



*Audacity Labs is a start-up incubator program for teens, where teams of student entrepreneurs will work together to conceive, develop, and launch a start-up enterprise. This will be done through an intense structured program of content and coaching, integrating a core set of skills: lean start-up, design thinking, and coding. The program is the result of a collaboration of institutions with expertise across these facets of entrepreneurial learning, including: the Museum of Life and Science, Duke University's Innovation and Entrepreneurship initiative, American Underground, and the Re:City Network.*

## A GROWING REGION

The Triangle Region - building upon the history, brand, and continued scientific and economic success of the Research Triangle Park, and supported with aggressive investment and economic development policies - has been witness to impressive growth over the past several decade, particularly in knowledge intensive sectors such as biosciences, interactive and gaming, and ICT.

Named the 'Startup Capital of the South', the city of Durham has been an exemplar of this development, home to hundreds of startups, multiple venture funds, and incubators / accelerators. Driven by the ground-breaking efforts of organizations such as American Underground, NC IDEA, and Duke University, the city has become a magnet for high-potential entrepreneurs, with resources and culture critical for individuals and teams to establish themselves and connect with other aspiring entrepreneurs, technologists, and designers.

## A GROWING OPPORTUNITY GAP

This growth, while helping position the region on the global innovation map, has not been equally distributed across the triangle's citizens. The region's resilient quest for innovation — whether in healthcare, technology, or nonprofits — has fostered an environment wherein some audiences have excellent opportunities to exposure to professional role models, and logistical and price barriers. As a result, an Opportunity Gap has continued to persist and even widen, particularly for resources which bring together students across racial and economic spectra to pursue collective ideas and ambitions.

## THE PROGRAM

Audacity Labs is a start-up incubator for teens. It will enable participants to zoom in on a specific issue or customer need, prototype ideas to address that need, and develop a new product or service, potentially leading to a sustained enterprise. In so doing,

## Our Mission

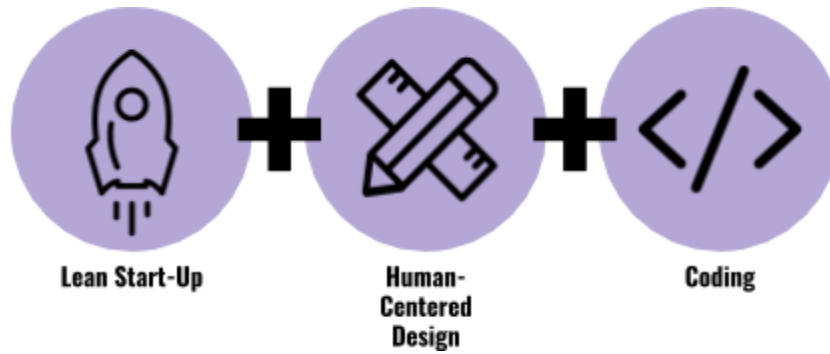
Audacity Labs is a program designed to democratize entrepreneurship by empowering local 9th-12th grade students with the tools and modern skills in coding and entrepreneurial thinking.



students will develop key 21st century skills

The Museum of Life and Science, and our

RIGHT:  
The three components  
of Audacity Labs.



associated with the start-up process, including problem-solving, creativity, confident communications, computational thinking, and collaboration.

Student cohorts will be divided into teams of four to six individuals. Each team will focus on the development of a start-up, with either a commercial orientation, a social enterprise, or a hybrid of both.

Crucially, students will be actively recruited from both traditional audiences and underserved populations, creating teams of students with a diversity of interests, strengths, and backgrounds. This recruitment will be enabled by pre-existing relationships that our collaborating institutions have with: Durham Public Schools, Chapel Hill Carrboro Public Schools, Citizen Schools, Durham Academy, and the Duke School. The program will aim for a diverse make-up in both overall cohort and team, in terms of race, gender, and socioeconomic status. At least half of participants will be those on free or reduced-price lunch, and will be provided a scholarship to enable fee-free participation.

## OUTCOMES

We believe that entrepreneurship is more than a set of skills. It is a mindset and resiliency which can serve an individual throughout his or her life, no matter the direction it may take.

partner institutions, is committed to ensuring such an impact for as many students as we can reach, giving them:

- An understanding of **problem deconstruction** and **solution development** with learning, efficiency, and impact as the parameters of success.
- A **tolerance** for, and appreciation of 'failure' as a byproduct of the innovation process.
- The **confidence** born of having to pitch an idea, and turn doubters into champions.
- An **agile** mindset, and willingness to try something over and over again with improvements, steps backward, and changes of direction.
- An **empathetic** and user-centered outlook, where clarification of *need* is as important as the resulting ideas.
- Crucial **business acumen**, including the ability to manage projects, account for financials, and work with others.
- Growing **ambitions** and **awareness** of what is possible, from exposure to mentors ranging from VCs to Duke Students to local CEO's.
- An expanded **network**, engaging participants with local organizations and giving them the tools to navigate their current communities, and those they may encounter in the future.

## A Portfolio of Methods

**Curriculum and Methodology:** A customized, structured program integrating Google Ventures' [Design Sprint methodology](#), IDEO.org's [DesignKit](#), and Code.Org's [App Lab](#).

**Workshops:** We will 'learn by doing', with a series of workshops applying design thinking through 'Sprints'. Each day of a sprint, or iteration, will progress through one step of the overall process of: research, ideation, design, prototyping, and testing.

**Coding / Computational Thinking:** Using open source coding curricula curated by our partner CSbyUs, participants will receive introductory training in coding principles and methods.

**Team Coaches:** Student teams be supported by Coaches - university students and recent graduates - who themselves will receive training in facilitation and project-based learning.

**Professional Mentoring:** Drawn from the combined network of our collaborating partners, mentors will provide targeted training and guidance to participants in a range of areas key to start-up development, including: leadership development, design, team building, financial modeling, and communications.

## Team

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Doug Speight | Entrepreneurship Lead | Executive Director, American Underground

Matthew Nash | University Lead | Managing Director of Social Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Duke University

Tanner Johnson | Computer Science Lead | Founder of CSbyUs and Mobile Citizens

Rob Shields | Social Enterprise Lead | Executive Director, ReCity Network

### TIMELINE:

