North Carolina's Premier Science & Technology Business Innovation Hub

- Nonprofit Science-Focused Business Incubator Serving Early-Stage Companies & Entrepreneurs.
- 400+ Resident Company Graduates
- Wet Labs and Office Space Available.
- 35-40 Resident Companies at Any Given Time.
- Located in the Heart of Research Triangle Park, NC.

Runway to SUCCESS

Programs designed to meet entrepreneurs at various stages in their company's life cycle.

PROGRAMS BELOW OFFERED AT ALL STAGES
Test Flight: Test Flight is pitch practice for companies in the First Flight Venture Center ecosystem. We will be inviting an audience to observe pitches from up to two companies. The audience will include our Navigators, angel investors, nondilutive funding groups, customers, and other relevant reviewers to ensure the companies get meaningful, impactful feedback so your pitches continue to get better! [1st Tuesday of the month, 8:30 - 9:30am.]

Itineraries: Itineraries offers a chance for members of the First Flight community and broader innovation ecosystem to learn about the work of early-stage science-focused companies, network, and have some fun at the same time! An Itinerary is 'a planned route or journey' and this program gives companies often who are in residence at First Flight a forum in which to share where they are and where they plan to go. [3rd Tuesday of the month, 12 - 1pm.]

Talking Shop: Talking Shop is a monthly lunchtime gathering, interactive open house to bring together committed experienced entrepreneurs with design and prototyping expertise with budding startups, entrepreneurs, or small manufacturers that are learning design and prototyping principles to "talk shop". [2nd Tuesday of the month, 11:30am - 12:45pm.]

Navigators: First Flight Navigators are seasoned executives, entrepreneurs, and scientists with rich business experience. They have worked hard, achieved success, and now want to give back to the entrepreneurial community.

Pilots Lounge: Connects seasoned professionals ("Navigators") with emerging entrepreneurs to share expertise, strategize on business development, and secure funding. The program revolves around two core components: Collaboration and Leveraging Experienced Industry Leaders. This program facilitates peer learning, mentoring, and strategic discussions to support early-stage businesses with expert-level experience.

First Flight Captain's Circle: Brings together small groups of non-competing entrepreneurs for monthly private discussions with peers, led by a professional facilitator. Structured topics designed to solve problems and share best practices include finance, investments, employee relations, legal considerations, operations, scalability, marketing, and sales.
Hangar6: Serious tools for serious people: Hangar6 is the Research Triangle’s premier advanced prototyping and design assistance space. Hangar6 enables the designing and building of prototypes using tools such as 3D printers, CO2 laser cutter, metal fiber laser, automated CNC mill, metal bending equipment, a woodshop and welding shop. Startups, entrepreneurs, corporations, design/engineering firms and other prototypers join Hangar6 through a monthly/annual/team membership model giving startups an easy and low cost way to prototype their idea.

LiftOff: First Flight’s LiftOff program recruits high potential early-stage science-based companies, provides them with a nondilutive funding strategic plan, identifies funding opportunities and provides professionally written, competitive SBIR/STTR grant writing services at a significantly subsidized rate. Since 2016, LiftOff companies have won over $16 million in SBIR/STTR grant funding.

DRIVE Initiative: First Flight has been selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as one of 13 national accelerators tasked with finding solutions to protect the world from health security threats, including sepsis and early notification of infectious diseases. This DRIVE (Division of Research, Innovation and Ventures) initiative is part of Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) and is designed to identify/fund companies who solve priority threats.

“Propeller”: Helps founders and entrepreneurs determine whether there is sufficient value to pursue a product or service idea, identify potential markets, develop a path to market strategy, and learn how to communicate the value of the idea to early stakeholders and adopters. Propeller serves as a critical step – often the first – helping a science/technology innovator bridge the gap between a brilliant idea and the business value it represents.

Wheels UP: Proposed for 2022 to further catalyze innovation, First Flight is creating Wheels UP, a comprehensive science-focused accelerator. Wheels UP will martial the resources and assets of our region to meet the entrepreneur at their company’s stage of development with skilled mentorship, technical and business training. The overall strategy for Wheels UP is to work collaboratively with companies to target their needs through new product innovation.

Wingspan: A comprehensive cohort-based & sector-focused program designed to help international companies soft land in North Carolina, USA. First Flight works closely with 10 leading companies per cohort, each poised for entry into the U.S. market. The Wingspan programs typically range from 7 to 10 days, depending on the size and stage of the companies in the program cohort. (some programs may last up to 3 months)
Runway to SUCCESS

Programs designed to meet entrepreneurs at various stages in their company's life cycle.

PROGRAMS BELOW OFFERED AT ALL STAGES

FIRST FLIGHT COWORKING

FIRST FLIGHT LiftOff PROGRAM

WINGSpan: EXPAND IN THE USA

FIRST FLIGHT FAST PROGRAM

SBIR STTR: America's Seed Fund

DRIVE

Wheels Up ACCELERATOR

FIRST FLIGHT INCUBATOR

FIRST FLIGHT CAPTAIN'S CIRCLE

Pilots Lounge: First Learning and Mentoring Program

PROPELLER

ITINERARIES: What's your business plan for success?

test FLIGHT (Pitch Practice)

hangar: A division of First Flight

Thirsty Thursdays (Startup Community Building)