# Concept to Company Application

January 9th-February 3rd 2012

StartLabs is a non-profit, founded by MIT students that is creating the next generation of technical entrepreneurs. StartLabs has created a program that will guide students and alumni of MIT (up to 3 years out) to turn their concepts into companies during the month of January of 2012. The program will bring in 5-7 teams this January to work at our space next to the Friendly Toast near Kendall Square (check it out at *startlabs.org/ourhouse*).   These teams will receive expert coaching and just about any resources within reason (legal, design, networking, monetary) required to turn their concepts into companies.

We are looking for teams of people who are currently working on a project - it can be a class project, thesis project, or any other type of project.  The only requirement is that you have a concept, a team, and have the capability to build your concept over the month of January (this means you must be technically capable of building your product).

*Hint:  there are only two things that we care about - You can build your product, and you're committed to turning your idea into a reality.*

**Applications are due by Sunday November 20th at 11:59PM and should be submitted online at startlabs.org/submit.  Early Application Deadline for feedback and suggestions is due by Tuesday November 15th at 11:59pm at startlabs.org/submit.**

## CONTACT
**First things first, who should we contact when we need to get a hold of you?**

Name of Primary Point of Contact: **Troy Astorino**

E-mail of Primary Point of Contact (@mit): **astorino@mit.edu**

Phone Number of Primary Point of Contact: **(949) 929-2082**

What do you plan on calling your Company: **Collabow**
*(Don't worry- it's not set in stone)*

E-mail address of founding team: **collabow@mit.edu**
*(Don't' have one yet? Go to: http://ist.mit.edu/services/email/maillists)*

What is the 140 character summary of your idea?   - Tweet it to @Start_Labs #C2C
 *(OK we know that actually leaves you with 124 characters. Be creative!)*

**Collabow tie-ing together devices to make real-time remote collaboration more efficient and expressive.  @Start_Labs #C2C**

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## TEAM

## Alright, now let's talk a little bit about the team you have assembled
**If you don't have a team yet – start talking with likeminded people at *startlabs.org/discuss***

1. Name, Major, Graduation Year, School, e-mail, current residence, other of each team member that will be participating in the C2C program
*Separate team members by one line each, include any other information you think is relevant*

**Troy Astorino, Physics and Aerospace Engineering, 2013, MIT, astorino@mit.edu, Baker**
**Andrew Dorne, EECS and Economics, 2014, MIT, adorne@mit.edu, Phi Sigma Kappa**

2. Why is your team awesome? Give specific examples of why each person is really good at what they do.
*Separate team members by one line each. Try to be as descriptive as possible about the examples - this is probably the most important question of the application.*

**We're both coders with a good sense for design.**

**Troy is a hacker with a soft spot for beautiful programming languages. He's been coding for 5 years, and has made projects ranging from a Mario-type video game to a networked flight simulator. Last year he was introduced to web development through the IAP Web Programming Competition, and something about those all-nighters trying to push that next vital feature made him fall in love with creating beautiful web apps. He has always been fascinated by how companies and products can transform the world, and has recently become obsessed with how the startup movement makes this dream so attainable. His experience in dealing with interthread and interprocess communication of highly concurrent apps will be vital to ensuring performance guarantees for our product.**

**Andrew loves creating things that people can utilize and enjoy. Whether this be building a 300 foot slip n slide or coding an adventure game, he has a good idea of how design and functionality can be linked to create the most effective and intuitive user experience. An avid photographer, he has a very visually creative mind and a good idea of framing, which is crucial to our product. As a part of the Brass Rat design committee here at MIT, he has experience working with artists and other passionate developers. As a programmer, he has 5 years of experience and while he is not as well versed in web development, he is a quick learner and excited about the potential of this product. He is very open to incorporating other people's thoughts and ideas into his work, but knows when to put his foot down and go with his gut.**

3. How does your team work together? How did you meet, what role does each person play when you work together.
*Separate team members by one line each. The roles do not need to be formal (like CEO, or business guy) – just tell us about how you work together.*

**Since we both work on front-end and back-end development, we'll be able to effectively design the software architecture together, and help each other debug. We typically code with each other and will often continue work long after we separate. Once we get a working prototype, we'll be able to test how effective our prototype is while collaborating remotely.**

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**Moving on to the idea...**
**(what we will honestly say is the LEAST important part of the application)**

**This section is more about showing off your thought process rather than your idea.**
**If you want to work with others going through this – join the discussion at *startlabs.org/discuss***

4.  Tell us about the meat of your idea:  What is the problem you are solving?  How are you solving it?  What kind of person would use this?  How will you make money (or if you're a non-profit, how would you sustain your company)?
*Try to give specific examples of each - use this question to show the process you use to think through your idea*

**Effective brainstorming requires sketching. Whenever you work with someone, and want to express a partial or complex idea, you turn to a whiteboard or piece of paper. But if you're working remotely and you're stuck using a combination of vidchat and Google docs, you'll find yourself getting frustrated. You'll gesture at the camera, try to move a piece of paper close enough to the lens to be legible but far enough away to still be in focus, and finally sense the idea slip away as you try to move to the keyboard.  The emergence of widespread ownership of tablets provides the hardware distribution required for an app enabling the visual sharing of ideas.  We can create a product that leverages the natural capabilities of the various devices people own.  By using a web-client in concert with a tablet app, the user has an environment that enables sketching alongside a web interface designed specifically for ideation.  Anyone needing to brainstorm with someone remotely would be a potential user, and anything requiring idea creation is effectively a brainstorming process.  The problem that addressed us founders most directly was trying to do homework with a friend across campus: taking pictures of equations just doesn't cut it. On a broader scale, small business owners could work with employees who are out of the office traveling across the country to meet clients. It could also benefit ad artists working remotely iron out specific designs, incorporate the company into the ideation process. In the home, imagine a young teenage girl Collabowing with her college-aged older sister to design her room. As far as monetizing our product, we plan on generating revenue from limiting usage among users, limiting the tools users can use on a free account, and potentially charging for the tablet app and paid advertisements.**

5.  Show us what you have built so far, and let us know what part of it you are most proud of
*It can be a link to a video, a solidworks model, a video showing it working, a link to a website – anything that shows off your ability to build to your product.*

**We're working on a video that incorporates the tablet, but you can see the web-client at http://collabow.herokuapp.com/ink.**

6.  How do you know that your idea is good?
*Start by asking five of your friends about your idea or e-mailing out to people you live with.  What did they think?  Include concrete results like quotes or survey responses.*

**This product is useful in any ideation process where the collaborators can't meet face to face.  We've had reactions to the concept ranging from impressed nodding at the very least, to a student begging us to finish the product so she could use it on her pset "right now."**

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7. Why are you working on this particular project?  What are some other ideas you considered working on?
*This is not a trick question, be honest – how and why did you decide on this final one?*

**We've thought about different projects ranging from a medical prescription manager to a textured tablet, but this struck us as a great project because it is very applicable to our lives and has a huge potential market.  It also approaches the problem of integrating a variety of devices into a unified experience.  Currently all our technology designed to facilitate life with multiple devices aims to replicate the user experience as much as possible on each individual device.  This approach misses the opportunity to have our devices work together and amplify their respective capabilities.  It's an exciting problem space with wide reaching implications, and our product would begin to touch on that space.**

## PROGRAM
**They say that picking a co-founder is like getting married, seeing as how we as an organization will be intimately involved with your founding team, consider this our proposal.  Lets talk a little but about StartLabs Concept to Company program and how you mesh with us.**
**For more details on StartLabs C2C program - check out *startlabs.org/C2C***

8. What do you think you can accomplish over the course of the C2C?
*If you could spend one intense month working on your company with your team and you had all of the resources you needed – what could you do with your idea?*

**We will launch a beta version of the product, and will create a LLC (based in Delaware).  We'll send out applications for further funding from VCs and will apply to incubators such as YC and TechStars.**

9. If you could only have help with one aspect of your company over the month of January, (other than money) what would it be?
*We will use the answer to this question to tailor the StartLabs C2C resources to maximize the impact on your company.*

**The mentors and the connections that will be made available through StartLabs will be awesome.  We believe being in an environment with such amazing mentors and students tirelessly working towards creating great products will engender success. We would also like to have different tablet devices to test our product on, although this is not necessary.**

10. Is the whole team committed to working solely on your Company over the entire month of January?
*They say at MIT that out of sleep, work, and fun you can pick two.  C2C should be a lot of fun and a lot of work, so there will already be limited time to sleep, much less if you are working on a class or something else at the same time.  If someone cannot commit, please explain the circumstances.*

# We're both committed 200% to C2C.

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## ANYTHING ELSE
**If there is anything else you would like to add, just put it at the end of the application.**

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