



## TON Startup Boot Camp FAQ

### What is the event designed to accomplish?

The overall goal is to bring together entrepreneurially minded people from Ottawa's technology sector to lay the groundwork for new venture creation. The most promising company proposal judged at the end of the weekend will receive a \$5,000 cash reward for incorporating within 45 days. Many successful ventures start with great teams, and this venue will broaden your exposure to like-minded and capable potential partners with complimentary skills. You will be in "startup mode" for the entire weekend --it may not be for everyone-- and this will be a great test of how well it suits you. Naturally, the mix of attendees, innovative ideas brought forward, event guidance skills and everyone's effort and interest will determine the outcomes.

### How is this different than programs like Lead to Win?

LTW ([www.leadtowin.ca](http://www.leadtowin.ca)) is an outstanding initiative at Carleton University designed to move technology teams forward with information and resources. Similarly, Entrepreneur's Edge ([www.ocri.ca/innovation/entrepreneursedge.asp](http://www.ocri.ca/innovation/entrepreneursedge.asp)) from OCRI provides an excellent training program for those ready to take the plunge. Unlike a lecture-style program for those further along, this event is an initial 'lab rat' experience designed to help people decide to make that next startup / entrepreneurial step.

### This sounds like one of those "un-conferences" that I have read about happening in Toronto, Montreal and Kitchener ...

You are absolutely right that there are similarities to these weekend sessions held in other regions. Event branding aside, the principle aim for this event is to get a diverse group of skilled and motivated people together with the hope that some interesting venture ideas will gel and emerge for committed follow-up starting on Monday after the event. The Ottawa Network is focused on enabling opportunities where people interact and hopefully start new ventures.

### What kind of people will be there?

We are asking people to register their main skill and interest area when they sign up, for example: technical, business development, operations, and finance/accounting/legal. We are confident a healthy mix of competencies will be in attendance.

### What kind of person do I need to be to attend?

Answer the following questions:

Do I have time and energy to contribute to a venture?

Do I have a bias towards participation, rather than observation?

Am I open to meeting new people with new ideas?

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Can I work in lightly structured scenarios?

Can I be open, constructive, and positive with potential team members?

Do my experiences and interests match at least one of the following “skill buckets”

- Development Engineers
- BizDev, Market Strategy, Marcom
- Finance/Accounting/Legal
- Operations, Manufacturing

If you can honestly say yes to most of these points, please sign up today!

### **How is this different than regular networking meetings?**

Well, most networking meetings have a very simple theme and a small number of experts to provide discussion content. This event is designed to step through many of these types of discussion in some kind of logical flow, and reach a point where a group or groups emerge to compete for recognition and reward. You will have access to a series of industry experts lending a hand throughout the weekend.

### **So how will it work?**

Registered participants will get to work Friday night. We will start with some activities that will help acquaint everyone with the skill sets and capabilities of other people in the room. Those with germination ideas to present will introduce them to the boot camp using a simple four-page PowerPoint template. Over the weekend we expect teams to coalesce and be ready to present their company pitch for consideration by Sunday night.

### **What types of ventures is the weekend designed for?**

We are seeking to move forward innovative technology business proposals. These need not be strictly in the IT or communications fields - however they do need to be based on a product development.

### **What if I don't have an idea for a new technology venture? Can I still participate?**

Absolutely! Although there can never be too many great ideas and people to champion them, at the same time we are looking to bring together people that can form productive teams. You may find out that your group needs to be tweaked as you take on an idea and that's a good outcome for the event as well.

### **I hear you have a special incentive?**

In order to encourage real startup ventures to move forward, the winning venture chosen by the attendees on Sunday evening will be eligible for a \$5000 contribution **IF** they incorporate within 45 days of the event. How's that for an incentive!

### **How will the winning pitch be decided on the final evening?**

We have drawn a panel of judges from the venture capital industry. The assessment criteria will be distributed at the start of the event.

### **I have an idea or have started a venture. Shouldn't I be in stealth mode? How can I protect “my” idea in an open event like this?**

First let's understand that every attendee has to contribute something to the event in order to get help and move “your” idea forward. Think of the Dragon's Den program on CBC – there is a risk in exposing your venture to the Dragons and to the viewers, and there is also opportunity. Access to funding, skills, sales channels and possibly partners to work with are all part of the opportunity. Every idea has the potential to be dramatically improved with a little brainstorming.

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**What about Non-Disclosure Agreements that my lawyer talks about?**

Non-disclosures are an important part of enabling registration of Intellectual Property for patents, however, what these processes are designed to protect is the essence of how you are going to implement the function, not what the function is. NDAs are rarely used when approaching funders as the logistics of protecting one idea versus another for people who see many ideas per day simply are unworkable. Professional ethics should be the guidelines that are used in this event.

**So tell me the benefit again?**

What everyone needs is help. We all have incredible skills in many areas, and getting help in those other “I dunno” areas is critical to venture success. This event is simply designed to bring together diversely skilled, interested and motivated people that will hopefully finish the weekend with something really interesting and motivating to continue working on. By participating in the weekend, we hope you will find the missing pieces that make your venture stronger and more likely to succeed – and a \$5,000 winning incorporation prize would make a great start!.

**Who can I contact for more information?**

Rick O’Connor, President of TON is the event organizer - [rickoco@theottawanetwork.com](mailto:rickoco@theottawanetwork.com)