



# ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Fairfax County  
Program Title: Accelerate Breakfast Series  
Program Category: Regional Collaboration

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Rebecca Moudry  
Title: Director  
Department: Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives  
Telephone: 571-536-0769 Website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/>  
Email: rebecca.moudry@fairfaxcounty.gov

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Bryan Hill  
Title: County Executive  
Signature:   
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## **Executive Summary**

The Accelerate Breakfast Series is a regional initiative designed to support promising start-ups by bridging the gap between early-stage technology companies and investors in the greater Washington, D.C. region. Established in 2024 through a partnership between Fairfax County, Arlington County, Prince William County, and George Mason University, this quarterly series provides a platform for high-growth startups to present their companies to an audience of investors and industry professionals. Presenting companies have raised close to \$20 million to date.

Each quarterly event features five selected technology companies seeking seed-stage capital between \$500,000 and \$2 million. The program emphasizes inclusivity, encouraging applications from founders historically underserved by early-stage capital investments. There is no application fee to participate, and selected start-ups receive comprehensive support, including professional pitch coaching and networking opportunities. The Accelerate Breakfast Series fosters innovation, promotes intergovernmental cooperation, provides high quality investment opportunities for investors, and serves as a replicable model for other regions.

The Accelerate Breakfast Series plays a vital role in strengthening the region's thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem and driving investment in local innovation.

## **Problem, challenge, or situation faced by the locality**

Early-stage technology companies in the Northern Virginia region have historically faced challenges in accessing seed-stage capital and connecting with potential investors in technology-based companies. While the region boasts a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem, the existence of structured platforms to facilitate meaningful interactions between startups and investors has been uneven. This gap has

hindered the growth potential of promising ventures and limited the region's capacity to retain and attract innovative companies ready for this seed capital.

Staff conducted interviews with leaders in the ecosystem to better understand regional issues, gaps, and trends. The purpose was to identify solutions to address this gap in funding. Findings from the interviews revealed:

1. Start-up companies in the region need very early-stage, non-dilutive funding for start-up companies where businesses are not required to lose equity to access funding.
2. Entrepreneurs need to increase their visibility within the ecosystem to garner investment capital.
3. Investors are often deals and trends-focused and seek to fund investment-ready startups, which are later stage organizations.
4. Early-stage founders are not always aware of the available business development resources.
5. Investors need opportunities to talk to and learn from other investors. Company founders are similarly seeking opportunities to meet other founders to learn about leads, resources, and connections.
6. Intentional efforts are needed to engage and reach historically underrepresented founders.

## **Award Criteria**

### **Innovative Solution**

The Accelerate Breakfast Series creates a recurring, structured event that combines networking, pitch presentations, and investor feedback. Unlike one-off conferences, this quarterly series ensures continuous engagement and support for startups, fostering long-term convivial relationships between entrepreneurs and investors.

The companies selected to present must demonstrate a track record of rapid growth, innovative technology, and strong business fundamentals. The selection process is highly competitive, with only five presenting companies selected each quarter among an application pool of around 100. Firms are chosen based on the strength of their applications and the potential for their solutions to make a significant impact.

Despite the seed funding for this program being provided exclusively by Northern Virginia jurisdictions, eligible companies are not limited to these counties and can be based in Virginia, Maryland, or Washington, DC. The multiple state, county, and city jurisdictions in the broader D.C. region have been historically siloed. The Accelerate Breakfast Series helps build greater trust and collaboration for effective regional economic development strategies, better enabling all jurisdictions and companies to participate and play a key role in building connections between ecosystem stakeholders.

#### Promoting Intergovernmental Cooperation

The program is a product of intergovernmental collaboration with Fairfax County, Arlington County, and Prince William County jointly funding and promoting the events. George Mason University supports and administers the series. Participation in hosting and managing the program is broad and inclusive. County economic development professionals, regional investors, educational institutions, and entrepreneurial support organizations participate in regular meetings for Accelerate subcommittees, including the Selection Committee, Marketing Committee, and Investor Outreach. Montgomery County and the State of Maryland are increasing their involvement through participation in subcommittees and promotion of the Accelerate Series, as demonstrated by increased applications from Maryland companies. Partnerships and sponsorships by regional service providers further expand the reach and effectiveness of the program.

### Providing a Model for Others

The design and implementation of the Accelerate Breakfast Series provides a replicable model for regions aiming to support early-stage technology companies and foster regional collaboration. Its adaptable structure enables localities to tailor the format to their specific goals and key industry sectors. With a focus on inclusivity—directed by jurisdictional and founder-focused participation—and frequent, approachable investor-entrepreneur interactions, the series offers a framework that can be successful in other regions facing similar challenges.

### Innovative Approach and Customization

The Accelerate Breakfast Series distinguishes itself through its tailored approach. Each event is designed to address the unique needs of the participating companies and investors, ensuring relevant content and meaningful connections. The companies selected to pitch for each event are targeted for the investment criteria of regional venture capital investors, and the service providers of the companies are targeted for participation in program subcommittees. This helps to ensure a focused event, increasing interest and participation from the targeted investors and stakeholders.

### Program Results

The Accelerate Breakfast Series has become a cornerstone event for the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem, fostering valuable connections and facilitating growth for innovative startups. With a focus on cutting-edge technologies, the series provides a unique platform for emerging companies to showcase their solutions, engage with potential investors, and forge strategic partnerships.

Since its inception in 2024, the Accelerate Breakfast Series has achieved the following outcomes:

- Facilitated more than 20 pitch presentations in four sessions, connecting startups with potential investors and leading to seed funding commitments. Presenting companies have raised close to \$20 million to date.
- Created valuable connections and learning for both investors and entrepreneurs. Survey results from the most recent event identified a 97% satisfaction rate with the quality of the pitches, and 100% of participants stated that the event was worth participants' time.

### PART III DIGITAL DOCUMENTATION -

Accelerate Website: <https://acceleratedeals.org/accelerate-breakfast-series/>

Event Promotion:



**ACCELERATE**  
2025  
BREAKFAST SERIES

# Accelerate Breakfast Series

*Applications are now open for July 10, 2025*

Only five carefully selected companies seeking seed funding will have the chance to pitch to a diverse audience of 200+ seasoned investors, business professionals, and stakeholders fostering connections and paving the way for new partnerships.

Deadline is May 16!  
**Apply Now!**



**ACCELERATE**  
2025  
BREAKFAST SERIES

*meet the*  
**five featured presenters**

 <b>Samarth Gupta</b> LEXIQ, INC.	 <b>Derese Getnet PhD</b> CHARIOT BIOSCIENCES, INC.	 <b>Lydia Ofori</b> PLAINR AI	 <b>Cenk Sidar</b> ENQUIRE AI	 <b>Rory Brogan</b> TOREV MOTORS
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