

Connect



# CO-FOUNDERS

## PROGRAMME

Join our Co-Founders programme to meet a co-founder, create a great product and get ready to embark on an exciting startup journey.

 Catalyst Inc

[connect.catalyst-inc.org](https://connect.catalyst-inc.org)

# CO-FOUNDERS



Our vision for Northern Ireland is to create a community of innovators so powerful its people can change the world. We realise many people would love to be an entrepreneur but don't have a product idea or they do not know someone who has complementary skills.

A Co-Founder is a person who, in conjunction with one or two other individuals, is instrumental in starting a business. This programme is for people who dream of being an entrepreneur, who want to meet likeminded people with complementary skills, to create a product and build a truly great business.

Ten teams who make it through the Co-Founders Hot House in September will then enter the intense ten week Co-Founders core programme. Each team is provided with a design thinking\*

coach (worth up to £2,000) to help you create a product that people really want!

Underpinning all of this will be education and knowledge on co-founding delivered by our own Connect Team. You will hear real life examples from our network of Co-Founders of innovation companies.

If you want to start a company or join a startup team and have the time, energy and enthusiasm to commit to this programme, we would like you to join us. This programme is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland. This is not a training and development programme – we are looking for the best talent to apply because you want to create the next great product, that could become the next great Northern Irish company.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Application Deadline  
28th August

Hothouse Friday  
15th (5.30pm to 9pm)  
& Saturday 16th (9am  
to 5pm) September

Co-Founders Programme  
Every Monday evening  
from 6pm to 9pm from 9th  
October to 11th December

Venue Catalyst Inc,  
Innovation Centre,  
Queen's Road Belfast

Cost FREE (however  
significant time commitment)

*Places are limited so you  
should only apply if you  
can fully commit to the time  
allocated above.*

\*For those of you unfamiliar with design thinking:

**“DESIGN THINKING IS A HUMAN-CENTERED APPROACH TO INNOVATION THAT DRAWS FROM THE DESIGNER’S TOOLKIT TO INTEGRATE THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE, THE POSSIBILITIES OF TECHNOLOGY, AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS.”**

- Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO

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## STAGE 1 - ENTER THE HOTHOUSE

### ENTER THE HOT HOUSE AND MEET YOUR TRIBE!

This weekend is all about forming teams, you will be asked to do a personal pitch as way of introduction to the group

so that people can start working out who they want on their team, depending on idea, product and skill fit. A team of experts

will also be analysing the group and providing suggestions for team fit.



INDIVIDUAL  
WITHOUT AN IDEA



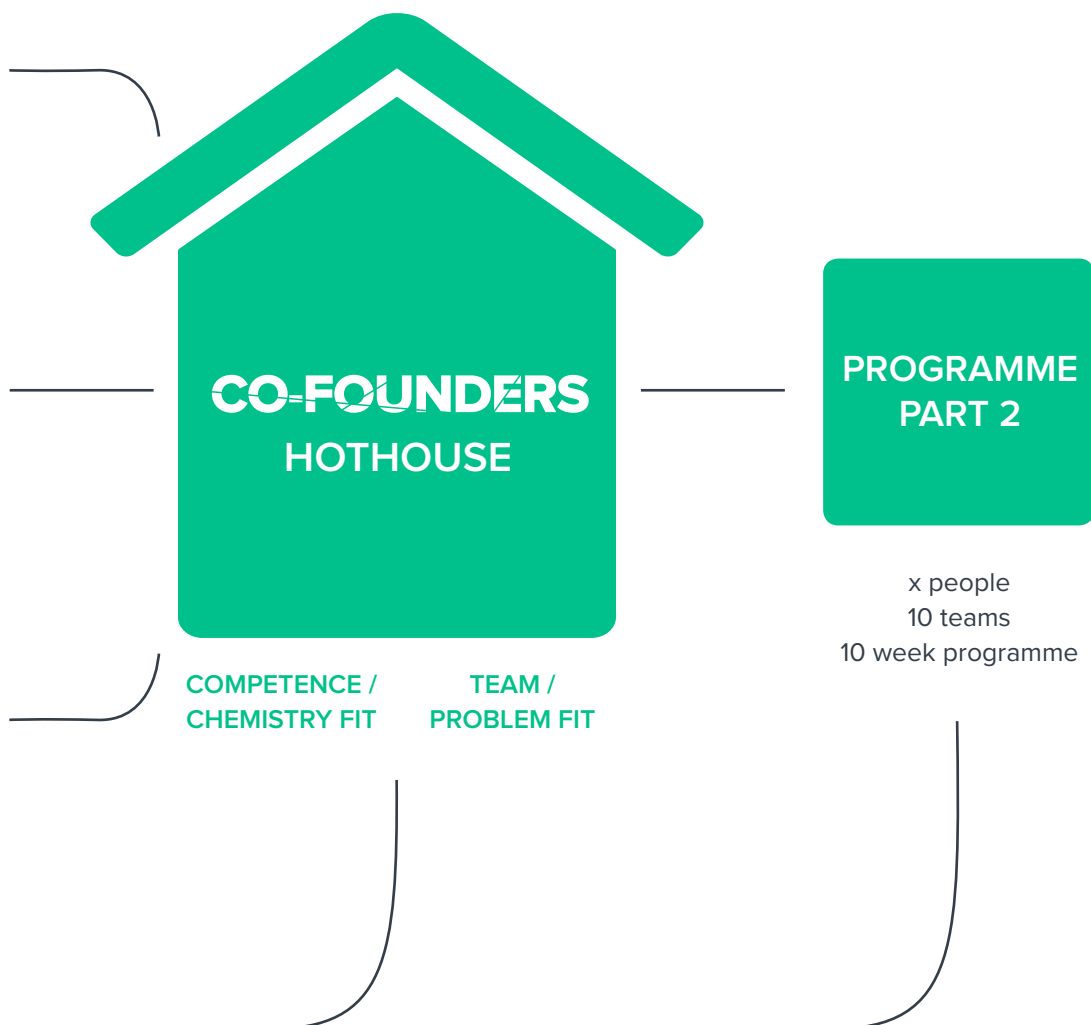
INDIVIDUAL WITH  
AN IDEA



TEAM WITHOUT  
AN IDEA



TEAM WITH  
AN IDEA



# CO-FOUNDERS



## STAGE 2 - CO-FOUNDERS PROGRAMME

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>BUILD PRODUCT</b>	Meet your design thinking coach					ITERATE PROTOTYPE				<b>DEMO NIGHT</b>
<b>HOW TO CO-FOUND</b>			Relationship Dilemmas Founders Stories	Role Dilemmas Founders Stories	Product Dilemmas Founders Stories	Reward Dilemmas Founders Stories	Pitch Prep			

Please note the 10 week programme is subject to change and each team can schedule their design thinking sessions with their individual

coaches at a time and location that suits them.

There is also an expectation that to properly form as a team and

develop a great product that you will need to put more hours into this than outlined above if you want your idea/team to succeed.

## YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAMME IF YOU:

- are someone with an idea for a great new product and need a team. You might even be well beyond an idea and have a prototype or a product with sales.
- are someone with a track record of success in your career to date (you can do deals / have cracked a significant commercial or technical challenge / other significant achievement).
- are a team that is already established but don't have an idea and want to identify a big problem worth solving.
- are already part of an established team and have an idea but need further help to test your idea and develop more as a team.
- want to develop a product that can disrupt a market and build a significant company around it.
- are an academic or Masters/ PhD/PostDoc student who meets one of the criteria above and has a specific domain expertise.
- are an experienced entrepreneur who has "been there, done that" and is ready to go again with a new startup.
- are a leader and have the ability to develop.
- are over 18 years of age.

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## WHY JOIN THE PROGRAMME?

- You will meet like-minded people with the energy, commitment and drive to create a startup.
- Each team will be allocated with a design thinking coach (worth £2,000) to help you refine your product idea.
- You will receive education and knowledge based on Noam Wasserman's book "The Founder's Dilemmas: Anticipating and Avoiding the Pitfalls that can sink a Startup" from experienced staff at Catalyst Inc and from Founders of innovation companies.
- There is no cost to you apart from a significant commitment of your time for 10 weeks.
- The opportunity to start your own innovation company with the product knowledge, team, education and experience to help you succeed!
- The programme has been designed using design thinking and from feedback from potential users of the programme. This cohort will act as a first prototype to allow us to re-iterate the

programme and improve it for future cohorts. We are asking you to be part of this design phase of the programme and will ask for feedback each week.

## HOW DO I APPLY?

Becoming a Co-Founder isn't for everyone! Applying to the Co-Founders programme at Catalyst Inc is a competitive process and there are only 40 places in the hothouse.

### Step 1 - Complete the application form by 28th August 2017

### Step 2 – Interview process

Interviews will take place week commencing 4th to 7th September at Catalyst Inc - skype interviews can be arranged.

### Offers will be made to candidates by 8th September.

Please note all candidates will be expected to attend the Co-Founder Hothouse which will take place on Friday 15th September (6pm to 10pm) and Saturday 16th September (9am to 5pm).

The Co-Founder programme will then commence on Monday 9th October for 10 weeks on consecutive Monday evenings from 6pm to 9pm.

## CO-FOUNDERS ALUMNI

We do not expect everyone who participates in Co-Founders to find their perfect business partner. For those who do not find a fit at the end of the 10-week core programme you will be eligible to become a Co-Founders Alumni:

- you will receive introductions to trusted partners of Connect who are looking for co-founders for their portfolio companies or exciting technologies
- you may be eligible to participate in future Co-Founders cohorts
- you will have a great network of new entrepreneurs.

## INFORMATION / CONTACT US

If you would like more information on Co-Founders, please contact Sonya Kerr, Programme Manager on +44 (0)28 9073 7828 or email [sonya.kerr@catalyst-inc.org](mailto:sonya.kerr@catalyst-inc.org) for an initial conversation.

Please note all meetings will be conducted in the strictest confidence and no information or contact details will be shared without your approval.