

Stanford University

## Technology Entrepreneurship

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[Forum](#) > [General](#) > [Class Project](#) > am I qualified to participate on a team for this class?

### am I qualified to participate on a team for this class?

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KW

**Karen West**

Posted about 1 hour ago.

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Hi - I have a question for perhaps the class mentors, TAs, but also, one person who contacted me in regard to joining their team (Amber Chang for: "FicRec: a website featuring an entertainment recommender for fictional works and reviews").

I submitted my "brainstorm" of ideas, but have not yet done my evaluations, but will before Sunday, as well as watch some videos not watched yet. However, before I join a team, I was wondering how you evaluate whether you have the right skills to join a team in this class. I have no idea whether it would make sense to work on any of my brainstorm ideas either - wouldn't you need feedback on those first? And if I'm in-experienced, then perhaps joining someone else's team, if I have enough of the required skills, would make more sense?

I am just learning more about web programming, and have done only a few introductory level things for Android Mobile devices in an online class, and also, an intro. with ruby/rails (part 1, but never did get to do part 2). I learned a bit about breaking web sites in software security - but most of my background was not in web programming - more of a beginner in that space.

Last semester, I took a class on being an entrepreneur, but we evaluated start ups in various different economies including our own, but we were not members of a team that tried to promote our own business model. That is what caught my eye in this class.

But I see that most projects involve a strong web programming background - and given I'm more of a beginner there - this is why I ask this question - I would like to learn more - but I do not want to advertise that I'm an expert in that area. My background was mostly as a software engineer (C) in embedded systems, and just recently started to take online classes to expand on that, and my major was in EE, not CS way back when. So in the recent online class space, I learned to program in Python, Java with XML for Android devices, database formats, introductory ruby on rails, a bit about the spatial computing database area in a GPS class, etc, so all these skills are new for me! I'm not sure if R is used anywhere but I'm half way through that language too (for data analysis). From my EE background, I also know MATLAB and I have a good understanding of hardware (although it's all from my education, not professional experience). As far as business related experience (outside of working in high tech company software groups for 18 years), I've only taken courses in economics (no others!)

So my question for this particular entrepreneur type class is: is this enough to participate?

If not, perhaps I should come back once I've filled in some skill and experience gaps! ;-)

Thank you for any advice. I'll continue on for now, and Amber Chang, if you read this, your feedback for your invitation would be helpful too. Thanks and good luck.

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☒ Resolved ☐ Unresolved

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## Replies



**Paulo Machado** (Mentor)

Posted 29 minutes ago.

0

Hi Karen-- You seem well qualified!

Most of the class is focused in the business/market aspects. We build simple (paper or wireframe) prototype, surveys, simple landing page, create a video, PPTs, etc. Only simple skills are required, and we often refer to tools that do not require coding.

Technical experience is valuable to orient the project and the market experiments, and to create these materials. Technical expertise also helps if you decide *later* to persist and launch a startup afterwards-- although, I would suggest not deciding now and see where things go from here. Most teams do not build functioning apps during the class-- and especially nothing very complex given the timeframe, workload, and the fact that most have full time jobs.

Find others that you connect well with and team up with them. Most of the learning in the class happens in working together and especially working in an idea that the team believes in, like in real startups.

Good luck!

[Comment](#)

**KW** **Karen West** less than a minute ago.

Thank you Paulo! I was not sure and did not want to sign up to be part of a team to which I would not be able to contribute. So I'll stick with it. Thanks for the response. ;-)

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