

The Garage FAQ'S

Q: What happens at The Garage?

A: The Garage is a physical space and network of resources for Northwestern students interested in entrepreneurship. Over 1,000 students, faculty, and staff visit The Garage each month for classes, office hours, events, and workshops.

Q: Who is The Garage for?

A: The Garage is for all degree-seeking, full-time Northwestern students, undergraduate and graduate, from across all schools at Northwestern. The Garage operates various programs, from incubation programs to fellowships.

Q: How can I get involved with The Garage?

A: If you are a Northwestern student interested in getting involved with The Garage, you can:

- Take a class. Many for-credit entrepreneurship classes are taught at academic centers throughout Northwestern, including: [The Farley Center](#), [Entrepreneurship at Kellogg](#), and [Weinberg's Harvey Kapnick Center for Business Institutions](#).
- Join a club. Northwestern has many innovation-focused clubs and student organizations, many of which meet at The Garage like [KEO](#), [e-Club](#), [Design for America](#), [ISBE](#), and [GES](#).
- The Garage also holds frequent events on innovation and entrepreneurship. Visit our [events](#) page for an updated calendar.
- Sign up for [Office Hours](#) with a peer or alumni to discuss your idea and get help.
- Students with an idea or project can apply to be in The Garage Tinker Program during the academic year. Learn more about our programs [here](#).

Q: What is The Garage Tinker Program?

A: The Garage Tinker Program is a valuable part of The Garage core community, offering access to resources for students working on their innovation projects. The program is open to current, degree-seeking, full-time Northwestern students. The Tinker Program application is open year-round, with students admitted on an ongoing basis. All students who wish to apply to The Residency Program must first spend one full academic quarter as a Tinkerer.

Q: What is The Garage Residency Program?

A: The Garage Residency Program is an opportunity for student teams, both undergraduate and graduate, from across all schools at Northwestern to be a core member of The Garage's entrepreneurial community. Resident Teams use The Garage as their office and receive special perks including 24/7 access, a weekly Family Dinner, a mentor, and priority for Office Hours.

Q: How long has The Garage been around?

A: The Garage opened in June 2015, and the 2015-16 Academic Year was our first year in operation.

Q: How do I become a Tinkerer?

A: Tinkerers are selected on an ongoing basis during the academic year.

Q: How do I become a Resident?

A: Resident Teams are selected on a quarterly basis. To learn more about the Residency program, visit our Residency [webpage](#).

Q: What startup phase does The Garage focus on?

A: Validation. Our students are past the ideation phase and are actively seeking product-market fit for their startups. Teams reaching the growth phase will graduate from The Garage, and we help them find funding, office space, accelerator programs, and general support to grow their ventures.

Q: What do you look for in new Residents?

A: Resident Teams are selected on three main criteria:

1. A team (which we will overlook if the other two requirements are strong)
2. Traction (you've moved beyond the ideation phase: You've taken a class, interviewed customers, built a prototype, etc.)
3. A recommendation. (Recommendations can come from a faculty/staff member, a student group leader, or a current Resident at The Garage who can speak to your progress and your commitment to working on your idea.)

Q: What are Resident Teams working on?

A: Resident Teams build companies and products that are for-profit or not-for-profit, hardware or software, commercial products or artistic endeavors. Anything bringing a new idea to fruition is welcome.

Q: What is Family Dinner?

A: Family Dinner is a weekly dinner and event for students in our Residency Program to discuss their successes and failures and get to know one another outside of their startup ventures. Each week, we are joined by an accomplished founder, technologist, or investor who shares his/her founder story and startup wisdom.

Q: How long can I incubate my project at The Garage?

A: As long as you are a current student at Northwestern and your startup is making progress towards finding product-market fit. Current Resident Teams are required to reapply each quarter to show progress.

Q: Where can I get funding?

A: We encourage students to seek non-dilutive capital through competitions, crowdfunding, and university programs. For example, [VentureCat](#), Northwestern's annual student startup competition, awards more than \$300,000 in non-dilutive prize money annually. Other programs, like the Zell Scholarship, are available to Kellogg students. Teams that achieve product-market fit are eligible to apply for [NUseeds](#), Northwestern's seed fund for student startups, which writes checks for equity in the \$10,000 to \$100,000 range.

Q: What is the Jumpstart Pre-Accelerator?

A: The [Jumpstart Pre-Accelerator](#) at The Garage aims to develop students as both leaders and founders by introducing new ways of thinking and problem-solving. The 10-week summer program culminates with a Demo Day/Shark Tank experience in which students pitch their proposal and gain feedback from established judges. This program is designed to help early-stage ventures learn, grow, and overcome obstacles preventing the launch of their venture.

Q: Who funds The Garage?

A: The Garage is funded by private donations from individuals, families, and foundations that are passionate about supporting entrepreneurship and innovation at Northwestern, as well as the Office of the Provost.

Q: What maker equipment do you have?

A: The Makerspace is equipped with 3D printers, Makerbot replicators, woodworking equipment, laser cutters, an electronics workbench, an embroidery machine, a vinyl printer, CAD software, a Virtual Reality Lab featuring the Oculus Rift, Microsoft HoloLens, and HTC Vive, and much more.

Q: Who can use the maker equipment?

A: Our maker equipment is for Residents working on physical products to work on their prototypes. Residents who are not familiar with using the equipment should attend during Open Maker Hours.

Q: What are the hours?

A: During the academic school year, The Garage is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. During the summer, hours are reduced to Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.