

ST. LOUIS STARTUP challenge

highlight • strengthen • reward

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For Immediate Release

STARTUP CHALLENGE OPENS WITH \$120,000 IN CASH PRIZES

ST. LOUIS STARTUP CHALLENGE ANNOUNCES BIGGER PRIZES FOR MORE WINNERS

St. Louis, May 29, 2014—With some of the biggest sponsors in St. Louis and some of the best prize packages, St. Louis Startup Challenge kicks off its fifth year with a proven track record of finding and funding the best local entrepreneurs. This year, Startup Challenge presents \$20,000 in new prizes and four new award categories.

“Our goal is to continue to evolve the competition to meet the ever-changing needs of the startup community,” said Travis Sheridan, assistant vice president of innovation and entrepreneurship for St. Louis Economic Development Partnership and chair of the Startup Challenge. “We believe startups are stronger simply as a result of competing in the Startup Challenge.”

Through funds provided by long-time sponsor Edward Jones, St. Louis Economic Development Partnership awards the top three winners with no-strings-attached, cash prizes totaling \$100,000 (\$50,000, \$30,000, \$20,000 respectively). New this year is the addition of four inclusion awards with cash prizes of \$5,000 each: most promising minority-owned business, most promising woman-owned business, most promising immigrant-owned business, and most promising veteran-owned business.

“In a year and a half, Juristat has gone from conception to revenue generation,” said Drew Winship, owner of Juristat, the 2013 first place winner. “Winning Startup Challenge has helped accelerate that growth to the point that we are expanding our team and reducing our timeline to profitability.”

Cash prizes are accompanied by professional office space within the STLventureWorks small business incubator network, enrollment in Center for Business Growth mentoring program, complementary booth space at Startup Connection, and top tier accounting, legal and marketing services.

The call for applications runs from June 1 to July 15, 2014. The winning companies will be announced November 19, 2014 at the [Startup Connection](#). With an expected turnout exceeding 1,000, this partnership raises the profile of the best startups in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

2013 WINNERS

1. Juristat
2. Young Innovators
3. Observable Networks

[Link to a complete list of winners, 2010-2013.](#)

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“We applaud innovation in St. Louis,” said St. Louis County Executive Charlie A. Dooley. “And we welcome new ways to support and celebrate our rising talent. If you have a big idea, we want you right here in St. Louis, and we want you to know that we have the resources, like our incubators and the Startup Challenge, to help you give wings to that big idea.”



This year’s top tier professional services are provided by: [Thompson Coburn](#); [Carmody MacDonald](#); [Armstrong Teasdale](#); [RubinBrown](#); [LarsonAllen](#); [Stone Carlie](#); [Common Ground Public Relations](#); [Spoke Marketing](#); and [The Vandiver Group](#).

“We love being part of the Startup Challenge,” said Denise Bentele, CEO of Common Ground Public Relations. “It’s exciting to be in on the ground floor, supporting and strategizing with these up-and-coming companies. I think it’s just as rewarding for us as it is for them.”

Every industry sector is eligible—including both for- and non-profit. Startups must be new or early stage with no more than \$100,000 in annual revenue. For additional information about eligibility requirements, competition rules, judging criteria, and important deadlines, visit STLStartupChallenge.com.

Connect with the Startup Challenge: [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and Twitter using #STLStartupChallenge.

About the Partnership

St. Louis Economic Development Partnership brings together the economic development agencies from St. Louis County and City of St. Louis to drive growth, generate prosperity and catalyze investment throughout the region. As an Accredited Economic Development Organization in Missouri, the Partnership provides a broad range of services, including entrepreneurial support (financing and incubators), business expansion and retention, real estate and community development and international trade support through World Trade Center St. Louis.

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