

# eLab

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**ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
AT CORNELL**

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CORNELL'S STUDENT  
STARTUP ACCELERATOR

**eLab** Student Agencies Foundation  
Entrepreneurship at Cornell

## eLab: Cornell's Student Accelerator

eLab is unlike any other entrepreneurship class – it is a student accelerator that launches several businesses each year. The program welcomes a large number of student teams in the fall semester and then narrows the cohort in the spring based off a pre-determined rubric instructors use to evaluate teams' performance and business models.

The program attracts top student entrepreneurs from any field across Cornell's campus. Once accepted into the program, the cohort is connected to an invaluable network of successful Cornell alumni who are eager to help them succeed.

### Benefits of eLab



Access to advisory board of successful entrepreneurs



Pitch events with investors (NYC, Silicon Valley, Ithaca)



\$5k Funding for customer discovery and initial investment into business



4.5 credits from the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business

“The experiential learning provided by the Johnson eLab accelerator program positions the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business at the center of entrepreneurship education on campus. Attracting students from every college on campus, eLab has consistently provided the education and resources required for students looking to launch a business as they conclude their Cornell career.”

- MARK NELSON, ANNE AND ELMER LINDESTH DEAN, SAMUEL CURTIS JOHNSON  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT



## Advisory Boards

The eLab advisory board sets the program apart from other entrepreneurship offerings in higher education. A hand-chosen group of eLab alumni, Cornell alumni, and successful entrepreneurs serve on the eLab advisory board and provide mentorship and guidance as the students develop their business plans and prepare for launch.



Nichole Bestman, MBA '19  
*Founder, Shipfair*



Andrés E. Gutiérrez, MS '22  
*Co-Founder and CEO of Comake*



Jamie Kim, '19  
*Founder of Jamie's Farm*



Madalina Sucala, PhD, MBA '22  
*Director, Digital Health Oncology R&D, AstraZeneca*

## Delivering Success



AI-Learners delivers four main values to students with disabilities and their parents and educators through its e-learning platform: accessibility, personalization, engagement, and analytics. The company has established **five pilot programs** in New York state schools and completed **100 user tests** with students and teachers.



Antithesis provides a healthier snacking experience without compromising on taste, including through its delicious, crunchy crisps, Protos. The startup landed **\$1 million in NSF funding** in the spring of 2022 to continue expanding its legume-based dough innovation to “mix-ins,” small pieces that other companies can incorporate to meet their product goals.



Since 2017, FloraPulse has been awarded more than **\$1 million in SBIR funding** from the USDA and NSF. With the **\$175,000 award** that the startup received from the USDA in the spring of 2022, FloraPulse is working on expanding its water-optimizing irrigation technology from trees to small-stem plants. The company's tech is currently used on almost every continent.



Since its soft launch while in eLab in the spring of 2022, StaffOnTap has raised over **\$125,000 in non-dilutive funding** for its digital platform that instantly fills long-term care provider's scheduling needs by connecting them to temporary nurses in the area. The startup is gaining traction, with **82 nursing home partners** and 140 nurse professionals using its product.





Marla Beyer, MBA/MHA '20, co-founder and CEO of 2020 eLab alumni company Hopscotch, identified a critical need for a full-service telehealth platform that provides in-network mental health care for children and teenagers and harnessed the power of timing to propel the startup to where it is today.

Although Beyer's inspiration came from her time managing National Institute of Health-funded studies in behavioral health while working at a children's hospital in Upstate New York, it was eLab that helped transform this inspiration into a successful startup. In a system that already struggled to help the one in five children who are diagnosed with a mental health disorder pre-pandemic, here Beyer was in eLab, "getting her hands dirty in entrepreneurship" and developing a mental telehealth solution that was so desperately needed during the COVID-19 crisis.

After participating in eLab, Hopscotch immediately started garnering attention, being recognized as one of 2020's Most Disruptive MBA Startups by Poets & Quants and being named one of the winners of the National Children's Hospital's "Make Your Medical Device Pitch for Kids!" competition.

Hopscotch launched in February 2021, and later that year, won the \$25,000 first prize among 60 teams at Blackstone LaundPad's 2021 Grind Pitch Competition. Since starting out with 1,600 providers, the startup has doubled in size, currently having a user base of over 3,200 pediatric behavioral health clinicians across 50 states. Having closed on an \$8 million seed round in September 2022, Hopscotch is preparing for more growth, including signing several major insurance partnerships.



**"eLab was a great way to get our hands dirty in entrepreneurship and learn a little bit more about the process –from doing customer discovery all the way to building out an MVP [minimum viable product] prototype and beginning to test."**

*- MARLA BEYER, MBA/MHA '20, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF HOPSCOTCH*





“The entrepreneurial ecosystem at Cornell nourished our ideas, sharpened our vision, and empowered us to build Rosie. That’s why I’m so passionate about staying involved with the program by both teaching at Cornell and serving student entrepreneurs in eLab.”

- NICK NICKITAS, MBA ‘14, CO-FOUNDER OF ROSIE

When Rosie was founded by Nick Nickitas, MBA ‘14, Jon Ambrose, MBA ‘14, and Michael Ryzewic in eLab in 2014, the startup set out to provide the fastest, most convenient way to shop for local groceries in the community. Ten years later, and Rosie has mastered its trade of offering e-commerce solutions for independent grocers and wholesalers. Fueled by rising demand for online grocery shopping and delivery amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Rosie tripled the size of its team and increased the number of retail and wholesale partnerships by 900% in 2020. The startup raised \$10 million in Series A financing in March 2021 and was acquired by Instacart in September 2022.

Having experienced firsthand just how invaluable eLab is for students passionate about entrepreneurship at Cornell, Nickitas remains engaged today, serving as an eLab instructor, as well as a visiting lecturer in the Cornell Johnson Graduate School of Management. “The entrepreneurial ecosystem at Cornell nourished our ideas, sharpened our vision, and empowered us to build Rosie,” Nickitas said. “That’s why I’m so passionate about staying involved with the program by both teaching at Cornell and serving student entrepreneurs in eLab.”

When Brian Schiff ‘18 and Jacob Cooper ‘16 founded Flip (formerly RedRoute) in their dorm room with UC-Davis alum Sam Krut as part of the 2016 eLab cohort, it was the startup’s first step in changing the script on traditional customer service. What started as a college-centric transportation app evolved into an artificial intelligence software for customer service after eLab helped Schiff, Cooper, and Krut discover how great of an opportunity there was to help address the challenges of customer service, especially with the modern voice era taking shape at the time.

After opening its New York City headquarters in 2018, Flip raised a \$2 million pre-seed round in 2019. The startup expanded into eCommerce globally in 2020, and within a year, experienced 10 times the growth on the eCommerce platform. Flip continues to scale, currently serving about 100 customers, closing a \$6.5 seed round in March of 2022, and re-branding from RedRoute to Flip. With the earnings from its funding round, the startup is working on expanding its team from 25 employees to 40 to continue changing the world one amazing customer service experience at a time.

FLIP