

# 2022 Start:ME Winter Accelerator Application



**Start:ME Application** Apply by Friday, October 15, 2021 11:59PM

Start:ME is a free small business training program for entrepreneurs. We work with all stages of businesses, from promising pilots to active ventures.

The Winter 2022 program will run from late January through April. The program will be hybrid - 11 weeknights (virtual) and 3 Saturday mornings (in-person). In-person gatherings may change to virtual depending on COVID rates and guidance.

We operate in three metro Atlanta communities: [Clarkston](#), [East Lake area](#), and [Atlanta's Southside](#). Applicants should only apply to one community program and must demonstrate a tie to that community – for example, living in, working in, and/or providing a valuable good or service to residents.

We receive many applications and select 15-18 businesses per community. We encourage you to be detailed and thorough with your responses. If you have one or more business partners, we ask that the person who will attend all sessions, if selected, complete the application. For more information, please review a [PDF of our application](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

We look forward to learning about your business!

What is your name?

First \_\_\_\_\_

Last \_\_\_\_\_

What is your phone number? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your preferred email address? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your home address?

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Which program are you applying to?

Clarkston ([Learn More](#))

East Lake area ([Learn More](#))

Southside Atlanta ([Learn More](#))

*[Clarkston only]* Which of the following describe your connection to Clarkston? (Check all that apply)

- I live in or near Clarkston
- I work in or near Clarkston
- I operate/plan to operate my business in or near Clarkston
- I employ/plan to employ people from Clarkston
- My business provides/will provide valuable products/services to the residents of Clarkston
- I attend a school in or near Clarkston
- I participate in/have participated in a Friends of Refugees program - Embrace, Mommy & Me/Refugee Family Literacy, Jolly Avenue Community Garden, Refugee Career Hub/Café Clarkston
- I have no direct ties to Clarkston

*[Clarkston only]* How many years have you been a resident of Clarkston? \_\_\_\_\_

*[Clarkston only]* This year, Start:ME will be a hybrid program that operates from January through April - 11 Wednesday evenings (virtual) + 3 Saturday mornings (in person). Entrepreneurs will be expected to watch prerecorded materials before the sessions begin and complete accompanying session assignments. Are you committed to attending and participating in sessions?

- Yes
- No

*[East Lake only]* Which of the following describe your connection to the East Lake area? (Check all that apply).

*Please note that the target neighborhoods include: East Lake, Edgewood, and Kirkwood.*

- I live in or near East Lake
- I live in the Villages of East Lake
- I work in or near East Lake
- I operate/plan to operate my business in or near East Lake
- I employ/plan to employ people from in or near East Lake
- My business provides/will provide valuable products/services to residents of the East Lake area
- My child attends Drew Charter School (Elementary or Junior and Senior Academy)
- My child attends Toomer Elementary School
- My child attends Whitefoord Early Learning Academy or Child Development Program
- I have no direct ties to the East Lake area

*[East Lake only]* How many years have you been a resident of the East Lake area? \_\_\_\_\_

*[East Lake only]* This year, Start:ME will be a hybrid program that operates from January through April - 11 Tuesday evenings (virtual) + 3 Saturday mornings (in person). Entrepreneurs will be expected to watch prerecorded materials before the sessions begin and complete accompanying session assignments. Are you committed to attending and participating in sessions?

- Yes
- No

*[Southside Atlanta only]* Which of the following describe your connection to Southside Atlanta?  
(Check all that apply).

*Target neighborhoods are south of I-20, bounded by Fort McPherson to Thomasville Heights,  
Pittsburgh to Browns Mill Park.*

- I live in a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood
- I work in a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood
- I operate/plan to operate my business in a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood
- I employ/plan to employ people from a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood
- My business provides/will provide valuable products/services to residents of a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood
- I attend a school in a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood
- I live in an FCS/Charis property
- My child attends a Purpose Built Schools Atlanta school - Thomasville Heights Elementary, Slater Elementary, Price Middle, and/or Carver STEAM Academy
- I have no direct ties to a target Southside Atlanta neighborhood

*[Southside Atlanta only]* How many years have you been a resident of Southside Atlanta? \_\_\_\_\_

*[Southside Atlanta only]* This year, Start:ME will be a hybrid program that operates from January through April - 11 Thursday evenings (virtual) + 3 Saturday mornings (in person). Entrepreneurs will be expected to watch prerecorded materials before the sessions begin and complete accompanying session assignments. Are you committed to attending and participating in sessions?

- Yes
- No

The Start:ME program is taught in English. Can you read, write, and speak effectively in English?

- Yes
- No

Did you apply to Start:ME in the past?

- Yes
- No

Which year(s) did you apply (select all that apply):

- 2020
- 2019
- 2018
- 2017
- 2016
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of your business? \_\_\_\_\_

When did you first start working on your business? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your business currently in operation?

- Yes
- No

What's your primary business goal at this time?

- Planning your business - not actively operating. Determining if your business idea is viable and making a plan to turn it into a business
- Launching your business - turning your business idea into a reality. Registering, filing, and starting to actively operate
- Managing your business - mastering day-to-day operations, such as finances, marketing, and employee hiring
- Growing your business - expanding, seeking additional funding, and/or opening new locations
- Relaunching/reinventing your business due to COVID-19 impacts

Do you have any business partners (in addition to yourself)?

- Yes
- No

*[if applicable]* What is your business partner's contact information?

- First Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Last Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone \_\_\_\_\_
- Email \_\_\_\_\_

Which industry most closely describes your business (select one)?

- Agriculture
- Arts/Culture/Creative
- Clothing/Accessories
- Education/Tutoring Services
- Food/Beverage

- Health/Beauty/Fitness
- Healthcare/Social Assistance
- Home Improvement
- Manufacturing
- Professional Services
- Retail
- Transportation

*(Optional)* Which of the following platforms does your business currently use?

Check all that apply and provide relevant address. Please do not just provide a handle or username.

- Etsy \_\_\_\_\_
- Facebook \_\_\_\_\_
- Instagram \_\_\_\_\_
- Website \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What is the legal structure of your business?

- Not Incorporated
- Incorporated as Benefit Corporation
- Incorporated as C Corp
- Incorporated as LLC
- Incorporated as Nonprofit
- Incorporated as S Corp
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



Have you already sold any products or services?

- Yes
- No

This year (2021), what are your total sales? \_\_\_\_\_

In an average week, how many hours do you work on your business? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently employed (full-time, part-time, freelance, and/or contractor) by another company?

- Yes
- No

What is the name of your current employer? \_\_\_\_\_

Not counting yourself, how many people do you currently employ?

- Full-Time Employees/Contractors \_\_\_\_\_
- Part-Time Employees/Contractors \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a "brick and mortar" business location - retail store or office space outside of your home?

- Yes
- No

What is your business "brick and mortar" address?

- Street \_\_\_\_\_
- City \_\_\_\_\_
- State \_\_\_\_\_
- Zip \_\_\_\_\_

When did your business "brick and mortar" business open? \_\_\_\_\_

This year (2021), did you receive financial investment (loans, equity, grants, other) for your business?

- Yes
- No

This year (2021), what types of financial investment did you receive?

- COVID-19 relief through the SBA, such as Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), Shuttered Venue Operators Grant, etc
  - COVID-19 relief through local government (ie: City of Atlanta, DeKalb County, etc)
  - Equity investment
  - Friends and family capital
  - Grant capital
  - SBA-backed bank loan
  - Traditional bank loan
-

*[if applicable]* This year (2021), how much financial investment did you receive from:

- **COVID-19 relief through the SBA** (such as Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), Shuttered Venue Operators Grant, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- **COVID-19 relief through local government** (ie: City of Atlanta, DeKalb County, etc)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- **Equity investment(s)** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Friends and family** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Grant(s)** \_\_\_\_\_
- **SBA-backed loan(s)** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Traditional bank loan(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE

At this time, does your business have a separate business checking or savings account?

- Yes
- No

*[if applicable]* What is the main reason for your business not having a business checking or savings account?

- Application procedures are too complex
- Did not think it would be approved
- Distrust of financial institutions
- Fees are too expensive
- No need for checking or savings account
- No or little access to bank branches
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Is your company a minority-owned business?

- No
- Yes - Officially Certified
- Yes - Self-Identified

Is your company a woman-owned business?

- No
- Yes - Officially Certified
- Yes - Self-Identified

Is your company a veteran-owned business?

- No
- Yes - Officially Certified
- Yes - Self-Identified

In 100 words or less, what does your business sell? How is it different than the products or services of your competition? \_\_\_\_\_

In 100 words or less, how would describe your ideal customer? Why are they motivated to buy your product or service? \_\_\_\_\_

*[Clarkston only]* In 100 words or less, how does your business benefit the people who live and work in Clarkston? \_\_\_\_\_

*[East Lake only]* In 100 words or less, how does your business benefit the people who live and work in the East Lake area? \_\_\_\_\_

*[Southside only]* In 100 words or less, how does your business benefit the people who live and work in Southside Atlanta? \_\_\_\_\_

In 100 words or less, how did you come up with this business idea? \_\_\_\_\_

In 100 words or less, how do your past experiences (professional or personal) uniquely qualify you to run this business? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever started a business before?

- Yes
- No

*[If applicable]* In 100 words or less, how would you describe the business(es) that you started previously? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you describe any of your family members as an entrepreneur?

- Yes
- No

In 100 words or less, how has COVID-19 impacted your business? \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional) What challenges might you face participating in a hybrid program that meets on weeknight evenings (virtually) and 3 Saturday mornings (in person)?

- Food insecurity
- Health concerns
- Lack of access to a computer
- Lack of access to reliable WIFI
- Lack of childcare
- Lack of comfort with online platforms
- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of transportation
- Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Start:ME collects demographic information from all entrepreneurs that apply to the program. This information is essential for securing funding so that the program can be delivered to all participants free of charge. Start:ME values inclusivity and respects your confidentiality.

Start:ME is delivered by Emory University's Goizueta Business School in partnership with local nonprofit organizations. Emory University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, genetic information, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and veteran's status.

Including you, how many people live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

In the 2020 tax year (last year), did your total household income exceed \$X?

- Yes
- No

What is your age?

What is your racial group (check all that apply)?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Were you born in the United States?

- Yes
- No

*[If applicable]* What is your country of birth? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer to self describe \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to say



Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?

- Yes, currently or formerly served
- No

What is the highest education level that you have completed?

- Primary school
- Middle school
- Some high school
- High school degree or GED
- Technical/vocational degree
- Associate's degree (2 year)
- Bachelor's degree (4 year)
- Master's or doctoral degree

*[Clarkston only]* How did you first hear about the Start:ME program? (Check all that apply)

- Alum of the Start:ME program (who?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Community agency (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Flyer (where?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Friend or family member
- Info session (how did you find out about the session?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Local newsletter (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Mentor of the Start:ME program (who?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Place of worship \_\_\_\_\_

- Social media
- Start:ME team member
- Start:ME website (startmeatl.org)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

*[East Lake only]* How did you first hear about the Start:ME program? (Check all that apply)

- Alum of the Start:ME program (who?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Community agency (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Drew Charter School newsletter
- ELNCA newsletter
- Flyer (where?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Friend or family member
- Info session (how did you find out about the session?) \_\_\_\_\_
- KBOA newsletter
- KNO newsletter
- Mentor of the Start:ME program (who?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Social media
- Start:ME team member
- Start:ME website (startmeatl.org)
- Toomer Elementary School newsletter
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

[Southside only] How did you first hear about the Start:ME program? (Check all that apply)

- Alum of the Start:ME program (who?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Community agency (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Flyer (where?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Friend or family member
- Info session (how did you find out about the session?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Mentor of the Start:ME program (who?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Newsletter (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Social media
- Start:ME team member
- Start:ME website (startmeatl.org)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you message.**