Welcome

Entrepreneurship is a mindset that initiates transformations through risk-taking actions and value-creating organizations. Each day, entrepreneurs push, pivot and persist. Tiger entrepreneurs help broaden Princeton’s liberal arts horizon and amplify the University’s service to society.

Our students have been blazing trails in both tech and non-profit startups. Our faculty have turned fundamental research into products benefiting people across the world. Our alumni entrepreneurs include household names, such as Jeff Bezos ’86, Wendy Kopp ’89, Eric Schmidt ’76, Meg Whitman ’77, as well as thousands more in diverse fields.

In May 2015, President Eisgruber ’83 and Provost Lee ’99 responded to the strategic planning report, “Entrepreneurship the Princeton Way.” By June 2017, all 20 of the approved action items will have been executed, mobilizing across a dozen campus organizations. Here are some examples: the first incubator; the first innovation center; the first seed fund; a certificate in entrepreneurship; and strategic engagement with New York, Silicon Valley, and many alumni. Now we have a comprehensive offering for our students, faculty, alumni, partners and neighbors with an entrepreneurial mindset.

As the timeline of highlights visualizes below, we have come a long way and accelerated remarkably. Yet this is just the beginning. As entrepreneurs, we continue to grow and adjust, to collaborate and innovate. And we thank you for your continued support.

Mung Chiang
Arthur LeGrand Doty Professor of Electrical Engineering
Inaugural Chairman, Princeton Entrepreneurship Council

PRINCETON ENTREPRENEURSHIP MILESTONES
Timeline of representative key events (by academic year)

1997: First Entrepreneurship course
1999: E-Club created
2006: Innovation Forum
2011: IP Acceleration Fund
2012: eLab Accelerator
Ecosystem

ENTREPRENEURIAL HUB

The Entrepreneurial Hub (eHub) opened in November 2015 as a space for entrepreneurs to innovate and collaborate. Located steps away from Nassau Street, it is home to the Princeton Entrepreneurship Council, the Princeton Entrepreneurship Club, and the offices of a few alumni startups. The eHub also houses several Keller Center programs, including eLab, a launch pad for student startups, and Tiger Challenge, a design thinking initiative. If you drop by the eHub, you are likely to see students hard at work on their startups, workshops being taught by local professionals, or a networking event with alumni.

PRINCETON INNOVATION CENTER

In November 2016, President Eisgruber ’83 and Provost Lee ’99 announced Princeton University’s new Innovation Center, an incubator located a few minutes from campus. Princeton Innovation Center will provide a wide range of resources for faculty, students, alumni, and the community. These resources include: wet labs for chemical and biological innovation; dry labs for maker space; and incubator space for Princeton startups, as well as non-university companies in the local innovation ecosystem.

June 2014: PEAC internal study

June 2014: AEF launch

May 2015: “Entrepreneurship the Princeton Way” report

July 2015: PEC created

November 2015: eHub opened

December 2015: Town-gown collaboration

February 2016: Tiger Challenge launch

May 2016: entrepreneurs.princeton.edu

June 2016: Immersive startup internship

September 2016: Inaugural certificate class

October 2016: NYC engagement

November 2016: Faculty New Venture Fund

April 2017: Startup Roadshow in Silicon Valley

May 2017: Tiger Entrepreneurs Award

June 2017: Princeton Innovation Center
Supported by the generosity of entrepreneurial Princeton alumni, the Alumni Entrepreneurs Fund (AEF) provides funding to recent alumni entrepreneurs and their startups. Since 2015, recipients of AEF funding also benefit from ongoing alumni mentorship and peer-to-peer relationships. They have an opportunity to give back to the University by mentoring Princeton students, helping advance the University’s education mission and cultivate its entrepreneurial ecosystem. Learn more about AEF at entrepreneurs.princeton.edu/programs/alumni-entrepreneurs-fund.

PORTFOLIO BY THE NUMBERS

17 COMPANIES AND COUNTING

$15+ MILLION ADDITIONAL FUNDS RAISED

33% WOMEN FOUNDERS

ENTERPRISE

SPACETOUCH

PIXM

PREELINE

SUSPECT TECHNOLOGIES

agepath

INDUSTRY / ENERGY

SOLSTICE

ECLiptic industrIes

EDUCATION

collegebacker

LightUp

PIPER

HEALTHCARE

volumetric

CONSUMER

friendsy

GLOSS GENIUS

SAVVY

RETAIL

deià

HILLFLINT
Bringing Social Science to Big Data

Jake Shapiro, Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Woodrow Wilson School, brings his social science background to bear on big data in his startup Giant Oak, which he co-founded in 2013. “The basic insight behind Giant Oak is that data without theory can be misleading; we bring in social science theory to help clients better understand what the data is telling them,” Shapiro said. Once the startup develops initial insights, Giant Oak works to automate the process so clients can rapidly understand what their data are saying. “We’ve worked with law enforcement and other government agencies to advance security goals on issues such as financial fraud, human trafficking, insurgency, crime, and terrorism,” Shapiro said. “In a world increasingly defined and measured by big data, we believe it is our responsibility to help organizations utilize this data effectively and coherently.”

Thinking Inside the Box with Piper

During his senior year at Princeton, Mark Pavlyukovskyy ’13 created Piper, a computer kit that kids assemble themselves and learn physical engineering in the process. Like any entrepreneur, however, Pavlyukovskyy had to pivot after developing the toy’s prototype. “What we learned was that kids weren’t interested in learning how to program per se; instead, they wanted to play ‘Minecraft.’” “Minecraft” is a video game that allows players to create and build using textured cubes in a 3D world; it is also the best-selling PC game to date. As it turns out, the video game proved to be a great partner for Piper. “By using the context of ‘Minecraft’ to engage kids with engineering and basic programming, we were engaging kids through a visual language they already understood and loved,” Pavlyukovskyy remarked. “Making ‘Minecraft’ the centerpiece and core software feature of Piper has allowed us to give kids confidence and tangible technical skills, which allow them to understand the fundamentals of how technology works.”

Data Domain, an Industry Disruptor

In 2001, Computer Science Professor Kai Li took a leave of absence from Princeton University to co-found Data Domain. His startup’s mission was to replace tape infrastructure in data centers for backup archives, the only remaining tape strongholds at a time when MP3 players had replaced cassettes and DVRs had replaced VCRs. “To efficiently store large amounts of data both locally and remotely, we had to build a new ecosystem,” Li said. Data Domain was the first ecosystem that used data deduplication to put data on the Cloud. “In industry speak, Data Domain would be referred to as a ‘disruptor,’ or an innovation that completely replaces the old way of doing things,” Li said. “This is partly why it’s been difficult for other businesses to compete— building a new ecosystem takes a lot of work!” Data Domain’s success speaks for itself; the startup has continually captured over 60 percent of the market share. The company went public in 2007 and was acquired in 2009 for $2.4 billion.
In Fall 2016, Princeton Entrepreneurship Council and Keller Center jointly launched an undergraduate certificate program in Entrepreneurship, with 27 students selected for the inaugural cohort. The program exposes students to different ways of understanding, conceptualizing, and building enterprises that create value and have a positive impact on society, whether through commercial or social ventures. Now students can systematically pursue entrepreneurship in the best liberal arts institution.

In addition to coursework in entrepreneurship, which is designed to complement the curriculum in their major, students are also required to complete a practicum. The practicum gives students real-world entrepreneurial experience with the help of alumni mentorship.

“What do you plan to do with your certificate after graduation?”

Rebecca De La Espriella ’17, Woodrow Wilson School
“As an incoming Strategy and Operations Analyst for Deloitte’s federal practice, I hope that my certificate will land me a position in Deloitte’s Greenhouse, where I would help create Design Thinking Labs that aim to generate insights and accelerate breakthroughs on clients’ toughest strategic issues.”

Max Greenwald ’17, Independent Major in Computer Science and Public Policy
“The certificate has helped me jump head-first into the Silicon Valley tech scene. Next year, I’ll be joining Google as a product manager.”

Tim Lau ’17, Computer Science
“With the certificate, I’ll plan to effectively inspire, lead, and develop innovative and human-centered products at Microsoft as a product manager, with strong considerations for the ethical, societal, and personal implications of my work.”

Erin Nurre ’18, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
“I plan to elevate the presence of women in both the entrepreneurship and scientific fields by promoting accessibility to technology and education.”

Shriya Sekhsaria ’18, Psychology
“I’m pursuing several ideas about memory jars and other potential startups. I don’t know which idea, if any, is going to work. I do know that I’m not going to let what I learn through the certificate remain as ideas—I’m going to make them happen.”

Andreas Dias ’17, Computer Science
“I plan on moving to the Bay Area to transition my thesis into a full-time startup or join an early stage venture!”

Ashlyn Lackey ’18, Anthropology
“As an Anthropology major with a strong interest in Design Thinking, I will use both my concentration and the certificate to focus on improving everyday user experiences; I plan to work in innovation consulting and marketing.”

Jen Lee ’17, Molecular Biology
“I’m going to use the skills I’ve honed in the certificate and apply them either as a CEO/founder or a venture capitalist.”

Yossi Quint ’17, Religion
“I want to use groundbreaking technologies to create plant-based alternatives to animal products. I hope to transform the global food system and shift consumption habits towards more sustainable products.”

Avthar Sewrathan ’18, Computer Science
“My certificate will help me empower people around the world, through innovating smart designs and technology.”

Erin Nurre ’18, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
“I plan to elevate the presence of women in both the entrepreneurship and scientific fields by promoting accessibility to technology and education.”

Shriya Sekhsaria ’18, Psychology
“I’m pursuing several ideas about memory jars and other potential startups. I don’t know which idea, if any, is going to work. I do know that I’m not going to let what I learn through the certificate remain as ideas—I’m going to make them happen.”
ENGAGING ALUMNI

TIGERTALKS IN THE CITY

TigerTalks in the City brings the innovative research of Princeton faculty to New York City on a quarterly basis. The events feature a panel discussion on an interdisciplinary topic, such as big data or smart cities, followed by a networking reception for Princeton students, alumni, faculty and New Yorkers. Learn more about past TigerTalks in the City topics and register for the next event by visiting entrepreneurs.princeton.edu/tigertalks.

Upcoming TigerTalks in the City:
March 30 - “Design Thinking's Impact on Liberal Arts”
May 18 - "Princeton Voices in Recent Books"

OFFICEHOURS IN THE CITY

OfficeHours in the City connects alumni mentors with students, faculty and early career alumni who seek guidance on their entrepreneurial endeavors. Mentors have experience in a variety of industries, and deep skills in areas including law, marketing, business development and finance.

To schedule an in-person or phone meeting with a mentor, or to apply to become a mentor, visit entrepreneurs.princeton.edu/officehours.

STARTUPROADSHOW IN SILICON VALLEY

The Startup Roadshow in Silicon Valley gives Princeton-affiliated early and growth-stage companies the opportunity to present in front of world-class venture capital firms. The inaugural roadshow is scheduled for April 6-7, 2017, with the aim of helping Princeton startups further grow and scale their ventures, with the help of institutional investments. Learn more about the Roadshow at entrepreneurs.princeton.edu/svroadshow.

TIGERENTREPRENEURS CONFERENCES

Two Tiger Entrepreneurs Conferences are planned for 2017, one in Silicon Valley and another in Boston. These conferences will showcase the Princeton entrepreneurial landscape on campus and beyond, and will provide attendees with the opportunity to experience our curriculum through a faculty-led panel discussion. Tiger Entrepreneurs Conferences will also highlight the startups of recent Princeton alumni.
Looking Ahead

"As we plan for the University's future, we have an opportunity to increase support for our student, faculty and alumni entrepreneurs — to help them make this world a better place."

— President Christopher L. Eisgruber ’83 and Provost David S. Lee *99

GET CONNECTED

Apply to Startup Roadshow in Silicon Valley
- Startup must be founded or managed by Princeton alumni, faculty, staff or students
- Startup must have achieved revenue or demonstrated momentum toward achieving revenue

Important Dates
- February 15: Application closes
- March 1: Participants chosen
- April 6-7: Roadshow in Silicon Valley

Apply to AEF Spring 2017 Round
- Any degree from Princeton University between June 2012 and June 2017
- Founder must be working on the venture full time
- Startup must have secured minimum of $50,000 of non-familial funding by April 1

Important Dates
- April 1: Application closes
- April 24: Finalists selected
- May 17: Feedback Panel Day

Nominate for Tiger Entrepreneurs Award
Nominate for Tiger Entrepreneurs Award, an award designed to celebrate the value of entrepreneurship and innovation across the Princeton community.
- Undergraduate or graduate students, or alumni who received any degree from Princeton University after January 1, 2012
- Up to three eligible candidates can be nominated together as a team

Important Dates
- April 1: Nomination period closes
- Early May: Winners selected
- May 11: Awards presented at Research Day

Register for TigerTalks in the City
March 30: “Design Thinking’s Impact on Liberal Arts” at entrepreneurs.princeton.edu/tigertalks

Are you an entrepreneurial alum?
We want to hear from you! Drop our Executive Director, Anne-Marie Maman ’84, a line at amaman@princeton.edu.

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