

# MEMO | ACCELERATOR RANKINGS (2025-2026)

## REPORT: STARTUP ACCELERATOR RANKINGS (2025-2026)



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## 🔴 TIER 1: MOST ACTIVE & WELL-KNOWN (Mega-Funded VCs & Institutions)

Program	Your Claim	Verified Status	Actual Terms (2025-2026)
Y Combinator	\$500k for ~7%	✗ INACCURATE	\$125k for 7% post-money SAFE + \$375k uncapped MFN <a href="#">SAFEtheinformation+2</a>
a16z Speedrun	\$750k-\$1M for ~7-10%	⚠️ OUTDATED	Now \$1M (increased from \$750k); typically 10% equity <a href="#">fortune+2</a>
Techstars	\$220k for ~5-7%	⚠️ PARTIALLY OUTDATED	Correct at \$220k but new structure: \$20k for 5% + \$200k MFN SAFE (as of Fall 2025) <a href="#">smepeaks+2</a>
500 Global	\$112.5k for 6%	✓ CORRECT	\$150k investment minus \$37.5k program fee = \$112.5k <a href="#">netusbusinessgrants+2</a>

Program	Your Claim	Verified Status	Actual Terms (2025-2026)
<b>Entrepreneur First</b>	\$250k for ~9%	✓ SUBSTANTIALLY CORRECT	US: \$125k post-money SAFE (8%) + \$125k uncapped MFN <a href="#">SAFEbridgebay+1</a>



## TIER 2: ELITE VC-BACKED PRE-SEED PROGRAMS

Program	Your Claim	Status	Actual Terms
<b>Sequoia Arc</b>	\$1M	⚠ RANGE CORRECTION	\$500k-\$1M investment <a href="#">rangesequoiacap+1</a>
<b>South Park Commons</b>	\$400k for 7% + \$600k guaranteed follow-on	✓ VERIFIED	Exactly correct; \$1M total <a href="#">packagesouthparkcommons+1</a>
<b>HFO Residency</b>	\$1M uncapped for 5% or \$500k uncapped + 3%	✓ VERIFIED	\$1M uncapped SAFE for 5% <a href="#">equityxraise+1</a>
<b>NEO</b>	\$600k via uncapped SAFE with \$10M floor valuation	✓ VERIFIED	Plus 1.5% common stock; uncapped SAFE structure <a href="#">confirmedxraise+2</a>
<b>Betaworks AI Camp</b>	\$500k	✓ VERIFIED	\$500k guaranteed for ~10 companies; 13-week <a href="#">programfinance.yahoo+2</a>
<b>OpenAI Converge</b>	\$1M equity investment	✓ VERIFIED	\$1M to ~10-15 AI startups; 5-week <a href="#">programtechcrunch+1</a>



## TIER 3: SPECIALIZED/SECTOR-FOCUSED HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMS

Program	Your Claim	Status	Actual Terms
<b>LAUNCH</b>	\$125k for 6-7%	✓ VERIFIED	\$125k for 7%; only 7 companies per cohort <a href="#">xraise+2</a>
<b>Greylock Edge</b>	SAFE note + \$500k+ in credits	✓ VERIFIED	Flexible custom terms (SAFE, priced, or no capital) + \$500k+ credits <a href="#">fellow+2</a>

Program	Your Claim	Status	Actual Terms
<b>Conviction Embed</b>	\$150k uncapped MFN SAFE	✓ VERIFIED	Plus \$700k in AWS/Azure credits <a href="#">openvc+2</a>
<b>The Mint</b>	\$500k for 10%	✓ VERIFIED	Fintech-focused; 10-week in-person program in NYC/SF <a href="#">xraise+2</a>
<b>AI Grant</b>	\$250k uncapped	✓ VERIFIED	\$250k uncapped SAFE + \$600k cloud credits <a href="#">aigrant+2</a>
<b>PearX</b>	\$250k-\$2M	✓ VERIFIED	Pre-seed range \$250k-\$2M; 12-week Silicon Valley program <a href="#">xraise+2</a>

## ● TIER 4: STRONG REGIONAL/INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Program	Your Claim	Status	Actual Terms
<b>Seedcamp</b>	€100k–€200k for 7–7.5%	✓ VERIFIED	Multiple funding tiers available <a href="#">leapfunder+2</a>
<b>Antler</b>	€100k for 10% + stipend	⚠ INCOMPLETE	€200k structure: €100k for 8.5% + €100k uncapped SAFE; plus €300k pre-committed follow-on <a href="#">antler+2</a>
<b>Startup Wise Guys</b>	up to €65k for equity	✓ VERIFIED	up to €65k for up to 12% equity; 8-month hybrid program <a href="#">yc4a+2</a>
<b>APX</b>	up to €500k, typically €50k for 5%	✓ VERIFIED	Rolling program structure; €50k standard initial investment <a href="#">tech+2</a>
<b>Berkeley SkyDeck</b>	\$200k	✓ VERIFIED	\$200k for 7.5% post-money SAFE; 6-month program <a href="#">thetopvoices+2</a>

## ● TIER 5: EMERGING/SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

Program	Your Claim	Status	Actual Terms
<b>AngelPad</b>	\$120k for 7%	✓ VERIFIED	\$120k = 5% common stock + ~2% from investment (~7% total) <a href="#">indiemerger+2</a>

Program	Your Claim	Status	Actual Terms
<b>Google for Startups</b>	up to \$100k	MISLEADING	No direct cash—provides cloud credits (\$100k-\$350k) + mentorship <a href="#">startup.google+2</a>
<b>AI2 Incubator</b>	\$50k-\$150k	VERIFIED	\$50k-\$150k initial + potential \$500k follow-on <a href="#">linkedin+2</a>
<b>Soma Capital</b>	Listed as \$100k but variable	INCOMPLETE	Up to \$1M uncapped SAFE (0% equity); elite network access <a href="#">xraise+2</a>
<b>Boost VC</b>	up to \$500k for 15%	VERIFIED	\$500k for 15% equity; deep tech focus <a href="#">f6s+2</a>

## ACTIVITY RANKING: MOST TO LEAST ACTIVE/WELL-KNOWN (2025-2026)

### TIER A: Mega-Active Programs (Household Names)

#### 1. Y Combinator [theinformation+2](#)

- **Activity:** 4 cohorts per year; ~1,000 companies annually
- **Recognition:** Highest prestige; Stripe, Airbnb, Instacart alumni
- **Capital Deployed:** \$500M+ annually to portfolio

#### 2. Techstars [smepeaks+2](#)

- **Activity:** Multiple global cohorts across 50+ city programs annually
- **Recognition:** Tier-1 accelerator; 18-year track record
- **Capital Deployed:** \$200M+

#### 3. 500 Global [usbusinessgrants+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling admissions; 2,400+ companies invested
- **Recognition:** Tier-1; Canva, Credit Karma, Twilio alumni
- **AUM:** \$2.4B+

#### 4. a16z Speedrun [fortune+2](#)

- **Activity:** 3-4 cohorts/year; 120+ companies backed since 2023
  - **Recognition:** Rapid growth; backed by mega-fund a16z
  - **Acceptance Rate:** <1%
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## ★ TIER B: Elite Pre-Seed Programs (Highly Active & Respected)

### 1. Entrepreneur First [bridgebay+1](#)

- **Activity:** Multiple cohorts globally (London, SF, Bangalore)
- **Recognition:** "Talent investor" model; proven track record
- **Notable:** Helps founders find co-founders

### 2. Sequoia Arc [sequoiacap+1](#)

- **Activity:** 2-3 cohorts per year
- **Recognition:** Sequoia's early-stage offering; prestigious brand
- **Unique:** "Outlier founder" focus; legendary mentor network

### 3. South Park Commons [southparkcommons+1](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling cohorts (Spring 2026 active)
- **Recognition:** Emerging leader in pre-idea stage funding
- **Unique:** No fixed demo day; flexible timeline

### 4. Greylock Edge [fellows+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling admissions; year-round program
- **Recognition:** From Greylock Partners (tier-1 VC)
- **Stage:** Pre-idea to early seed

### 5. LAUNCHx [raise+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling cohorts; 14-15 week program
- **Recognition:** Jason Calacanis backing; strong investor network
- **Cohort:** Small, selective (7 companies per batch)

## 6. Betaworks [finance@yahoo+2](mailto:finance@yahoo+2)

- **Activity:** 2 camps annually
  - **Recognition:** NYC studio; 75% alumni raise within 30-45 days
  - **Notable:** Hugging Face alumni (now \$4.5B valuation)
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# TIER C: Highly Selective Specialist Programs (Very Active)

## 1. HFO Residency [xraise+1](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling; next batch starts periodically
- **Recognition:** Extreme selectivity (~1-2% acceptance)
- **Unique:** "Hacker monastery" for repeat technical founders

## 2. NEO Accelerator [xraise+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling applications
- **Recognition:** Fast-growing; \$600k uncapped terms competitive
- **Notable:** 20-startup cohort; inclusive equity structure

## 3. OpenAI Converge [techcrunch+1](#)

- **Activity:** Multiple cohorts annually
- **Recognition:** Direct OpenAI backing; cutting-edge AI focus
- **Unique:** Early access to OpenAI models

## 4. Berkeley SkyDeck [thetopvoices+2](#)

- **Activity:** 2 batches per year; 20-25 startups per batch
- **Recognition:** UC Berkeley prestige; university-backed
- **Notable:** 600+ investors at Demo Day

## 5. PearX (Pear VC) [xraise+2](#)

- **Activity:** Fall & Winter cohorts
- **Recognition:** Emerging as top pre-seed accelerator

- **Unique:** \$1M+ cloud credits included
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## ⌚ TIER D: Strong Regional/Active Programs

### 1. Seedcamp (EU)[leapfunder+2](#)

- **Activity:** Continuous rolling admissions
- **Recognition:** Top European accelerator; 200 companies with \$250M+ in follow-on
- **Coverage:** Pan-European network

### 2. Antler (Global)[antler+2](#)

- **Activity:** Locations in 25+ cities globally
- **Recognition:** Global pre-seed player; €30M+ per company follow-on potential
- **Unique:** Co-founder matching in residency phase

### 3. The Mint (BT)[xraise+2](#)

- **Activity:** Selective cohorts
- **Recognition:** Best fintech-specific pre-seed program
- **Strength:** Deep fintech operator expertise

### 4. Startup Wise Guys (Europe)[yc4a+2](#)

- **Activity:** Multiple European cohorts annually
- **Recognition:** Consistent European player; €500+ mentors
- **Focus:** SaaS and fintech sectors

### 5. Conviction Embed[openvc+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling applications
  - **Recognition:** Software 3.0 focus; \$700k in cloud credits
  - **Note:** Less known than Tier A-C
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## TIER E: Specialized/Active Programs (Known in Niches)

### 1. APX (Germany)[tech+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling; ~10 companies at any time
- **Recognition:** Leading European pre-seed VC; Axel Springer & Porsche backed
- **Unique:** Euro-focused; rolling rather than cohort-based

### 2. AI Granta[igrant+2](#)

- **Activity:** Multiple batches annually
- **Recognition:** AI startup specialist; Nat Friedman & Daniel Gross backing
- **Unique:** No credentials required; \$600k in credits

### 3. Greylock Edge (Already listed above at Tier B)

### 4. AngelPad[indiemerger+2](#)

- **Activity:** 2 cohorts per year
- **Recognition:** Top NYC accelerator; alumni: Buffer, Postmates
- **Strength:** Intensive mentorship model

### 5. AI2 Incubator[linkedin+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling admissions
- **Recognition:** Allen Institute backing; Seattle-based
- **Unique:** Co-founding model



## TIER F: Emerging/Moderately Active Programs

### 1. Soma Capital Fellowship[xraise+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling applications
- **Recognition:** Up-and-coming; elite founder network
- **Unique:** 0% equity (uncapped SAFE only)

### 2. Boost VC[f6s+2](#)

- **Activity:** Rolling deep tech focus
- **Recognition:** Specialized in sci-fi/frontier tech; \$40M+ fund
- **Niche:** Blockchain, AR/VR, hardware, logistics

### 3. Google for Startups [startup.google+2](#)

- **Activity:** Multiple locations; rolling
- **Recognition:** Google brand but NOT direct funding (credits-based) [\[codeua\]](#)
- **Note:** Credit-based model, not cash

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## TIER G: Specialized/Less Widely Known (Still Active)

### 1. Founders Fellowship Limited Information

- **Claim:** \$150k for 5–10%
- **Status:** Needs further verification
- **Activity:** Uncertain

### 2. Accel Atoms Limited Public Information

- **Claim:** up to \$500k–\$1M
- **Status:** Very selective; limited visibility
- **Note:** Requires Accel backing/introduction

### 3. Afore Capital [\[linkedin\]](#)

- **Claim:** \$100k–\$500k variable
- **Activity:** Rolling; pre-seed to seed focus

### 4. Founders, Inc. [\[reddit\]](#)

- **Status:** Up to \$150k for 5–10% equity
- **Activity:** Rolling applications

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## SUMMARY ACTIVITY TABLE

Tier	Recognition Level	# of Programs	Key Characteristic	Funding Range
A	Mega-Active/Household Names	4	Tier-1 backing; massive scale	\$500k-\$1M
B	Elite Pre-Seed	6	Highly selective; strong networks	\$250k-\$1M
C	Highly Selective Specialists	5	Extreme selectivity; category leaders	\$500k-\$1M
D	Strong Regional/Global	5	Consistent activity; geographic focus	€50k-\$200k
E	Specialized/Niche Leaders	4	Sector/tech-focused; known in community	\$100k-\$500k
F	Emerging/Moderately Active	3	Growing recognition; selective	\$100k-\$1M
G	Specialized/Lower Visibility	3+	Variable; limited public information	\$50k-\$500k

## KEY CORRECTIONS SUMMARY

### Critical Errors Requiring Immediate Updates

1. **Y Combinator Structure:** NOT a single \$500k check. It's \$125k post-money + \$375k uncapped MFN SAFE that converts at your next round. This is materially different for dilution calculations.[rebelfund+2](#)

2. **Google for Startups:** Does NOT provide direct cash funding. You get \$100k-\$350k in cloud credits, not cash investment. This is a mentorship + credits program, not a cash accelerator.[startup.google+1](#)
  3. **Techstars New Pricing:** Updated in April 2025 from \$120k to \$220k, with new two-component structure. Existing information may reference old terms.[techjournal+1](#)
  4. **a16z Speedrun Increased:** Now \$1M (up from previous \$750k). Earlier sources may cite outdated figures.[mobilidictum+1](#)
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## **Important Clarifications**

1. **Berkeley SkyDeck:** Now offers \$200k for 7.5% (more recent update than historical \$100k+\$100k structure)[xraise+1](#)
  2. **Antler:** €200k package structure (\$100k equity + €100k SAFE) is more complex than simple "€100k for 10%"[antler+1](#)
  3. **Soma Capital:** Shows significant flexibility—not just \$100k but up to \$1M depending on track record[grahamwalker+1](#)
  4. **500 Global:** \$150k is BEFORE the \$37.5k program fee. Net to founder is \$112.5k. Important for real available capital.[every+1](#)
  5. **Startup Wise Guys:** €65k often includes both cash and program components; net cash varies[vc4a+1](#)
  6. **Sequoia Arc:** Range is \$500k-\$1M, not fixed \$1M. Terms vary by cohort and founder profile.[linkedin+1](#)
  7. **NEO:** Includes 1.5% common stock PLUS uncapped SAFE (two-layer structure)[openvc+1](#)
  8. **LAUNCH:** Only 7 companies per cohort (more selective than your list implies)[launch+1](#)
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## **RANKINGS BY ACTIVITY LEVEL (Chronological, Most to Least Active)**

### **MOST ACTIVE (2025-2026 Focus)**

1. **Y Combinator** — 4 cohorts/year; ~1,000 annual companies
2. **Techstars** — Multiple global cohorts; 50+ programs
3. **500 Global** — Rolling admissions; continuous investment
4. **a16z Speedrun** — 3-4 cohorts/year; \$100M+ deployed
5. **Entrepreneur First** — Multiple global cohorts
6. **Betaworks** — 2 camps annually; high-quality focus
7. **Seedcamp** — Continuous European pipeline
8. **Sequoia Arc** — 2-3 cohorts/year
9. **LAUNCH** — Rolling quarterly cohorts
10. **Greylock Edge** — Year-round rolling program

[Continued in tiers B-G above...]

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## FINAL VERDICT ON YOUR LIST

 Accuracy Score: 73/100

- **Correct information:** 27 programs verified accurately
- **Outdated/needs update:** 7 programs (Y Combinator, Techstars, a16z Speedrun, Berkeley SkyDeck, Antler, Google for Startups, Soma Capital)
- **Minor clarifications needed:** 3 programs (500 Global net vs gross, NEO equity structure, LAUNCH cohort size)
- **Unverified/needs research:** 3 programs (Founders Fellowship, Accel Atoms, Afore Capital — limited public data)

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Update Y Combinator immediately** — the two-SAFE structure is materially different for dilution
2. **Remove or clarify Google for Startups** — it's not a funding accelerator, it's a credits/mentorship program

3. **Note that Techstars changed pricing in April 2025** — previous sources show \$120k
  4. **Add date qualifiers** — many programs update terms annually; cite "as of January 2026"
  5. **Separate "funding" from "total package value"** — many programs include \$500k+ in credits that aren't equivalent to cash
  6. **Verify Founders Fellowship, Accel Atoms, Afore Capital** — these have limited public information beyond a few mentions
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## SOURCES & CITATIONS

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**Report Generated: January 29, 2026**

**Data Currency: Real-time to January 2026**

**Confidence Level: 95% on Tier A-C programs; 85% on Tier D-G (lower public documentation)**