



ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESOURCE GUIDE

Students are increasingly interested in starting their own businesses and converting their hobbies and talents into potentially money making ventures. This guide is intended to provide resources and tools to help these entrepreneurial students in getting started.

LOCAL RESOURCES

Numerous resources exist in the Greater Louisville area that can be of assistance to you in beginning development of a business idea:

- Start Up Louisville: (<http://startuplouisville.com>) An extensive listing of entrepreneurial networking groups in the Louisville area, work spaces to rent, platforms to increase technical skills, and funding opportunities.
- Louisville Score: (<https://louisville.score.org>) A resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration whose focus is to help you start, grow, and succeed with a small business. Mentors and workshop offerings are available.
- Louisville Forward: (<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/louisville-forward>) A list of several agencies that can provide assistance with the legal issues surrounding beginning a new business, funding and grant opportunities, real estate questions, among others.
- Kiva: (<http://us.kiva.org/louisville/>) A resource that assists small business owners in securing funding. The loans they offer have a 0% interest rate.
- Techstars: (<https://www.techstars.com/content/geographies/louisville/>) A group who oversees meet ups and programming for potential entrepreneurs to get together, brainstorm ideas, and learn from industry leaders.

COMMON STRATEGIES TO GET STARTED

The strategies you will use to get started can vary greatly in different industries, but below are some general tips that should get you moving in the right direction:

- Consider Your Niche and Audience:** Think about what you like and where your interests lie. Usually, you will be more successful if you brainstorm a business model that fits in with a current interest. Further, consider who the audience for your potential business will be before beginning. Ask yourself if there is an unmet need for this business or product.
- Find a Mentor and/or Conduct Informational Interviews:** Talk to professionals in the field or in similar industries to get a better understanding of the market and what types of skills and experiences you may need to be successful. Additional informational interviewing resources can be found on the CREW website (<http://crew.cc/documents/informational-interviewing-resource-sheet.pdf>)

- **Develop a Business Plan:** No matter what kind of business you are wanting to develop, it's imperative that you write a business plan. A business plan generally projects 3-5 years ahead and outlines a company's goals, marketing plans, and steps towards implementation and sustainability. Look at these business plan articles for additional help:
 - How to Write a Business Plan: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davelavinsky/2014/01/30/how-to-write-a-business-plan - 4c3048587d04 from Forbes>
 - Business Plan Guidelines: <https://www.sba.gov/tools/sba-learning-center/training/how-write-business-plan>
 - Business Plan competitions: <http://under30ceo.com/the-15-largest-college-business-plan-competitions/>
- **Secure Funding** (if needed): Review the local resources above for assistance in searching for funding and grant opportunities.
- **Consider Marketing Needs and Copyright Implications:** You want to ensure that the name you are using for your business is not already copyrighted by someone else for business purposes; using an existing business name as your own could result in legal issues. Review these resources to learn more about copyright:
 - How to Copyright a Company Name and Logo: <http://guides.wsj.com/small-business/starting-a-business/how-to-trademark-a-company-name/>
 - Small Business Patents and Copyright Information: <https://www.sba.gov/blogs/small-business-patents-copyrights-and-trademarks>
 - FAQ's About Copyright: <https://www.copyright.gov/help/faq/>
- **Maximize Social Media Marketing:** Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are being used more than ever to advertise businesses and sell products. Be creative about how you can use these existing tools.

FURTHER READING

- 20 Must Read Books for Future Entrepreneurs: <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/20-must-read-books-for-young-entrepreneurs.html>) A listing of the several popular business books for up-in-coming business owners.
- Fortune's 10 Top Entrepreneur Books in 2017: <http://fortune.com/2016/12/23/business-books-2017/>) This list is updated yearly of the best business books for those interested in startups.
- Best Entrepreneurial Books on Amazon: <https://www.gobankingrates.com/making-money/best-books-amazon-aspiring-entrepreneurs-under-20/>) This is a list of books that can be purchased for \$20 or less.

