

Incubators and Spaces in the San Francisco Bay Area

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You need a place to start working in San Francisco or Silicon Valley? You've got a large choice in the Bay Area.

Are you aware of the difference between incubators, co-working spaces and accelerators?

- **Incubators** are rent-based and, oftentimes, offer complementary or discounted services. You'll work around other entrepreneurs, but not necessarily co-work with them. Incubators usually have a focus (biotech, for instance), which allows them to add more value in that particular niche. Capital, mentorship and influence will vary greatly, depending on the people associated, so make sure you research the people running the incubator.

- **Co-working spaces** tweak the incubator idea. They're also rent-based, but rather than gain your own workspace, you'll often work alongside people from other companies. There is usually more peer-to-peer mentorship and greater access to talent. Good co-working spaces tend to attract investors and mentors.

- Being program-based and time-specific, **accelerators** are fundamentally different. Once accepted, you'll cycle through a system designed to deliver necessary elements in a defined period of time. There is far more organization than with incubators or co-working spaces, but once you've graduated, it's scaled back dramatically.

Incubators in the Bay Area

1. **PARISOMA** is an incubator and co-working space, they frequently host events, and along with faber Novel at PARISOMA, they are leaders in their respective fields. PARISOMA is extremely unique, and distinguishes itself very well from the field of incubators in San Francisco.
2. **The Berkeley Skydeck** is a fascinating new group growing out of the UC Berkeley campus.
3. **Pivotal Labs** is one of the best and most active startup incubators in the San Francisco Bay Area, located in SoMa, nurturing startups, holding free and paid events for the public, and exerting influence all over the web.
4. **Kicklabs** was launched in 2010, and remains home to some of the most fascinating, disruptive startups in the world. "Smart, driven, innovative" is Kicklabs' motto, and they're definitely worth a closer inspection.
5. **AngelPad** - Pledging to help entrepreneurs build better products, AngelPad has expanded from San Francisco to New York as well.
6. **i/o Ventures** is an incubator and café boldly carving out a totally unique niche in SOMA. Inviting the community in every day for coffee is a great way to build ties with where you are, and whether or not you like espresso, i/o Ventures is definitely worth a closer look.
7. **RocketSpace** is a dynamic, innovative incubator in SOMA hosting a dozen or so seed-funded startups. RocketSpace has regular events, definitely check them out and get to know the folks at RocketSpace.
8. **The Alchemist Accelerator** is a San Francisco-based incubator exclusively for startups whose revenue comes from enterprise clients.
9. **Matter** is a media-focused incubator with the goal of building tomorrow's media organizations from scratch. Matter has a branch in New York, and occasionally hosts events in San Francisco. If your media startup needs funding, definitely do more research on Matter.
10. **Runway** is an incubator on Market street in San Francisco with a very active events calendar and membership.
11. **Digital Garage (DG717)** is a new startup incubator in SoMa, bridging the tech communities in Japan and the US.
12. **Sandbox Suites** is an incubator with five locations in the Bay Area, which is currently having a grand opening of their Silicon Valley branch in Mountain View. Sandbox Suites' flagship location is in the heart of SoMa, by 10th and Market. They also have branches at Union Square, South Park, and even has a branch in Berkeley, a 2-block walk diagonally from the Berkeley BART, open for visits or coffee.

13. **Y Combinator** is an original. Having first created much of what we know to be a tech incubator, Y Combinator is a pioneer known the world over.
14. **Upwest Labs** is an Israel-focused incubator, focusing on startups that bridge the gap between Palo Alto and Tel-Aviv.
15. The **Plug & Play Tech Center** is a pioneering, well-thought out model for startup incubation. Billed as “SV In-A-Box,” Plug and Play may be unmatched in Silicon Valley for how they’ve exported their model to the rest of the world.
16. **The Founder’s Institute** is a Mountain View and San Francisco based incubator with dozens of branches all over the world, dedicated to “Globalizing Silicon Valley.”
17. **Innospring** is the first and biggest Chinese-focused startup incubator in the Bay Area. Hosting events on a regular basis, Innospring is a gateway to highly valuable attention and resources for anyone serious about success and growth.
18. **Vodafone Xone** is a relatively new incubator and accelerator in Redwood City. “Where collaboration and innovation unite,” Xone is a space where qualified startups can get the attention you’d receive at a world class incubator such as this.
19. **500 Startups** is one of the biggest incubators in the Bay Area. Offering funding up to the quarter-million range to startup applicants, 500 Startups was one of the first, and is definitely a key player in the tech world here in the Bay Area.
20. **Startup Weekend** is an active incubator in the Bay Area, almost always with a big event right around the corner. Headquartered in Seattle and with branches in Europe and Mexico, as well as the Bay, Startup Weekend hosts events where entrepreneurs build businesses over the course of a weekend.
21. The **Sudo Room** is an exciting new shared creative co-working space growing in Oakland, near 22nd and Broadway.
22. **Techliminal** - Based in Oakland, Techliminal is a very active group, with weekly, and sometimes daily, events from which to pick. Techliminal is a co-working space with a community active enough to qualify as an incubator. Techliminal operates out of the Oakland City Hall, and has quite a bit of overlap with government and technology.
23. The **Berkeley Startup Cluster** partners closely with NextSpace and Impact HUB Berkeley. HUB Oakland is also a new presence, though HUB has locations all over the world.
24. **WeWork**. Falling somewhere between a co-working space and a full startup incubator, WeWork Labs is a “pre-incubator”! Great space with two different locations in the Bay Area - Golden Gate and SoMa.

Co-working spaces in the Bay Area

Citizen Space SF (SOMA) Colearn Space (SOMA) Connections SF (Financial District) CO-Spot (SOMA) Firehouse 8 (Nob Hill) The Hatchery (SOMA) The Hub (SOMA) Makeshift Society (Hayes Valley) StartupHQ (SOMA) StartupHouse (SOMA)	mission*social (SOMA) NextSpace (Montgomery) NextSpace (Union Square) NextSpace (Potrero Hill) NextSpace (Berkeley) PARISOMA (SOMA) Opinno (SOMA) The Reactor (SOMA) REZERV IT (North Beach) RocketSpace (Financial District)	RockIT CoLabs (Chinatown) Sandbox Suites (Union Sq) Sandbox Suites (SOMA) Sandbox Suites (South Park) Second Glass (Mission) SHARED (SOMA) 611 South (Mission) SVT Group (Mission) YetiZen Innovation Lab (SOMA) Taqueria Trabajo (Mission)
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Accelerators in the Bay Area

1. **Y Combinator** has funded over 500 startups, including Airbnb, Reddit, Dropbox, Disqus, Scribd, Heroku, Hipmunk, and Omgpop, among others. The accelerator hosts two cycles for which startups can apply: one from January to March and another from June to August. Deal terms: Startups accepted into a Y Combinator class will receive a seed investment of up to \$20,000 in exchange for a 2-10% stake in the company.
2. **KickLabs** doesn’t do classes and batches with enrollment dates. Instead, it has an open enrollment system, though it’s currently not accepting applications. Deal terms: KickLabs says it doesn’t typically offer startup capital as most of the startups that go through its program have already raised capital elsewhere.

3. **AngelPad.** Founded by ex-Googler Thomas Korte, AngelPad takes on two cohorts a year for 10 weeks each. AngelPad says it differs from other accelerators in that it allows for more personalized mentorship through its small program (about 12 startups each). It also places a strong emphasis on product development and market fit, and mentors are more involved in the fundraising process. Deal terms: In 2011, AngelPad kicked up its seed offering a notch. All accepted AngelPad startups are offered \$120,000—a \$20,000 seed investment and an additional \$100K convertible note.
4. **500 Startups.** Founded in 2010, startups that have come out of 500 Startups include TaskRabbit, SendGrid, Wildfire, Udemy, and Twilio, among others. In addition to its accelerator, 500 Startups also offers a separate seed fund. Deal terms: Startups who participate in 500 Startups' accelerator program get \$50,000 for 5% equity. 500 also participates in follow-on investments up to \$200,000 for startups that are doing well.
5. **i/o ventures.** Founded in 2010 by founders and executives from MySpace, BitTorrent, Lefora, and more, i/o ventures takes much smaller batches than other accelerators. Each batch consists of only five startups, so the program is much more personalized. Deal terms: i/o ventures invests up to \$25,000 in exchange for 8% in common stock.
6. **Rock Health.** Founded in 2010, Rock Health is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that is nurturing startups that aim to disrupt the reptilian healthcare system. Graduates include drchrono, Cardiio, Docphin, and Wello, among others. Deal terms: Rock Health offers startups \$100,000 in a convertible note.
7. **Imagine K12** is tackling a big market: K-12 education. By applying technology to education, Imagine aims to solve some of the persistent challenges that face educators, students, and families across the country. Its first class was in Summer 2011, and since then, 39 startups have graduated from the program and 70% of graduates (not including the most recent winter 2013 cohort) have gone on to raise additional funds. Graduates include ClassDojo, Goalbook, Chalk, and more. Deal terms: Imagine K12 recently raised additional funding from outside investors so that it can now provide all accepted startups with \$100,000 in seed financing. In exchange, Imagine takes a 2-10% stake in each company.
8. **Lemnos Labs.** While other accelerators are built around consumer Web products and services, Lemnos Labs is an accelerator specifically designed to meet the needs of hardware startups, which face unique challenges like bad production runs, safety recalls, and design delays. Deal terms: Lemnos invests up to \$100,000 for a 2-10% stake.
9. **Code For America.** Described as a "Peace Corps for nerds," the Code for America accelerator is a four-month program for "civic startups," companies that are aiming to disrupt the way government and communities interact. The CfA accelerator supports for-profit startups that are making the experience of engaging with government more like the consumer Web. Deal terms: CfA takes a decidedly different approach to this whole early-stage seed funding thing by offering startups \$25,000 in exchange for...nothing. CfA takes no equity in the company.
10. **Tandem.** Boasting a 90% success rate, Tandem is an accelerator for mobile-first startups that are tackling large market opportunities. The highly selective accelerator only accepts six startups per session. Graduates from Tandem include PlayHaven, Sift, UpOut, Pagerduty, and more. Deal terms: Tandem offers accepted startups \$200,000 under a convertible note with no cap in exchange for an initial 10% stake in the company.