



CITY OF DURHAM
Office of Public Affairs
101 CITY HALL PLAZA
DURHAM, NC 27701

News Media Contact:

Amy Blalock
Public Affairs Manager
(919) 560-4123 x 11253
(919) 475-7735 (cell)
Amy.Blalock@DurhamNC.gov
<http://Facebook.com/CityofDurhamNC>
<http://Twitter.com/CityofDurhamNC>
<http://Instagram.com/CityofDurhamNC>
<http://YouTube.com/CityofDurhamNC>

News Release

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Share! Local startups & entrepreneurs looking to test their products & services should now apply to new #Durham pilot program

Durham Seeks Entrepreneurs for Innovation Partnership

Pilot Program for Local Startups & Entrepreneurs to Test Their Products & Services

DURHAM, NC – Local startups and entrepreneurs looking to develop and test products and services now have a new way to do so thanks to a pilot program from the City of Durham.

The City's Office of Performance and Innovation is launching the new [Innovate Durham](#) program to open up the City's resources for entrepreneurs to develop, test and scale innovative solutions to improve City operations and solve community problems. This pilot program, now accepting [applications](#) until Monday, August 28, will give startups and entrepreneurs a way to test their products or services using City data and infrastructure.

According to Josh Edwards, director of the City's Office of Performance and Innovation, the City is looking for partners that can help advance the [Strategic Plan](#). "We live in a community with a robust startup scene and we want to tap into this hotbed of innovation to help us improve the quality and efficiency of our services and operations as well as help support economic vitality, social equity and environmental quality," Edwards said. "If this pilot is successful, we hope to make this social entrepreneurship program one of the cornerstones of innovation in our city."

According to Edwards, as a client and testing ground, the City will give the selected entrepreneurs a valuable use case for their products and services. "This exposure can potentially help attract new investors and clients since participants will get access to our resources and networks as well as mentoring and guidance from a City champion," Edwards

said. "In return for providing a valuable testing ground and access to our resources, we hope to learn about new technologies and approaches to improve the delivery of our services or provide savings to our residents."

Durham is the first city in North Carolina to start a public-private partnership program and is modeling its pilot after existing programs in [Kansas City, Mo.](#), [Pittsburgh, Pa.](#) and [San Francisco, Calif.](#)

To apply for the Innovate Durham Program, an online application form must be completed. Applicants will be evaluated on a variety of criteria and a select number will be invited to partner with the City in this 12-week program. For more information or to submit an online application, visit the [City's website](#) or contact Edwards at (919) 560-4111, ext. 20102 or by email at Josh.Edwards@DurhamNC.gov.

About the Budget and Management Services Department

The City of Durham [Budget and Management Services Department](#) is responsible for the development and oversight of the City's annual budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The department is also responsible for performance management, continuous improvement, and strategic planning. A division of the department, the [Office of Performance and Innovation](#), serves as internal consultants, helping City departments accomplish Durham's "One Vision and Five Goals" through advancing the City's [Strategic Plan](#); providing framework for data-driven decisions; fostering a culture of innovation; and facilitating process improvements.

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