

News from: City of Oakland

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Emerging Startups Encouraged to Register for Oakland's Rising Stars at Vator Splash Conference *25 startups from Oakland's tech sector to be profiled*

Oakland, CA – Nurtured by Oakland's vibrant business community, 25 tech startups will be highlighted as part of the 3rd annual Vator Splash Spring conference on Thursday, May 12, in Oakland. Dubbed Oakland's Rising Stars, this conference program provides entrepreneurs with heightened exposure in front of the hundreds of investors expected at the event. Oakland-based entrepreneurs are encouraged to apply for one of the 25 Rising Stars slots online at <http://vator.tv/competition/oaklands-rising-stars>. The application deadline is Tuesday, April 12.

Oakland has long been an ideal location for startups in many industry sectors. In fact, the vast majority of Oakland's 500+ tech companies were founded here and have chosen to stay and expand in Oakland. The tech sector is firmly rooted in Oakland as evidenced by the venture capital surging into the city. In the fourth quarter of 2015, growing local companies received \$179.8 million in venture capital funding, according to research done for American City Business Journals by PitchBook Data as reported by the *San Francisco Business Times*.¹ That's a larger dollar investment than in San Jose, Sunnyvale or Menlo Park. Oakland tech startups find a supportive local ecosystem with excellent access to diverse markets as well as Silicon Valley resources and wide ranging entrepreneur support including local incubators and accelerators.

The 25 startups selected as Oakland's Rising Stars will receive complimentary tickets to the Vator Splash Spring conference and will be profiled on Vator News. In addition, the top five, selected by online vote, will have the opportunity to demo their services or products on site at the conference.

The Vator Splash Spring Oakland conference includes both presentations and a local startup competition. Previous competition winners include Oakland-based companies Oppsites, which now serves 110 cities in 14 states, and e-retailer BacktotheRoots, which just raised a \$5 million seed round.

More than 1,000 attendees are expected to attend this year's Vator Splash Spring Oakland conference, with presentations, panels and fireside chats at the historic Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive, near beautiful Lake Merritt. During the course of the day-long event, three tracks of content are designed to educate tech startups and investors.

Speakers include luminaries in the startup scene from Mitch Kapor, founder of Lotus Corporation and Kapor Center for Social Impact; Nigel Eccles, Founder & CEO of Fanduel, one of the most popular fantasy sports sites; Andy Dunn, Founder & CEO of Bonobos; Oisin Hanrahan, Founder & CEO of Handy; Sarah Leahy, Founder of Nextdoor; Eric Setton, Founder & CEO of Tango and many more. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf will give opening remarks.

Oakland's Rising Stars is hosted by the City of Oakland, Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Visit Oakland and Vator, one of the largest business networks dedicated to entrepreneurs and investors.

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¹. <http://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/blog/techflash/2016/02/startup-funding-slowdown-hits-harder-in-silicon.html>



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