



## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **StartupArlington**

### The Challenge:

Arlington has the resources to become one of the technology hubs of not just in the Washington, D.C. region, but in the Country. After all, some of the world's most brilliant tech innovations of the last few decades, including GPS, voice-recognition software, and even the Internet itself, were all born in Arlington. However, with the brand awareness of competing destinations like Silicon Valley or Austin, Arlington was having trouble expanding beyond its perception as a "government town." The County sits just across the Potomac River from the nation's capital and is home to thousands of government offices and contractors, most notably the Pentagon. Arlington needed to find a new and intriguing way to encourage technology entrepreneurs to consider the County for its business.

### The Solution:

Working with partners in real estate, hospitality, transportation and other fields, Arlington Economic Development (AED) developed StartupArlington, a nationwide competition that would allow new or growing companies in the technology sector to pitch for the opportunity to live and work in Arlington free of charge for three months. The winning company would receive free office space in a local co-working office. The founder(s) would receive three free months lodging at a nearby extended stay hotel. What's more, AED expanded the offering so that the winning company founder(s) would really get the opportunity to experience life in Arlington. The prize package included complimentary passes for Metrorail and Capital Bikeshare to highlight the community's car-free lifestyle. It supplied a gym membership. And company founders could take advantage of free legal advice and mentoring as they worked to set up the new enterprise.

This project centered on cooperation and partnership from various aspects of Arlington's business, hospitality and government communities. Various departments within Arlington County were brought together to develop competition language and legality. A local extended stay hotel company agreed to partner for the competition to provide complimentary hotel space for three months, and a local co-working space agreed to provide office accommodations. A local law practice agreed to offer ten hours of legal counseling for the winner, and transportation partners provided access to public transit. In all, due to partnerships and in-kind donations, the only costs for the county were those on taxes paid on the hotel lodging and nominal advertising fees, approximately \$3,500. The entire value of the program was estimated at \$15,450.

The strategy was two-fold. The winning company and its founders, of course, received the opportunity to try out Arlington as a business location. They were able to experience firsthand not only the resources available here and the proximity to the government agencies in need of technology innovation, but also Arlington as a community. Similarly, AED received pitches from interested companies all over the country, all of which had expressed specific interest in Arlington as a possible business location.

#### The Implementation:

AED launched the StartupArlington campaign in September 2015 via editorial outreach, social media, and a modest advertorial partnership with Tech.co. In addition to local media coverage, the competition was featured in Inc.com and on the American Entrepreneurship blog. Social media channels reached out to more than 180,000 users. More than 700 unique users visited the StartupArlington page on AED's

website, and advertorial content reached an even further audience via the outreach of Tech.co. As a result, a total of 78 companies from 14 states and 13 different technology industries submitted completed applications.

### The Results:

All entries were judged by a collaborative panel consisting of Arlington County Government employees and officials, Arlington entrepreneurs, and local business leaders. Startup Arlington applicants were evaluated on criteria ranging from how the company would benefit from locating in Arlington to growth potential and business plans. To be eligible, applicants must have been from outside the greater Capital region and have been a founder and/or CEO of a technology-based company. After reviewing and evaluating all entries, Montana-based Oppleo, a cyber security company offering software known as Sikernes, was chosen as the StartupArlington winner. Oppleo founders Roderick Flores and Bri Rolston relocated to Arlington in November 2015. The company still remains in the area.

Since the program began several other real estate companies and residential complexes contacted Arlington Economic Development to understand how they can participate in the future (including the largest residential and commercial companies with properties in Arlington.) They want to market their properties/area to the same entrepreneurial audience StartupArlington reached. As a result of the program AED's business development group cultivated several leads of companies that are being tracked to understand when they grow to the point of needing commercial space. Whereas AED intends to assist with their growth.

The StartupArlington program is a great way to reach the community with mutual benefit to economic development, the business community, and the startup community. And with its success, Arlington sees StartupArlington as an ongoing program and an excellent way to not only reach out to company founders who may previously have been unaware of Arlington's resources and opportunities, but also form new collaborations and working relationships with Arlington's existing business and hospitality communities with the joint effort of creating a stronger business climate in Arlington County.

## StartupArlington: Program Overview

StartupArlington is a collaborative initiative between Arlington County and key members of Arlington's business and hospitality community designed to reach out to and educate a larger scale of entrepreneurs who would potentially benefit from locating their businesses in Arlington. A partnership was created to develop a competition for technology startups in which the winner would be able to bring his/her business to Arlington for three months free of charge, with work space, living space, and other amenities provided by Arlington and its partners. With this method, a startup business founder would have the opportunity to experience the resources and opportunities that exist in Arlington for entrepreneurs before making a long-term commitment. At the same time, Arlington County has a new tool to connect with entrepreneurs who may have an interest in opening or relocating a business in Arlington.

In its initial implementation and with minimal budget, the StartupArlington competition and its attractive prize encouraged 78 company founders from 14 states to apply. After a careful review process from County, business, and non-profit leaders on how the company would best benefit from being in Arlington, Montana-based Oppleo was selected as the first StartupArlington winner, with founders of the cybersecurity company with the Sikernes Risk Management software relocating to Arlington in November 2015.

StartupArlington provides the unique opportunity to reach out to technology entrepreneurs who may have never realized the opportunities that exist for the industry in Arlington. It also serves as an excellent method of collaboration between several divisions of the community, including County government, real estate, entrepreneurs, hospitality, transportation and law. It is through this collaboration and partnership that the program succeeds, and a similar competition is planned for later in 2016.

## StartupArlington: Program Summary

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