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## News

University News & Information

[Admissions & Aid](#)

[Majors & Colleges](#)

[Research](#)

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[Campus Life](#)

[Athletics](#)

[About](#)



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### *Cal Poly Sets Third Annual Startup Weekend for Jan. 17*

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Calling all entrepreneurs: Cal Poly's third annual Startup Weekend will begin at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 17, in Chumash Auditorium on campus.

Startup Weekend is designed to empower entrepreneurs who are learning the basics of founding startups and launching successful ventures. Students and community members have 54 hours over the course of the weekend to build products and form startup companies. Participants have the opportunity to devise a business model, conduct market research, develop a prototype, and design a brand.

After registration, dinner and a networking session Jan. 17, participants will formalize teams and take an inventory of skills. The event continues Saturday, Jan. 18, from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 19, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Final presentations will be given at 5 p.m. Sunday, followed by judging and awards.

David Janzen, Cal Poly computer science professor, and Lorraine Donegan, graphic communication professor, will be two of the judges at this year's event. Coaches, who are on hand Saturday and Sunday to dispense advice, include a variety of business leaders and Cal Poly faculty and staff members.

"Both aspiring and veteran entrepreneurs benefit from gained confidence, exposure to a variety of ideas, and the immense satisfaction of completing a project in such a confined time frame," said Tim Sweeney, a Cal Poly business student and lead organizer of the event. "Rapid development, prototyping and validation are the pillars of success at Startup Weekend."

Luke Bayard, winner of last year's Startup Weekend with Just4You Tickets said, "Startup Weekend was a stepping stone for our team to move into great programs offered by Cal Poly's Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. We participated in the 'Hatchery,' then were accepted into the SLO HotHouse Business Accelerator program. The experience taught us so much about entrepreneurship and our drive to make a difference."

Over the last two years, 14 groups formed companies at Startup Weekend events. Anyone interested in creating, innovating or turning their passion into reality is invited to sign up. Tickets include meals, drinks, "swag," and a giant working space.

"There is no need for an idea or a team; you'll find one at Startup Weekend SLO 2014," said Cameron Wiese, a Cal Poly computer science student and event organizer.

For more information and to register, go to [slo.startupweekend.org](http://slo.startupweekend.org) or email Sweeney at [tssweene@calpoly.edu](mailto:tssweene@calpoly.edu). Registration ends at 5 p.m. Jan. 14.

#### **About Startup Weekend**

Startup Weekend is a nonprofit, global grassroots organization headquartered in

Seattle, Wash. Its organizers and facilitators are in more than 200 cities around the world, bringing together people for weekend workshops to pitch ideas, form teams, and start companies.

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