advice and actionable solutions are available to small and medium sized manufacturers through IMC events and resources.
Life Sciences Greenhouse of Central PA
www.lsgpa.com
LSGPA evaluates and provides funding for early stage healthcare technology and life sciences companies. They provide pre-seed and seed funding for these companies as well as making connections with other investors and consulting. Naturally, they are heavily involved in tech transfer companies. Steve is closely involved with the local start up community. Mel is the best contact for broader purposes.

Advocacy / Networking
This is perhaps the most mature area, hence the large number of organizations in this category. The fact that this category is still growing is testament to the enthusiasm and optimism of the entrepreneur community about the future of the region.

Alliance for Innovation & Business Development
A diverse group of entrepreneurial leaders from many different sectors, with the mission of "facilitating an innovative, entrepreneurial, venture culture, making entrepreneurship commonplace and common knowledge in central PA". They also host periodic networking events and arrange pitch events to venture capitalists and angel investors.

CBICC - Chamber of Business and Industry in Centre County
www.cbiccc.org
The local chamber of commerce. A membership organization of local businesses, it seeks to build bridges between individuals, companies, organizations, and government. Their goal is to promote healthy business growth while maintaining the high quality of life we owe in Centre County. Under Vern Squier's leadership, the CBICC has become a strong promoter of entrepreneurship efforts.

Centre Region Entrepreneur Network (CREN)
CREN is a periodic informal gathering of local entrepreneurs. It provides a place for them to get together to with their peers and discuss the successes and difficulties of running a business. It is the premier gathering of entrepreneurs in the region. Admission is via application.

EWE: Entrepreneurial Women's Expo
www.eweusc.com
An annual event where women from all over Central PA benefit from a day of visionary leadership and collaborative learning.

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Happy Valley Startups
www.happyvalleystartups.com
A web application that aims to provide a central resource and connecting point for all entrepreneurial resources in the Centre Region, both on and off campus.

Nittany Entrepreneurs
www.nittanyentrepreneurs.org
Nittany Entrepreneurs is a PSU club that connects students with local business leaders and the Centre County Chamber of Business and Industry. They are in the process of developing a mentor network for student entrepreneurs and developing a job fair for students that emphasizes connections with local businesses.

PennTAP: Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program
www.penntap.psu.edu
PennTAP is an outreach program of PSU. It provides technical assistance and information to Pennsylvania companies free of charge in order to help resolve specific technical questions or needs. Its primary areas of expertise are in IT, energy, environmental, worker health, new product prototyping and development, and process improvement.

SBDC: Small Business Development Center
www.sbdc.psu.edu
The Penn State SBDC provides entrepreneurs with the education, information, and tools necessary to build successful businesses. Free, confidential consulting services are provided to individuals looking to start or grow a small business in Centre or Mifflin Counties. Their main office is located in State College and also offer services in an outreach location in Lewistown.

Startup Coffee
An informal weekly gathering of entrepreneurs and local people who work at startups for morning coffee and socializing. Startup Coffee meets weekly on Wednesdays at New Leaf Initiative at 8am.
Technology Council of Pennsylvania
The Technology Council of Pennsylvania is dedicated to creating, attracting, growing and retaining technology businesses in Pennsylvania. Based in Harrisburg, it provides educational programming and networking, and it performs legislative advocacy for technology-based businesses in central PA.

Mentorship / Education
This is a small, yet growing area of our ecosystem. There has been significant effort in the last couple years to grow the leadership skills in the region, which has resulted in some very high quality programs.

ExecuStar
www.execustar.org
A one-year series of classes and discussions for the executives of successful businesses from $1M-$500M, to help propel their ventures to the next phase of growth and success. Includes a very mature mentorship program. Based in Hershey, PA, about half of the class is usually from State College.

Leadership Centre County
www.leadershipcentrecounty.org
Leadership Centre County located in Central Pennsylvania is a 501 (c)(3) Corporation that is dedicated to the development of qualified leaders within the community.

SCORE of Central PA
www.scorecpa.org
Regional branch of a national nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small businesses via free counseling and mentoring. They offer confidential help at no charge.

TechCelerator @ State College
www.techceleratorstatecollege.org
The TechCelerator offers designated, shared space and an array of pre-launch business and market research services. The program is designed to assist inventors, faculty, and very early-stage entrepreneurs in converting their business ideas and concepts into operating ventures. This program serves as a valuable "boot camp" for new entrepreneurs, where their initial concepts and first steps are refined based on expert feedback. It culminates in a pitch event that awards $10,000 to the winning team.
Specific Skills
These three specific groups represent skills that are important to many startups (marketing and high tech), but aren't represented elsewhere in the document.

[CP]² (Central Pennsylvania Creative Professionals)
www.cpsquared.com
"CP Squared" is a regular meeting of the top professionals in advertising, marketing, and design services in the region. National level speakers are often brought in.

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eMarketing Learning Center
www.emarketinglearningcenter.org/index.html
The eMarketing Learning Center focuses on professional-level interactive and digital marketing education, training, and research. The purpose is to help business employers and professionals address the growing need for business marketers who possess the knowledge and capabilities to apply technology-based marketing techniques.

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Hacky Hour
www.hackyhour.com
An informal weekly meetup for all computer programmers in Happy Valley and at PSU, from the amateur to the professional. Designed to break down silos between the student and professional, and industry and academia. Sponsored by West Arete, hosted at New Leaf Initiative.

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“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”
- Mark Twain