



Countdown: Idea Validation Spring 2020

Welcome to Countdown: Idea Validation

Countdown: Idea Validation is an interactive, 8-week business building program to test the merits of any early stage business idea. It seeks to answer the important question, “I have an idea but is it a business?”

The program is built for anyone that has an idea they wish to test. This includes University students & researchers, serial entrepreneurs, corporate incubators or anyone simply eager to learn more about Design Thinking and business building. You don’t need experience - only passion, commitment & curiosity.

We pair each team or entrepreneur with an experienced mentor that is dedicated solely to the success of that idea. Community created within the cohort allows each team to learn from one another and tackle the early stages of the entrepreneurial journey with other passionate, eager individuals. This is all supported by over 6 years of experience from the Stellenbosch University LaunchLab team.

If you have an idea that could be an incredible business opportunity then Countdown is the perfect first step for you.

The Countdown Program

Focusing on our users by ‘getting out of the building’ is critical to the success of early stage ventures. Design Thinking is the venture building methodology we use to empower the entrepreneur to test their idea through interactions with potential users. A heavy emphasis on rapid prototyping, testing and iteration allows us to create a product or service that meets our customer needs in a financially viable manner.

Countdown starts with Week 0, which offers an opportunity to meet your mentor, engage with your cohort and learn the basics of Design Thinking, Lean Startup Methodology and Growth Mindset.

The following 8-weeks take us through a standardised Design Thinking journey as we Build Empathy, Define, Ideate, Prototype & Test our idea with actual potential customers. Teams are guided through this process by our trained SU LaunchLab staff while meeting weekly with their mentor. There is also an opportunity to build strong ties with your cohort through expert sessions & events.

When you finish the Countdown program you will have all of the following:

- Experience in Design Thinking that will serve in many aspects of life
- A clear understanding if your idea or product can be a viable business
- A Minimum Viable Product and deep understanding of your ideal customer
- A Data Room with important assets such as an Ideal Customer Profile, Business Model Canvas, Financial Model & Pitch Deck.

The course wraps up with a mini demo day in which each team pitches their business idea to a panel of angel investors, University members and experienced entrepreneurs. This demo day as well as the course outputs will enable you to decide if you'd like to take the next step on the entrepreneurial journey. This could mean that you dedicate more time & effort to your idea, raise seed funding or continue working with the SU LaunchLab team to grow your business.

Your Time Commitment

We know that entrepreneurs are busy building their business. Therefore the course is tailored to meet your calendar through a blend of both on-line and in-person training. In order to get the most out of the course teams are asked to make the following time commitment:

- 1 hour of content engagement per week for 8 weeks
- 1-2 hours of work per week on your business from the outcomes of the content
- 1 hour per week going through what you're doing and learning with your mentor

Who can apply?

All you need in order to apply to Countdown: Idea Validation is an idea, curiosity and a commitment to pursuing greatness. The program is open to University students & researchers, Alumni, corporations seeking internal innovation or entrepreneurs at large from around the world.

Countdown runs both on-demand as well as as set times every year. We start a new cohort annually in February, May & October. Applications are always available at www.launchlab.co.za

Are you ready to transform seemingly impossible into world-shaping?

If you want to take the first, big step on your entrepreneurial journey then email or call us:

Email: info@launchlab.co.za or call 021 808 9494

It's time to build together.