2013 Polsky Center Accelerator Program
Description and Expectations

What is the Polsky Center Accelerator Program? The Accelerator Program gives University of Chicago students the opportunity to develop their own businesses for a summer in the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship. Students receive office space, access to Polsky Center staff, alumni entrepreneur, and Chicago investor mentors, as well as programming designed to help them overcome many of the hurdles to launching a business.

Program Expectations and Benefits
- Teams work full-time for 10 weeks on their startup in offices in Chicago Booth’s Harper Center.
- Teams receive mentoring from Chicago Booth alumni and Chicago-area entrepreneurs and investors.
- The Polsky Center hosts regular events and programming specifically catered to the needs of Accelerator Program entrepreneurs where experts provide useful information on topics including marketing, sales, presentation skills, and pitching to angel and venture investors.
- The program provides each team with a stipend of $10,000. This stipend entitles the Polsky Center to a small equity position when the team raises its next round of funding or sells the business.
- The Accelerator Program culminates with a Demo Day, when companies present before investors, mentors, faculty, and the University and Chicago entrepreneurial communities. These final presentations and a concluding reception give companies exposure to a wider audience that can help their teams going forward.

Accelerator Program Alumni:

Accelerator Program Application Process: Students apply to the Accelerator Program as a business rather than as individuals. Applications are due Monday, April 15, 2013 by noon CST and must contain the following:
- Online team application and essay responses
- Team member resumes and company slides submitted to AP@lists.chicagobooth.edu.

Accelerator Program Selection Process: Applications are evaluated by a committee of Polsky Center staff and faculty who judge businesses based on the merits of the idea, progress-to-date, and management team. The committee may also use a business’ progress in the New Venture Challenge start-up program to assist in the decision-making process if the business is a part of that program. Teams may also be interviewed by faculty and staff of the Polsky Center before a decision on their candidacy is made.

Chicago Booth Accelerator Program Key Dates:
- April 15, 2013: Application deadline. The online team application must be filled out and resumes and company slides should be submitted electronically to the Polsky Center through to: AP@lists.chicagobooth.edu
- April 22-April 26: Teams may be asked to interview with Polsky Center program administrators
- June 17, 2013: Accelerator Program begins in the Harper Center

Questions? Students may also make an appointment to speak with Starr Marcello (starr.marcello@chicagobooth.edu), Director of Operations, Tom Ancona (tom.ancona@chicagobooth.edu), Associate Director, or Professor Ellen Rudnick (ellen.rudnick@chicagobooth.edu).

Last updated: December 18, 2012