



## **Proposal for Glendale Start-Up Tech Accelerator Operator RFP**

Prepared for:

**The City of Glendale**

Prepared by:

**SmartGate Seed Fund I Partners LLC**

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March 11, 2020

Attn: the Honorable Chair and Members of the City Council of the City of Glendale

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are delighted to enclose our proposal for the operation and program management of a Start-Up Tech Accelerator (the "Accelerator") in response to the RFP released on January 15, 2020.

SmartGate Seed Fund I Partners LLC ("SmartGateVC") is a venture capital firm that actively operates across Armenia, Eastern Europe and the United States. Investors in the Fund include Tim Draper of DFJ as well as other seasoned investors, entrepreneurs and professionals in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East.

Glendale is a second home for SmartGateVC since early 2018 when the Fund started its operations. Five of sixteen our portfolio companies have a significant presence in Glendale and many companies in our investment pipeline plan to establish their presence here. Many leaders in the Tri-City tech community are hands-on advisors and mentors of SmartGateVC's portfolio.

Regardless of the results of the Accelerator selection process, we have already made a strategic commitment to establish a significant, permanent presence in Glendale, beginning in summer 2020. Our base in Glendale will include:

- Hero House Glendale – a place where science, technology, and capital will converge in compelling ways to empower entrepreneurs and launch and grow outstanding companies. Hero House Glendale will be located near Glendale MetroLink Station.
- The establishment of Hero House, Glendale as the LA area's base for Draper University of Heroe. Draper University is Silicon Valley's premier educational program for entrepreneurs.
- The hosting of *Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America* in the Hero House to implement joint programs.
- Establishing the Glendale chapter of HyeTech, a well-established, global community of Armenian technology and investment professionals.

Should the City consider awarding us the contract to operate the Accelerator, we will leverage the City's funding, together with resources that we will bring, to uniquely position Glendale as a prime, highly attractive location for local, US and foreign founders of key deep-tech companies to establish their headquarters. **This will not be yet another accelerator in the US.** Glendale will be **THE** place to consider for building companies focused on next generation technologies and leveraging the California tech ecosystem.

Our key value propositions include:

- Proven experience in incubating and accelerating deep tech companies;

- Proven experience in efficient collaboration with local, national and international governmental institutions (such as the European Union, German Development Agency (GIZ), UNDP and European Fund for Southeast Europe);
- Access to a network of entrepreneurs and mentors in the LA area as well Silicon Valley and other tech hubs in California and the United States. Our network of investors, mentors and advisors includes founders and/or key executives of well-established local companies such as ServiceTitan, Intelinair, DISQO, BlueIP and many others;
- Access to engineering talent in Eastern Europe (Armenia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova) allowing the Accelerator to support local entrepreneurs with cost-efficient overseas tech teams;
- Access to capital for the Accelerator's entrepreneurs from SmartGateVC's **own venture capital fund**;
- A proprietary network of 50+ angel investors (who are also investors in SmartGateVC);
- Strategic partnership with Draper University Ventures (opening access to \$2B+ Draper Venture Network), One Way Ventures (California and Massachusetts), and Hye Rise Investments (Glendale);
- Direct access to California's top-ranked angel groups such as the Band of Angels and Tech Coast Angels (TCA).

We look forward to enhancing Glendale's reputation as a place for tech heroes together.

Sincerely,

SmartGateVC Founders

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# WHO

## What is Hero House?

The first Hero House was established by the founders of SmartGateVC in Yerevan, Armenia, in 2017 with a mission to build a pipeline of extraordinary investment opportunities for the fund. Over time it became a place where capital, technology, and entrepreneurship converged and incubated and grew class-leading technology companies with outstanding products and extraordinary founders. **Started with \$160K of annual budget it multiplied its budget and turned into a hub with its alumni companies raising more than \$3 million in 2 years. On the other side, \$1.5 million of SmartGateVC's investment attracted an additional \$10 million investment into Yerevan during the same period.** We expect the same multiplication effects to occur in the Californian context - each spent \$1 million at this stage to attract 10-20 times more of private funding during next 3 years.

From the first days, Hero House has focused on two directions: **maturing our entrepreneurs** and **deepening our technology focus**.

By **maturing and growing our entrepreneurs**, Hero House works on igniting the entrepreneurial spirit within our community and regularly brings new knowledge and top professionals into our ecosystem who help us build an ever more sophisticated entrepreneurial environment and culture.

By **deepening technology access and focus**, Hero House develops and hosts technology groups and top scientists and engineers who keep our community on the cutting edge of global technology developments. Results of this effort include the development of a Quantum Computing research lab and a converged AI and 3D lab. These are described in more detail, below:

Since its establishment, Hero House has been hosting:

- SmartGateVC, an in-house pre-seed venture capital fund,
- Armenia Startup Academy, the leading startup program in Armenia,
- An AI Incubator,
- Gate42 Quantum Computing Research Lab,
- PerceptionLab,
- Entrepreneurial Assistants' School.

More information about Hero House can be found at [www.herohouse.am](http://www.herohouse.am). What follows is a brief introduction of existing initiatives and projects run at Hero House:

**The Armenia Startup Academy** is a 12-week very early stage startup acceleration program run twice a year. It guides tech companies through the process of robust customer development along with custom-designed approaches and mentorship to enter and expand into new markets. Armenia Startup Academy alumni raised more than \$3 million during the last two years (details at [www.startupacademy.am](http://www.startupacademy.am)),



**The Artificial Intelligence Incubator** is a 26-week incubation program designed to bring together (a) companies having AI implementation potential, (b) leading ML research supervisors from universities and industry and (c) university students conducting research in machine learning or adjacent disciplines to create a pipeline of scalable and investable startups and foster undergraduate research in universities (more details in [www.herohouse.am/ai-incubator](http://www.herohouse.am/ai-incubator)),

**The Gate42 Quantum Computing Research Lab** is a scientific research group of physicists, computer scientists and developers working in the areas of Quantum Information Theory, near-term applications of Quantum Computing, Quantum Algorithms, Quantum Simulation, and Quantum Machine Learning along with researchers from Google and Stanford University (more information at [www.gate42.org](http://www.gate42.org)).

**The PerceptionLab** is a brain-computer interface research lab that uses machine learning to create meaningfully-controlled 3D environments. Collaborating with Princeton University and Nvidia, it works on generating and developing 3D environment in virtual reality by manipulating it with gestures and brainwaves. For a PerceptionLab demo, see [here](#).

**The Entrepreneurial Assistants' School** is an eight-week program that trains and prepares a community of young, professional to support startups, accelerators, and various investment vehicles early on. Throughout the program the students explore different directions including and not limited to Business Intelligence and Customer Development, Product Gamification, Intellectual Property (IP), Growth Hacking, Sales, Public Relations (PR) in tech, Product Management and Analytics, Customer Success and UI/UX Design (more information at [www.herohouse.am/ea-school](http://www.herohouse.am/ea-school)).

Besides these internally developed and sponsored initiatives, Hero House also organizes the following events on a regular basis:

**HyeTech Entrepreneurship Immersion Program** is a 10-day annual program in Los Angeles and Silicon Valley co-organized with HyeTech, a group of Armenian-origin tech professionals, investors and entrepreneurs from Silicon Valley. The program introduces foreign founders to the fast paced and highly competitive nature of Silicon Valley startup dynamics and helps them meet key industry experts and business leaders from their individual industries. The program includes sessions and talks by domain experts, professionals and investors; visits to leading companies, venture capital firms and accelerators, and concludes with a Demo Day where founders pitch their startups to leading Silicon Valley investors (more information at [www.hyetech.org](http://www.hyetech.org)).

**Startup Boost Weekend** is a 3-day entrepreneurship bootcamp designed to boost healthy entrepreneurship in universities by having students experience the ideation, group formation, customer development, prototyping, pitch deck design and pitching, thus exploring in deep and understanding critical components of the startup development process. Startup Boost Weekends are organized 2-3 times per year in cooperation with universities with a shared goal of developing in student participants a passion for entrepreneurship and giving them effective frameworks for starting tech companies, thus nurturing our talent and investment pipeline development over the long run (more information at [www.sbw.am](http://www.sbw.am)).



**Science and Technology Convergence Conference** unites researchers and engineers from different disciplines across industry and academia once a year to share experiences, facilitate and manage collaboration among Science, Industry, and Government; and establish regional and international connections promoting repatriation/expatriation and encouraging more science funding (more information at [www.stcc.am](http://www.stcc.am)).

Being an essential part of SmartGateVC, Hero House collaborates with Draper University and San Jose State University to build links between the Hero House community and Silicon Valley. On a broader scale, Hero House works with companies, accelerators, investors, governments, non-profits, and other organizations to raise and support more “hero entrepreneurs” globally. SmartGateVC is now in the process of establishing a **network of Hero Houses in Eastern Europe and in California**.

## Hero House Glendale: Mission and Strategic Partners

Hero House Glendale will be established by SmartGateVC and be backed by multiple partners, three of whom are **strategic partners**:

1. Draper University of Heroes, in San Mateo, California;
2. The City of Glendale, California (as the result of a contract award for which the current proposal has been designed);
3. Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AESA) headquartered in Glendale, California.

***Hero House Glendale’s mission is to create an innovation hub where capital, technology and entrepreneurship converge in order to create hero startups and drive Glendale towards turning into a tech hub.***

### SmartGateVC

**SmartGate Seed Fund I Partners LLC:** Venture Capital Fund Management Company (General Partner)

**Year Founded:** 2017

**Business Registration:** Limited Liability Company (File number: 6392003)

**Website:** [www.smartgate.vc](http://www.smartgate.vc)

SmartGateVC is a Silicon Valley pre-seed venture capital fund backed by Tim Draper and a network of entrepreneurs and professionals from the US, Europe, and MENA. The key focus areas are Artificial Intelligence (AI), Security, Internet of Things (IoT), and emerging Computational Biology and Quantum Computing, focused on investing in California, Massachusetts, New York and Eastern Europe (including Armenia). The fund invests on the edge of technology innovation where science and entrepreneurship join to disrupt the status quo. The fund portfolio is comprised of 16 companies focused on Network Security, Computer Vision, AI, Deep Learning, and more.

## Draper University of Heroes

Website: [www.draperuniversity.com](http://www.draperuniversity.com)

Draper University of Heroes is a private entrepreneurship and venture capital innovation center located in San Mateo, California. It was established in 2012 by venture capitalist Tim Draper, co-founder of DFJ, Draper Associates and Draper Venture Network. The Draper ecosystem's track record counts 32 unicorns and 5 rhinos (valuation is more than \$10 billion). Tim Draper has established more than 30 funds and was the first venture capitalist to invest in China.

Draper University (DU) offers various venture capital and entrepreneurial programs for young investors and startup founders, teaching them essential startup skills, providing exposure to industry experts and like-minded entrepreneurs, as well as mentoring them using their rich network of experienced industry professionals, successful entrepreneurs and venture capitalists (VCs).

DU invests through an affiliated fund, Draper University Ventures (DU Ventures). DU Ventures invests exclusively in DU alumni companies. **DU alumni have collectively raised more than \$240 million** in venture funding. DU is very active in developing accelerators. It has established a corporate accelerator for JetBlue and partnered with the World Bank Group in launching a startup program for Western Africa in 2020.

## Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AESA)

Website: [www.aesa.org](http://www.aesa.org)

The Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America, Inc. (AESA) is a non-partisan and non-sectarian philanthropic organization founded in 1983 and comprised of Armenian engineers and scientists who come together to network, collaborate and build a better community. The organization is headquartered in Glendale and has two additional major chapters - AESA Michigan and AESA New York. The network is comprised of talented professionals from a wide range of disciplines - from Bio-engineering, Computer Science and Robotics to Environmental Science.

AESA regularly conducts technical workshops and lectures on cutting-edge science and technology and organizes science olympiads for students. Since its inception, the AESA has organized several symposia attracting professionals from the US, Armenia, Canada, UK, France, and Australia as well as two World Armenian Scientific Congresses. The 1st World Congress was held in the United States, and the second was held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

AESA Young Professionals (YPro) Committee shares the resources of experienced professionals within the AESA to foster community leadership through networking and professional development for the career-minded young engineers and scientists.

## Hero House Glendale: Scope and Timeline

**Hero House Glendale will showcase the successes of the Glendale and Tri-City technology community.**

Relying on the experience, talent and resource networks of SmartGateVC and Draper University to build innovation hubs from scratch, Hero House Glendale will employ a variety of programs to showcase the local startup community and provide early stage startups with the tools and support they need to succeed and thrive in Glendale and the Tri-City Region:

- Hero House Accelerator;
- The SmartGate and Draper VC infrastructure;
- proven tech entrepreneurship development activities for students;
- a network of mentors from local tech community, Silicon Valley, Massachusetts and New York, as well as globally from Europe and Australia;
- partnerships with key local and Silicon Valley ecosystem players, including venture and angel funds and leading universities.

During the first year, **Hero House Accelerator** will be built as part of Hero House Glendale. Within the Accelerator, **two acceleration programs** will be implemented. **Scaling Heroes** will empower LA-area founders to build fast-growing tech companies, and **Gateway to LA** will attract capable founders from Eastern Europe who will relocate and build tech companies headquartered in Glendale.

### Why Will Eastern Europe Play A Key Role for the Accelerator?

Hero House Glendale is determined to integrate high-potential startups in the Tri-City into global markets from the outset by the following ways:

1. leverage **world-class technical talent** from **Eastern Europe** for **cost-efficient software development** and more efficient productization for local **Tri-City** area entrepreneurs,
2. attract potential **high-growth startups from Eastern Europe** who demonstrate promising initial traction and who use Glendale as their **headquarters** and their **gateway** to growing their US market presence.

We have chosen **Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Romania, and Armenia)**, as our leverage and foreign deal flow source, for these reasons:

- Eastern Europe has earned a well-deserved reputation of being a **reliable and cost-efficient software development center** due to **affordable labor rates** (3-4X difference with the US) with no compromise for **quality**. The **high growth of the IT sector** (26% growth in Ukraine, 23% in Armenia and 15% in Romania in 2018), a strong population of software developers (more than 150,000 IT professionals in Ukraine alone, with an annual growth rate of 10-15%), combined with **strong STEM educational infrastructure** that has developed highly-competent workforce, are the primary factors that drive the reputation of Eastern Europe as a **favorable source of software development talent and expertise** to partners world-wide.

- The startup scene in Eastern Europe is thriving. More than **10 unicorns** have been grown in the region, having a combined value of **\$33 billion**. Many other tech companies are raising sizable rounds. Eastern Europe received a **\$800 million in VC investments** in 2018, including the participation of brand-name foreign investors. Having the Tri-City region serve as a US gateway for these fast-growing companies is a win-win for them and for the Tri-City region. Eastern Europeans will be able to access to a much larger market and gain growth, and expansion opportunities together with the critical network connections that only the US market can provide. On a broader scale, **Glendale and the Tri-City region will benefit economically and strategically from having a growing number of potentially fast-growth companies build their businesses and attract human and financial capital to the area.**

Hero House Glendale will nurture a highly engaged **VC infrastructure** which will benefit the local tech and startup ecosystem and which will inject necessary initial capital. All of this will strengthen and energize the Tri-City region's startup ecosystem. In addition to **early-stage VC investment from SmartGateVC**, Hero House Glendale will partner with other VC firms and angel networks, thus expanding the amount of professionally managed venture capital available to the region. One of the early-stage funds joining Hero House Glendale, from day one, is **DU Ventures**. Being backed by Tim Draper, both SmartGateVC and DU Ventures' portfolio of Tri-City startups will have access to the **Draper Venture Network**, comprising 24 funds in 60+ cities with **\$2 billion AUM**, for later-stage follow-on funding. In addition to VC firms, Hero House Glendale will develop its own network of **in-house angel investors**, which eventually could become Glendale's first official angel network, similar in impact to what Pasadena Angels has done locally.. Office hours with the angel investors at Hero House Glendale will be a regular practice for the startup founders who will mentor them about the metrics and milestones needed to secure seed, angel and early VC funding.. This angel network is being developed and has already recruited a core group of local investors.

A set of programs will be targeted towards **workforce and entrepreneurship development among students** (high school and university students). Student-focused activities with a proven methodology, co-organized with colleges and universities will nurture the entrepreneurial potential of students, armor them with unique knowledge and skills to make sure that talent stays in Glendale and is being retained in the Tri-City region. Tech hubs grow when startups become successful and when employees start new companies in the region. Workforce development and continuous educational and career opportunities in Glendale are critical to this process.

An existing network of **more than 50 active Hero mentors has been developed**. This network includes Unicorn founders, seasoned entrepreneurs who have seen \$100M exits, and top industry insiders from **Silicon Valley and Los Angeles**. This network will be a critical part of Hero House Glendale from day one. In addition, leading Tri-City tech companies, such as **DISQO** and **Service Titan**, have already agreed to have their employees serve as Hero mentors at Hero House Glendale in order to **share unique industry expertise and experience** via talks and regular office hours.

Before the official launch, Hero House Glendale has already started collaborating and with **HyeTech**, the leading Armenian technology networking group in Silicon Valley, and **AGBU Silicon Valley Chapter**. And Hero House Glendale is already in the process of establishing collaboration with some of the leading startup programs at **USC, UCLA** and **Caltech**. Hero House Glendale will also serve as the Los Angeles base for HyeTech and will manage the HyeTech Los Angeles chapter, thus deepening connections with Silicon Valley and offering additional growth opportunities for Glendale's tech entrepreneurs through structured programs.

After the first two years, Hero House Glendale plans to establish **Hero Awards** to annually celebrate outstanding entrepreneurs and other achievers who have made top-notch contributions to the Tri-City ecosystem. Additionally, a comprehensive **Tech Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Mapping** report will be developed to measure the state of tech entrepreneurship in Glendale, capturing the key players, revealing existing gaps, and recognizing the most impactful industry achievements. As the next step after the first Ecosystem Map, relevant **indexing of the tech community in Glendale** will be established in order for the stakeholders to be aware of the annual ecosystem progress.

The Hero House Glendale will evolve in four phases:

- Phase 1:** Establishment of the first Accelerator program for entrepreneurs from the LA area;
- Phase 2:** Launch of the second Accelerator program for international founders;
- Phase 3:** Kickstart of initiatives for the development of Glendale tech and startup ecosystem;
- Phase 4:** Ecosystem progress recognition, evaluation, indexing and further growth.



Each phase includes a set of modules - programs and activities with a targeted audience and underlying objectives.

**Important:**

This proposal only covers the establishment of the Hero House Accelerator and the two startup programs mentioned above - **Scaling Heroes** and **Gateway to LA**. Other Hero House Glendale initiatives and projects are planned to be implemented by tapping into other funding sources, including contributions from Hero House Glendale partners and via sponsorships.

## WHY

### SmartGateVC is already in Glendale and Grows its Presence

Despite being a Silicon Valley fund, SmartGateVC has a significant informal and indirect presence in Glendale and the Tri-City area. This presence grew naturally in 2019 and plans to grow more in the future due to established business connections.

SmartGateVC is in final negotiation with the owner of a 7,000 sq ft property near Glendale Metrolink Station to establish Hero House at that location. We are currently finalizing that agreement. The expected date of the launch is June 2020. Should SmartGateVC win the Accelerator contract from the Glendale City Council, our space might also serve as the location for the Hero House Glendale Accelerator. Besides having the capacity to host a large number of startup founders, the venue also has capacity to host events having up to 120 participants. For this reason, it is highly likely that the launch of Hero House Glendale and the Glendale Accelerator will not need the City of Glendale to provide city-owned space at 250 N Orange St, Glendale.

Five out of sixteen SmartGateVC portfolio companies have a significant presence in Glendale:

- Two companies have been headquartered in Glendale since 2019, one of which is originally from Glendale;
- Two companies actively work with customers in Glendale;
- One company established its prototyping lab in Glendale in 2019.

Another strategic partner of Hero House Glendale, who might move to the aforementioned space is AESA. Our goal would be to have, under one roof, a leading Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) organization, venture capitalists and tech companies. This would create a unique innovation capability for Glendale, a center-of-gravity for Glendale's emerging regional innovation hub. This facility would be aligned with the overall goals of the Glendale Tech Accelerator as described in the RFP.

### Mission Alignment with Glendale Tech Strategy

The **value proposition** for Hero House Glendale is designed based on **proven programs and initiatives** successfully implemented by SmartGateVC and by Draper University. **Hero House Glendale is already strongly aligned with Glendale's Tech Strategy**, to capable tech entrepreneurs to build companies in Glendale, contribute to the development of a strong local tech and startup ecosystem, support young talent with opportunities to gain practical experience by being involved in the tech industry and, eventually, **turn Glendale into a leading tech hub**.

Besides a strong alignment with Glendale Tech Strategy, among the many other benefits to Glendale created by Hero House Glendale, we note these six::

- strong affiliation to **Silicon Valley**'s network, education, and culture;
- in-depth knowledge of and strong ties with key **Eastern Europe technology ecosystems**;
- solid **STEM DNA** - network inside and outside of the US;
- enthusiastic support for this initiative from **Glendale's tech and startup community**;
- **active early-stage funding vehicles** run by SmattGateVC and DU;
- experienced team with **highly relevant skills** to run Hero House Glendale.

More details on Hero House's unique value proposition are provided below:

<b>Silicon Valley Startup Program</b>	The curriculum of the Hero House Accelerator's two startup programs will be developed and implemented in accordance with Silicon Valley best practices, in close cooperation with Draper University of Heroes.
<b>Regular visits to Silicon Valley</b>	Regular visits to Silicon Valley (hosted by Draper University) are an integral part of the curriculum of Hero House Accelerator's programs. These aim to expand the network of participating startups and make them "feel the Silicon Valley vibe."
<b>Connections with Eastern Europe</b>	Provide Glendale's entrepreneurs and businesspeople with the operational excellence required to build robust tech companies and connect them to a pool of trusted software development organizations for cost-efficient product development
<b>Program Partners: ServiceTitan &amp; DISQO</b>	Expertise sharing from local leading companies in different vertical markets. The kinds of expertise will include Product Management, Sales, Growth Hacking, Customer Success all delivered via lectures, 1:1 office hours, mentoring and company visits, Vertical market SaaSbest practices and Digital Marketing strategies.
<b>Large (enough) Space</b>	Creating a vibrant community of tech ecosystem players in Glendale in close proximity to the Glendale Metrolink Station, encompassing 7,000 sq ft, with its own library, several meeting/conference rooms and a large hall for larger-scale events.
<b>Ecosystem Development</b>	A far-reaching approach to ecosystem development via student-focused programs and initiatives aiming to contribute to Glendale's workforce development and student career development; organizing hackathons and conferences and using these platforms to promote Glendale as a startup and technology hub of the Tri-City area; analyzing Glendale's tech entrepreneurial hub via a comprehensive Ecosystem Mapping document capturing the key players, revealing ecosystem gaps, celebrating most impactful industry achievements and developing relevant indexing of the tech ecosystem..
<b>Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) DNA</b>	Acting as a channel between academia and industry and helping to commercialize R&D results; building partnerships with Offices of Technology Transfer at LA area universities; cooperating with AESA to host/co-organize Science Olympiads; leveraging AESA's network to encourage penetration of more STEM into the region's tech hub..
<b>Focus on Deepening Partnerships with Universities</b>	Working to build deep-rooted cooperation with universities in order to organize student-focused programs and initiatives; working with Offices of Technology Transfer from LA area universities to facilitate academia-industry cooperation; gaining access to top faculty and students.



Pool of Tech Companies	Leveraging SmartGateVC portfolio companies that have scalability potential or market presence in the Glendale and wider LA area who will benefit the local tech entrepreneurial ecosystem and wider community likewise (e.g. Robin by Expper Technologies, gg and Embry Tech).
HyeTech LA chapter	Bringing HyeTech vibes to the region; hosting HyeTech events at Hero House Glendale (lectures, workshops, brainstorming events, conferences, etc); having experts from HyeTech's network mentor Glendale entrepreneurs.
Early-stage Investment Capital	Early stage VC investment opportunity from SmartGateVC is available to the local tech entrepreneurial ecosystem from day one along with DU Ventures's network to support the top Hero House Glendale Accelerator graduates; working to build an in-house network of Angel investors and partnerships with other VC firms and Angel Networks on wider LA area (e.g.,. Founders Fund, Tech Coast Angels).

#### So, why do we apply?

We are already here, know what to do, have ambitious plans, are already integrated into the community and are trusted by key local players. **With more resources we can do even more (together).**

## HOW

### Multi-Dimensional (Multi-Pillar) Approach

Draper University and SmartGateVC have joined forces to build and promoting Glendale as a startup hub of the Tri-City and wider Los Angeles area, with internal programs and with externally-focused programs to build awareness of Glendale as as center of tech innovation, one of California's top smart cities. Both startup acceleration programs of the Hero House Accelerator - Scaling Heroes and Gateway to LA - **are solid foundational pillars** for Hero House Glendale. However, for establishing a **comprehensive and structured approach** to tech and startup ecosystem development additional pillars are required to be built by us with the help of ecosystem partners and other stakeholders.



For any accelerator to succeed, there's a vital need for having a favorable environment where capital, technology, and entrepreneurship converge in the right way. We believe there are several enhancements that Hero House Glendale will develop in order to ensure the long-term success of Hero House Accelerator.

## Hero House Accelerator

### Tech Enablement of Glendale and LA Area Entrepreneurs

In the framework of its first Hero House Accelerator program - **Scaling Heroes**, the Hero House Glendale aims to work with brick-and-mortar business leaders who have built successful non-tech businesses. Such people usually know how to set up operational excellence in business; however, they lack the context and knowledge about building successful tech companies. Hero House Glendale will aim to connect people having **unique industry knowledge** and **market insights** with the technological expertise of **Eastern Europe** in order to enable the creation of **new tech companies** operating in Glendale. As a result of such matching and guidance provided by Hero House, we expect to see the birth of many promising **vertical SaaS** (Software as a Service) companies. The growth model of ServiceTitan is going to be very relevant to these companies. With this in mind, Hero House Glendale has already agreed upon

**collaborative schemes with ServiceTitan** on the basis of which they will share on a regular basis their **expertise and experience** in building a successful product, setting up sales and customer success in vertical SaaS. Regular talks, mentor office hours, and other sessions with leading specialists of ServiceTitan will be organized for the entrepreneurs building new vertical SaaS companies out of Hero House Glendale.

## Connecting Eastern Europe to the US via Glendale

The **internationalization** of Hero House Glendale is a crucial step in making it a successful technology and startup hub. The ability to cultivate different but solid perspectives in uncertain environments boosts overall creativity, which makes it faster for startups to get to the holy grail - product-market fit.

Following the establishment of the Scaling Heroes program targeting local founders, Eastern Europe will be targeted with the second Hero House Accelerator program - **Gateway to LA**. The program will aim to bring international companies to Glendale, who will benefit from **entering the US market via Los Angeles**. We expect Gateway to LA program to widen the network of founders, mentors, and other relevant partners engaged in the Glendale tech scene. As well, with the progress of the program, it is expected to increase in the long run **the attractiveness of Glendale for international startups** with high-growth potential.

Due to the Gateway to LA program, a solid value proposition for Glendale as a tech hub will be developed. International founders would be willing to know **"Why Glendale"**. It is interesting to note that the **Armenian angle** might play a crucial role in this story. The answer to "Why Glendale" is more apparent for founders from Armenia and hence, in the long run, the success of Armenian founders may become a role model to follow for other Eastern European founders.

## VC Infrastructure

One of the key factors necessary for the growth of the tech sector is access to investment. Hero House Glendale features a supportive VC infrastructure for the local tech entrepreneurial ecosystem that will further boost the growth of the local tech sector.

### In-house VC Fund

From day one, Hero House Glendale residents and program participants will have direct access to VC funding coming from SmartGateVC, an in-house venture capital firm investing in deep tech companies. Access to investment infrastructure from the very beginning is critical for enabling companies to move fast in incubating innovation and attracting and retaining talent. The Partners of SmartGateVC will hold regular VC office hours to provide ongoing support and guidance to investment-related questions.

### **In-house Pool of Angels**

Hero House Glendale will leverage its network to generate an in-house pool of angel investors. Office hours with them will be available for the startup founders. Angel pitching events will also be organized on a regular basis to attract angel investments. The pool is already being built and has few local angel investors as part of it.

### **Partner VC firms and Angel Networks**

Hero House Glendale will also bring in already existing funding channels and connections and will actively work towards establishing new connections with local and international investors - angels, seed-stage funds and VCs - in order to ensure startup financing and have well-attended demo days. Pre-contract agreement with Draper University Ventures has been established which ensures eligibility for DU Ventures to invest in Hero House Accelerator graduates. Again, office hours and pitching events will be conducted to foster communication between the entrepreneurs and investors and facilitate the startup financing processes. Dr. Ronald Weissman, Chairman of the Software Industry Group at Band of Angels, Silicon Valley's oldest angel investment group (founded in 1994) with over 120 members, and Board Member at **Angel Capital Association**, the official industry alliance of over 100 largest angel investor groups in the United States, is also both a mentor and an investor at Hero House Glendale. Dr. Weissman will support the establishment of the angel network around Hero House Glendale that may become the first official angel network of Glendale.

### **Partnerships with Local Leaders**

Besides strategic partnerships (sharing same mission) with Draper University, AESA and possibly City of Glendale (in case of winning the contract), SmartGateVC has already established partnerships and started collaboration with local leading organizations from various industries with the goal to engage them in Hero House Glendale activities.

### **Local Leading Companies**

Hero House Glendale has agreed with some of the local leading tech companies such as **Service Titan** and **DISQO**, to contribute to Hero House success by sharing their expertise and experience in vertical SaaS and Digital Marketing respectively, through regular talks and mentorship sessions, as well as involvement in other Hero House initiatives.

### **LA Area Leading Universities**

Hero House Glendale started building relationships with the **University of Southern California (USC)**, **University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)** and **California Institute of Technology (Caltech)** on the scope of bridging university research and on-campus startup activities with the Hero House Glendale

community. Hero House Glendale might co-organize with some of them Startup Boost Weekends, a few rounds of Entrepreneurial Assistants' School, and Artificial Intelligence Incubator. In addition, professors from these universities will be invited to give presentations on various topics at Hero House Glendale. Various initial agreements about mutual support have been made with some of the representatives from each educational institution, however, more work is required for tangible results.

Additionally, as mentioned above, Hero House Glendale has already decided on an agreement with **Draper University**, based on which some of Hero House Accelerator participants will spend one to two weeks on Draper University campus in San Mateo. In addition, a pre-contract agreement with DU Ventures has been established that Hero House Glendale residents going through joint programs with Draper University will be considered DU alumni and become eligible for funding from the fund.

### **Armenian Tech Communities**

SmartGateVC has agreed with various Armenian diaspora organizations about joint efforts in promoting Hero House Glendale as a tech and startup hub, which may significantly contribute towards the positioning of Glendale as an emerging tech and startup hub of Tri-City region within Armenian diaspora.

### **Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AESA)**

AESA is a potent channel for making national and international connections for the Glendale tech scene and promoting Glendale as a thriving technological hub beyond the Tri-City region. AESA sections in New York and Michigan will strengthen Hero House Glendale's connections US-wise. Additionally, since the AESA network is comprised of talented professionals from a wide range of disciplines - from Bio-engineering, Computer Science, and Robotics to Environmental Science, they will be invited to hold lectures on cutting-edge science and technology as part of Hero weekly sessions.

### **AGBU Silicon Valley Chapter**

The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) is the world's largest non-profit organization devoted to upholding the Armenian heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs. AGBU currently operates with an annual budget of over \$46 million and has an active presence in 31 countries and 74 cities. An agreement has been made with the AGBU Silicon Valley chapter to connect Hero House Glendale with technology leaders from Silicon Valley. It will also help to establish and strengthen the connection of Hero House Glendale with AGBU Young Professionals (YP), which is a global Armenian network of young professionals around the world. This vertical will serve as a base to expand beyond Glendale by creating connections with YP groups in LA and other major cities in the US and Europe. Experienced professionals from the AGBU network will also be invited to give talks and share their experience as part of weekly sessions at Hero House.

## HyeTech

HyeTech is an informal group of Armenian professionals in technology, business, and entrepreneurship started in Silicon Valley. Currently it has chapters in Silicon Valley, Massachusetts, UK, France and Armenia. HyeTech will co-organize HyeTech Entrepreneurship Immersion Program with Hero House Glendale as well as conduct monthly events in Hero House Glendale - talks, workshops, brainstorming events, etc. Hero House Glendale will host **HyeTech Los Angeles chapter**, thus strengthening ties with Silicon Valley and other chapters, which in the long run will result in an exchange of expertise and open access to more investment vehicles and promising startups.

## USC Institute of Armenian Studies

USC Institute of Armenian Studies is an educational center dedicated to the study of modern Armenia, based at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. They will champion Hero House Glendale within USC by relevant introductions and necessary facilitation where needed.

## Youth and Juniors

Hero House has a set of proven programs that successfully fill the gap of knowledge and skills required to fuel the ecosystem with young rising talents. These programs spread and share the entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and culture within university students and prepare a pipeline of capable entrepreneurs for future accelerator programs.

In partnership and collaboration with local corporates and institutions these programs can contribute to the **workforce development** in Glendale and prepare capable professionals to join the tech companies. They can also serve the **career awareness** needs of students by guiding them through different disciplines of technology and business along with experienced mentors and advisors.

## Startup Boost Weekend

Startup Boost Weekends are 48-hours long recurring programs aiming to promote tech entrepreneurship among students. A typical batch includes 100 students who eventually form 10-12 teams passing through the early-stage startup development processes - ideation, group formation, customer development, prototyping and pitching. The program also serves as a pipeline for university incubators present in the ecosystem.

## Entrepreneurial Assistants School

Entrepreneurial Assistants School serves the primary purpose of talent generation and placement of this talent in different organizations and startups in the ecosystem. It is an internship program for students with individual learning plans in various directions including and not limited to Growth Hacking, UX

Design, Product Management and Analytics, Gamification, Sales Enablement and other directions. Throughout the program, top industry experts will guide the interns as mentors.

### **Artificial Intelligence Incubator**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Incubator is a 10-14 weeks program that matches companies with data to Data Science or Machine Learning university students along with senior AI supervisors. This is a learning environment where students gain practical and applied knowledge through the work with supervisors and companies/research groups. They are given an opportunity to pursue a career as a researcher in the field of Machine Learning and Data Science. The university departments continue to supervise and participate in students' research work even after the completion of the incubator program, thus resulting in the creation of higher education and industry collaboration in the long term.

The program facilitates a collaborative environment for students and companies/research groups and fosters the entrepreneurial and innovative culture within university students. This is also a shared platform for students to learn from top professionals in the field.

### **Hero Hacker School**

Hero Hacker School (HHS) is a highly competitive learning center for mid-level software engineers to develop senior engineering skills & knowledge. HHS provides challenging project-based learning, mentorship & instruction by engineers from top tech companies who are experienced in delivering challenging solutions.

### **Student Enrollment Program**

Hero House Glendale will also serve as a career awareness space for high school and university students by allowing them to get practical knowledge via volunteering and internship opportunities. Student Enrollment Program will offer business- and tech-focused internships for university students and match them with Startup Program participants and alumni as well as wider community players. The goal of the Student Enrollment Program is to nurture the next generation of local tech entrepreneurs along with the other student-centric programs mentioned above.

Local students will also be hired on volunteering or internship basis to join the team of Hero House Glendale and help with the implementation of programs and initiatives as outlined in the proposal. Over time, there will be a **Junior Onboarding Team** dealing with the career guidance of newly-joined interns and volunteers to make sure they pass through a supervised learning plan and gain maximum value.

### **Employee Immersion Program (EIP2)**

EIP2 is a 10-day intensive program designed for employees working in the tech entrepreneurial ecosystems of Armenia and Eastern Europe. It is a 10-day visit to the Los Angeles Area which allows the



employees to feel the vibes of the business culture in the Los Angeles Area, explore the startup dynamics there, make new connections, increase their self-confidence and ultimately become change agents in their respective areas of expertise and workplaces. Hero House Glendale already has interest from an overseas company to deliver them such a program.

### **Collaborative Co-Working Space**

Hero House Glendale will advance as a **non-traditional collaborative co-working space** to further unlock the innovative energy of the Hero House community, nourish the sense of urgency, and allow for everyday peer-to-peer learning. It is an innovation hub and collaborative office space with a creative atmosphere and an entrepreneurial spirit for the locals - entrepreneurs, students, and the wider community. One of the intrinsic values of Hero House is the presence of EIRs (Entrepreneurs in Residence) and resident investors, which provide a unique opportunity to get on-the-fly advice every day combined with weekly sessions given by high-profile industry experts.

### **“One-Place” Support**

Hero House Glendale is going to work towards becoming a **“one place” support** for tech entrepreneurs via mentorship, weekly sessions, startup-centric programs, and other initiatives allowing founders to fully focus on execution. This approach reduces the transaction costs of the entrepreneurs and directs their time and time towards the execution of their business ventures.

## **Hero Ecosystem**

### **Glendale Tech Week**

Hero House Glendale considers also joining Glendale Tech Week as a co-organizer together with AESA, utilizing existing players and contributors. It will share its resources in order to make Glendale Tech Week a well-known international startup event over time that converges capital, technology and entrepreneurship for driving innovation.

### **Hackathons**

With the participation of other ecosystem players, Hero House Glendale can serve as a vehicle for the City to identify and establish a pool of city problems as well as be a platform for organizing hackathons to address the revealed challenges. Students, young professionals and code enthusiasts will come to join the coding marathon, solve real-life problems and win prizes. These hackathons will also serve the purpose of talent management and public awareness for Hero House Glendale.

### **Startup Ecosystem Mapping and Indexing**

At the end of the three-year timespan, Hero House Glendale will introduce an Ecosystem Mapping report which will provide historical background about entrepreneurship in the Glendale tech ecosystem,

introduce the general business environment in the region and existing gaps, map the keynote players and initiatives in tech entrepreneurship, as well as it will attempt to provide a series of recommendations for improvement of the tech entrepreneurship ecosystem.

### Tech Entrepreneurship Awards

Closer to the end of Phase 3, Hero House Glendale will feature **Hero Awards** recognizing the top-notch players and impactful contributions to the ecosystem. The awarding ceremony will bring together startup founders, entrepreneurs, investors, mentors and industry professionals from the Los Angeles Area and special guests from abroad. It will also serve as a platform to position the city as a thriving tech hub of the region and encourage more interest in Glendale.

## High Level Approach Towards Cornerstone Issues

### Scope of the Proposal

As it has already been articulated before, the scope of this proposal includes only Hero House Accelerator with 2 startup programs - **Scaling Heroes** and **Gateway to LA**. Rest of the projects and initiatives are anticipated to be implemented pro bono by Hero House Glendale and are not included in the scope of this proposal. Hero House Glendale considers to partner and collaborate with various stakeholders who might share the vision regarding the importance of some of the projects and initiatives and will join as co-organizers and/or sponsors.

### One Year of Pilot

To the best of our knowledge, it is going to be the first time for Glendale to host a startup acceleration program, although there are many accelerators in the Los Angeles area. Establishing an accelerator program implies a lot of uncertainties to deal with. Thus, based on our previous experience, most probably the first year is going to be a year of intensive learning until Hero House Accelerator runs one batch of each startup program - **Scaling Heroes** and **Gateway to LA**.

### Contribution to Existing Projects

Again, as it was mentioned before, Hero House Glendale (if granted the City contract) considers also joining Glendale Tech Week as a co-organizer (contributor) together with AESA, combining its resources with the contributions of existing players. The vision Hero House Glendale wants to pursue for the Glendale Tech Week is to make it a well-known international tech event converging capital, technology and entrepreneurship for spreading innovation worldwide.

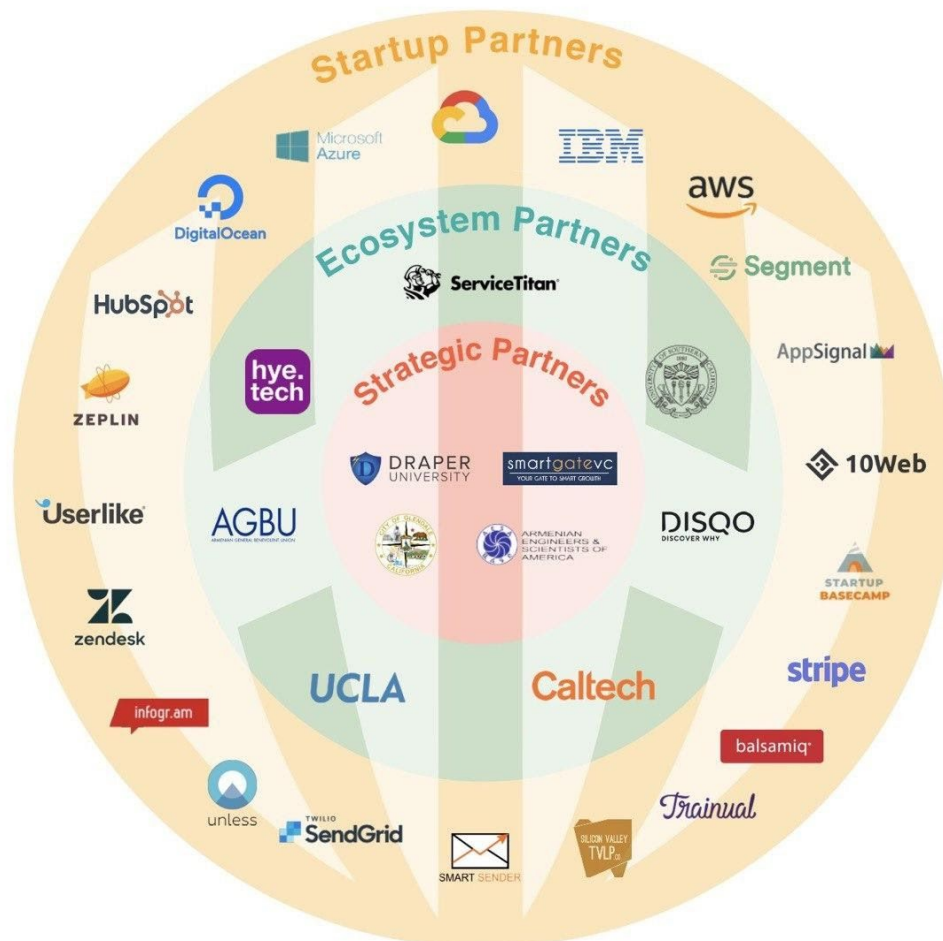
## Partnerships

As it was already mentioned, SmartGateVC is leading the initiative of establishing Hero House Glendale operating according to its complete vision together with 3 strategic partners - Draper University, AESA and City of Glendale. Hero House Glendale will be supported by **Ecosystem Partners**, namely ServiceTitan and DISQO as local leading tech companies, Silicon Valley based Armenian organizations, particularly HyeTech, AGBU Silicon Valley Chapter, as well as USC, UCLA and Caltech as local leading universities. Each of them brings a unique value to the Hero House Glendale and Glendale tech ecosystem.

In addition to **Strategic and Ecosystem Partners**, SmartGateVC partners with more than 20 world-renowned leading tech companies to provide various benefits for its portfolio and Hero House community. Total value of Startup Partners' perks exceeds \$500K per each company.

## Media Presence

For the recognition of Glendale as an international tech hub a well-planned and targeted marketing and branding campaign needs to be carried out. Internally, a special position will be designated in the Hero



House Glendale team who will be responsible for Community along with Media, PR and Communications in case if SmartGateVC wins the contract award by the Glendale City Council. Additionally, it is envisioned to cooperate with a media/PR agency and use different media outlets and coverage to raise the reputation of Glendale as a deeply networked technological hub and ultimately attract more and more high-growth potential tech companies to the region. Internet media will be the mainstream channel in use internally.

## Long-term Intention

It is anticipated that by the end of the second year, Hero House Accelerator will have enough outstanding results in order to start raising funding for a traditional accelerator, where companies get investment upon start of the program. It is expected that the management fee from such an accelerator fund will cover necessary costs. However, during next 3 years, Hero House Glendale will work on exploring more possible channels of monetization besides sponsorships, including paid programs, equity programs, facilitation of investing vehicles and many more.

# WHAT

## Hero House Accelerator: Mission, Scope, Timeline

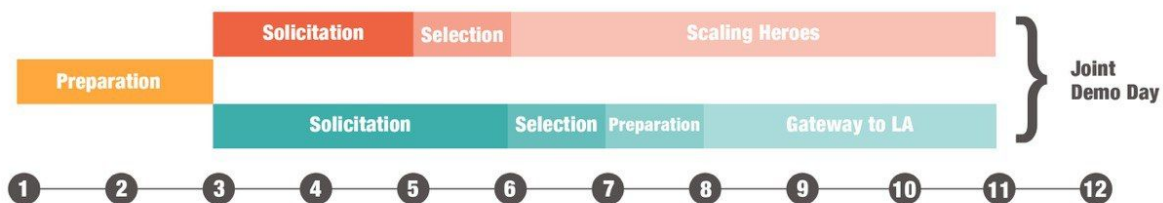
Hero House Accelerator is a cornerstone project for the success of Hero House Glendale. It consists of two acceleration programs - **Scaling Heroes** and **Gateway to LA**. Although acceleration programs are usually structured similarly, what differentiates them is their focus by: a) geography and b) industry, c) stage, and d) unique network and the reputation of the Operator. For a successful program there should be a simple and clear story line that describes a startup journey which resonates with its target audience and has been proved by the market.

**Hero House Accelerator's mission is to contribute to the creation of a highly competitive cluster of tech companies in Glendale by finding and working with extraordinary founders with unique market knowledge and strong technology in order to speed up their growth of customers and revenues.**

Hero House Accelerator will set the wheels in motion with its 5-months long **Scaling Heroes** acceleration program designed for LA area entrepreneurs. The Scaling Heroes is designed to empower local entrepreneurs having unique market knowledge and operational excellence to build highly scalable companies using technology. Matching with trusted Eastern European technology vendors is part of the program and should enable cost-efficient software development, in some cases it may even help to find technical co-founders for those business founders who are in need of it.

After 4 months from Hero House Accelerator launch, the solicitation for the second acceleration program - **Gateway to LA**, will kickstart. The program will last 3 months and will work towards attracting high-growth startups from Eastern Europe to relocate into Glendale, headquarter and expand from here, using unique opportunities available in the Tri-City area.

High-level timeline for both Hero House Accelerator programs is introduced below. It is designed in a way a) to allow program overlaps between 2 programs for maximizing cross-pollination, b) to be under 12 months with Demo Day during the 11th month from the start in order to plan the programs for the second year of the contract before it starts.

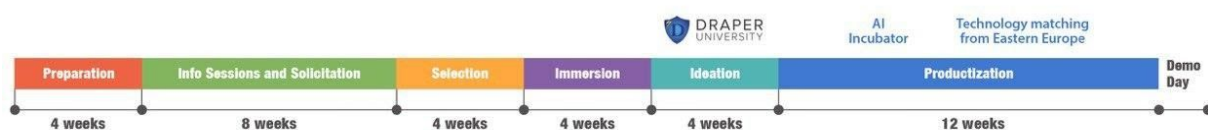


## Accelerator Details: Curriculum, Pipeline, Solicitation, Selection, Marketing, Branding

### Hero House Accelerator: Scaling Heroes

Scaling Heroes is a 5-months long startup program aiming to enable local proven brick-and-mortar businesspeople, as well as top business and STEM students to build tech companies with incredibly high growth potential. The program is comprised of three main components and culminates into a Demo Day at the end of the 5th month:

1. **Component 1: Immersion** (4 weeks) - during which the participants acquire a unique knowledge about practical frameworks to use for building a tech company.
2. **Component 2: Ideation** (4 weeks) - during this period participants work with groups of ideas with help of mentors in order to choose one idea to proceed with it.
3. **Component 3: Productization** (12 weeks) - during which the most promising idea of each participant passes through product development, prototyping and deployment.
4. **Demo Day** - at the end of the program participants pitch their business ideas/plans to the audience of investors and demo product prototype if available.



Curriculum:

	Week	Topic	Focus
	Week 1	Talk: Welcome and Introduction, Hero House Startup Program, Goals to reach until Demo Day, First 15 second pitches.	Onboarding, getting to know main concepts/terms, goal setting, need assessment, expectations and objectives.
		Expectations interviews and need assessment 1-1 meetings	
	Week 2	Cohort networking event	Community building and networking, need assessment, expectations and objectives.
		Expectations interviews and need assessment 1-1 meetings	
		Team assignment	
	Week 3	Team Breakfast	Strategic positioning and messaging for founders, Review of weekly goals and roadmap to reach the goals.
		Book Discussion	
		Workshop: Storytelling	
		Weekly progress report	
	Week 4	Workshop: Lean Canvas	Lean Business Canvas development, Basics of Market and business model analysis, understanding SWOT analysis, Customer development basics.
		Team assignment	
		Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
		Weekly progress report	
	Week 5	Talk: Brainstorming and Ideation	Brainstorming and developing idea boards, Startup etiquette, professional communication, starting customer development, learning about practical impact of a book.
		Workshop: Startup Etiquette and Communications	
		Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
		Book discussion meeting with experienced entrepreneur	
		Weekly progress report	
	Week 6	Visit to Draper University	Networking events, Idea development
	Week 7	Visit to Draper University	Selection of top 3 ideas, mentorship.
	Week 8	Idea Boards group discussion, selection of top 3 ideas	Identification of initial value proposition for customer segment.

		Mentor Hour	
		Team assignment	
		Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 9</b>		Lean interviews for customer development Lean Business Canvas development	Defining the initial economy, selection of customer segments, Review of weekly goals and roadmap to reach the goals, pitching.
		Talk: Market Selection	
		Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
		Weekly progress report	
		Pitching session	
<b>Week 10</b>		Talk: Go-To-Market Strategy	Market analysis and evaluation, identification of winning GTM frameworks and channels; Customer interviews, identification of customer segment problems, pitching.
		Customer development tracking meetings	
		Mentor one-on-one meetings	
		Weekly progress report Pitching session	
<b>Week 11</b>		Book discussion meeting with experienced entrepreneur	Customer interviews, identification of customer segment problems; Draft Pitch Deck review.
		Customer development tracking meetings	
		Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
		Weekly progress report	
		Pitching session	
<b>Week 12</b>		Talk: UI/UX Design	UI/UX design; Customer interviews, validation of customer segment problems;
		Customer development tracking meetings	
		Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
		Weekly progress report	
		Pitching session	
<b>Week 13</b>		Talk: Growth Hacking/SEO	Marketing, Growth Hacking, SEO; Community building and networking; Customer interviews, validation of customer segment problems, pitching.
		Customer development tracking meetings	
		Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	



	Weekly progress report	
	Pitching session	
	Cohort Gathering and Networking Event	
<b>Week 14</b>	Talk: Fundraising	Fundraising main concepts and processes, communication and relationship with investors; Customer interviews, validation of customer segment problems, pitching.
	Customer development tracking meetings	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Weekly progress report	
	Pitching session	
<b>Week 15</b>	Talk: Enterprise Sales	Sales, customer discovery, value proposition hypothesis; Customer interviews, validation of customer segment problems, pitching.
	One-on-one meetings with Sales Professional	
	Customer development tracking meetings	
	Weekly progress report	
	Pitching session	
<b>Week 16</b>	Talk/workshop: Pitch Deck Design and Pitching	The main components of a pitch deck, what are investors looking for in a pitch; Customer discovery, customer segment hypothesis; Pitching.
	Customer development tracking meetings	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Weekly progress report	
	Pitching Session	
<b>Week 17</b>	Talk: Term Sheets and Financials	Term sheets and financials, investment instrument; Lean interviews for customer development; Pitching, Pitch deck review.
	Customer development tracking meeting	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Weekly progress report	
	Pitching Session	

Week 18	Team Breakfast	Intellectual Property Protection, State and International Laws, Pitch deck final review. Customer interviews wrap-up, Pitching, Pitch deck review.
	Talk: Intellectual Property Protection	
	Customer development tracking meetings	
	Weekly progress report	
	Pitching Session	
Week 19	Intensive Pitching Sessions	Intensive Pitching practice, Demo Day preparations, Participant Progress Evaluation
	Exit Interviews	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
Week 20	Intensive Pitching Sessions	Intensive Pitching practice, Demo Day preparations, Participant Progress Evaluation
	Exit Interviews	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
Demo Day		

#### **Pipeline (or Targeted Participants):**

The following groups are considered to be the most relevant for the Scaling Heroes program:

- Entrepreneurs who built successful brick-and-mortar businesses (eg chains of bakeries, body shops, etc) and willing to take their businesses to the next level with the idea of building a tech company around gained domain expertise and known unique market insights;
- The next generation (children or grandchildren) of the previous group;
- Top business and STEM students having unique market insights and domain knowledge who need help in building a product and tech company in the right way.

#### **Solicitation and Selection (or Recruitment process):**

For finding the most relevant candidates, Hero House Accelerator is going to use its network to tap into **organizations and communities** where the mentioned groups can be found. Below is the list of some of such organizations:

- **Executive and Part-time MBA programs** of LA area universities and their graduate schools.
- **Family Business Program** initiated by the USC Marshall School of Business.

- **USC Center for Real Estate**, as many of the Center students are already engaged in traditional brick-and-mortar businesses with established operational excellence.
- **Local communities** (e.g. AESA, AGBU Young Professionals Network, Biocom).
- **Alumni Associations** and **Alumni unions**.

Some of the planned **activities for solicitation** of the Scaling Heroes program are:

- **Case competitions** in universities and other educational centers might serve as a great solicitation channel. The judges are going to be from among Silicon Valley top companies and VCs. Thus, the case competitions will not only serve for solicitation purposes but also raise awareness about Hero House Glendale as the regional tech powerhouse and open access to a wider VC infrastructure and potential partners.
- **Information sessions** held at Hero House Glendale, universities and other educational centers, partner entrepreneurial and tech-focused communities, other relevant organizations.
- **Announcements** about opened call for applications via social media, Hero House Glendale website and other media channels, as well as during various relevant events (such as alumni reunions/gatherings etc).

The selection for the **Scaling Heroes** acceleration program will target to select 10-15 high quality participants for enrollment in the program and will follow a **three-step process** covering:

1. **Review of received applications** and shortlisting of promising ones by Hero House Accelerator team and invited experts if needed;
2. **Interviews with shortlisted candidates** by Hero House Accelerator team and invited experts if needed;
3. **Selection of top-10 candidates** (and 5 waiting list candidates) as the results of interviews to be approved by Hero House Glendale Director.

For the **Scaling Heroes** acceleration program the final list of selection criteria and with weights are going to be confirmed by Hero House Glendale Director, however some of the important **selection criteria** that are going to guide selection team will be the following:

- Level of commitment,
- Ability to execute,
- Domain knowledge,
- Severeness of the problem,
- Market for the solution,
- Team.

## Hero House Accelerator: Gateway to LA

After the successful implementation of Scaling Heroes startup program, Hero House Accelerator will target international founders, particularly from Eastern Europe, for its second acceleration program with the duration of 3 months. For these founders, Hero House Accelerator will serve as a gateway to enter the US market expanding from the Los Angeles area. The aim is to attract high-growth potential startups

to Glendale and retain them in the city after they graduate from the 3 months long acceleration program. The program will have 4 major components:

1. **Partnerships** - making strategic connections with key players of the tech entrepreneurial ecosystem and top global companies in the Los Angeles area (e.g. Media, Entertainment, SpaceTech);
2. **Sales** - helping the entrepreneurs with their market expansion and sales strategy including finding customers and establishing product/service presence in the Los Angeles area;
3. **Fundraising** - connecting with investors from the LA area and wider California, including introductions to venture capital firms and angel investor networks of the area;
4. **Demo Day** - at the end of the program participants pitch their business ideas/plans to the audience of investors and tech community.



#### Curriculum:

Week	Topic	Focus
Week 1	Talk: Welcome and Introduction, Hero House Startup Program, Goals to reach until Demo Day, First 15 sec pitches.	Onboarding, getting to know main concepts/terms, goal setting, needs assessment, expectations and objectives.
	Expectations interviews and need assessment 1-1 meetings	
Week 2	Cohort networking event	Community building and networking, needs assessment, expectations and objectives.
	Expectations interviews and need assessment 1-1 meetings	
Week 3	Workshop: Storytelling and Pitching	Strategic positioning and messaging for founders, Review of weekly goals and roadmap to reach the goals.
	Weekly progress report	
Week 4	Talk: Fundraising and Market Analysis	Market analysis, business model analysis and selection, Fundraising basics.
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	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Weekly progress report	
Week 5		

	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 6</b>	Talk: How to Create a Winning Pitch Deck	The main components of pitch deck, what are investor looking for in a pitch customer segment hypothesis, draft pitch deck review.
	Pitching Session	
	Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 7</b>	Talk: Enterprise Sales	Sales, pitch deck design and pitching.
	-----	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Talk/workshop: Pitch Deck Design and Pitching Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 8</b>	Talk: Growth Hacking/SEO	Marketing, Growth Hacking, SEO, pitching.
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	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Pitching session Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 9</b>	Talk: Intellectual Property Protection	Intellectual Property Protection, pitching.
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	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Pitching session Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 10</b>	Talk: UI/UX Design	UI/UX design, pitching.
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	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Pitching session Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 11</b>	Talk:Term Sheets and Financials	Fundraising main concepts and processes, communication and relationship with investors, Term sheets and financials, investment instruments, pitching.
	Intensive Pitching sessions	
	Exit Interviews	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	

	Weekly progress report	
<b>Week 12</b>	Intensive Pitching sessions	
	Exit Interviews	
	Mentor and VC hours (by choice)	
	Weekly progress report	

Based on each participant's needs, the two Startup Programs will include:

- Customer development tracking;
- 1-1 general business development mentorship;
- Weekly sessions, talks, and workshops;
- Pitch deck design and pitching practices;
- Growth Hacking;
- Sales enablement;
- Follow on fundraising strategy development and support.

Hero House Glendale has already decided on an agreement with Draper University based on which the participants will spend one or two weeks of the Ideation phase of Scaling Heroes program at **Draper University** in San Mateo. A critical part of this cooperation is access to investment by DU Ventures. Companies successfully graduating from Scaling Hero program will also be considered Draper University alumni and thus will be eligible to receive funding by Draper University Ventures - a fund dedicated to Draper University alumni companies. The contractual agreement will be signed by both parties after winning the Contract award by the City Council.

#### **Pipeline (or Targeted Participants):**

The targeted participants of the Gateway to LA program are:

- Graduates of leading incubation and pre-acceleration programs of Eastern European countries such as Armenia, Georgia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Serbia, Bulgaria, Moscow-Russia);
- Companies raised pre-seed or seed rounds seeking first sales in the US;
- Companies from other states of the US seeking collaboration with corporations and universities in the Los Angeles area.

#### **Solicitation and Selection (or Recruitment process):**

The solicitation for international founders will start with regular call for applications and will target to select 10 companies from 7 Eastern European countries.

For finding the most relevant candidates, Hero House Accelerator will use its network of organizations to access such companies. Below is the list of some of such organizations:

- **Armenia Startup Academy**, Armenia

- **iHub**, Ukraine
- **Demium**, Belarus
- **Dream-ups**, Moldova
- **Tekwill**, Moldova
- **SC Ventures**, Serbia

Some of the planned **activities for solicitation** of the GateWay to LA program are:

- **Promotional trips** with participation of Hero House mentors for a local community in each targeted Eastern European country during 2 prospective months.
- **References** from the network of organizations that consider their beneficiary companies for expanding to the US market.

The visits will be wound up with the three-step recruitment process explained above.

Some of the important **selection criteria** that are going to guide selection team will be the following:

- Synergies and the potential to leverage the LA area industries and educational institutions,
- Ability to execute,
- Domain knowledge,
- Likelihood of raising follow-on funding,
- Market for the solution,
- Team.

## Training materials

### Books

Based on the teams' needs and objectives, an individual learning plan is developed and shared with each founder. The list includes the essential entrepreneurship-related books but the ordering is prioritized based on the goals of the founders and companies.

The essentials include:

1. **The Startup Owner's Manual** by Steven G. Blank
2. **Zero to One** by Peter Thiel
3. **The Mom's Test** by Rob Fitzpatrick
4. **The Startup Game** by William Henry Draper III
5. **The Entrepreneurial Bible to Venture Capital** by Andrew Romans
6. **Traction** by Gino Wickman
7. **The Hard Thing about Hard Things** by Ben Horowitz
8. **Lean Customer Development** by Cindy Alvarez

9. **Pitch Anything** by Oren Klaff
10. **Viral Loop** by Adam Penenberg
11. **Blitzscaling** by Reid Hoffman and Chris Yeh
12. **Good to Great** by James C. Collins
13. **Made to Stick** by Chip Heath and Dan Heath
14. **Scaling Lean** by Ash Maurya

### Video Lectures and Podcasts

Besides books, the following three resources are included in the learning plan.

1. **How to Start a Startup**: a series of video lectures by Y Combinator, which covers topics such as ideation, growth, sales and marketing, hiring, raising money, company culture, and more.
2. **Technology-enabled Blitzscaling**: a series of video lectures by Greylock Partners, which focuses on the challenges and dynamics of the “hyper growth” stage of startups.
3. **Masters of Scale**: a podcast hosted by Reid Hoffman, founder of LinkedIn and Investor at Greylock, in which Reid talks with legendary leaders and shows how companies grow.

### Forms

**Customer Development Tracking:** Weekly one-on-one meetings with the companies constitute an integral part of the **Scaling Heroes** program. Based on the expectations interviews and need assessment conducted at the beginning of the program, the pain points for each participant team are identified and an individual development plan is designed accordingly. For the teams whose priority need is identified to be customer development, individual tracking will be done during one-on-one sessions, mainly focusing on Customer Discovery and Customer Validation. This will help startups to get closer to achieving product-market fit before diving into productization. Depending on each startup's needs, all are matched with mentors, high-ranking industry professionals from local tech companies and communities - ServiceTitan, DISQO, HyeTech and AESA to name a few.



### ***Lean Interview Forms:***

#### **Part 1**

Startup name	What problems are you trying to solve?	What are the existing alternatives?	What are the main assumptions?	How are you solving the problem?	Why are you top?	What are your key metrics?

#### **Part 2**

Startup name	What is your unique value proposition?	What is your unfair advantage?	How are you going to reach your customers?	What are your customer segments?	What is your cost structure?	What is your revenue structure?

### ***Customer Development Forms:***

#### **Template for Customer Discovery**

#	Customer Segment Hypothesis	Initial Value Proposition	Validated problems	Customer Segment	Refined Value Proposition	Initial economy is defined	MVP is ready

### Template for Customer Validation

#### Part 1

#	Customer Segment	Value Proposition	Sales Channel	Awareness tools built	Sales tools ready	Customers evaluate Value Proposition

#### Part 2

#	Customers redefine Value Proposition	Sales tools refined	First sale in channel	More sales	Positive economy	Scalable economy

## Other Building Blocks of the Accelerator

The following five components - Demo Days, HyeTech Entrepreneurship Immersion Program, Hero Sessions, VC and Mentor hours - are important building blocks of Scaling Heroes and Gateway to LA Startup Programs.

### Demo Days

Both Scaling Heroes and Gateway to LA Startup Programs will be culminated with **Demo Days** during which the batch participants will pitch their products to an audience of investors, tech community, and the media. A well-marketed and well-attended Demo Day is a quantum leap in both the accelerator's and startups' reputation and opens a wider access to a pool of investors. With this in mind, investors and key ecosystem players will be invited to Hero House Demo Days from both local communities and the Silicon Valley Bay Area.

### Hero Sessions

Hero sessions vary from Business and Technology talks, Fireside Chats, Workshops, Success stories, Program Talks, Panel discussions, Q&A sessions and other formats held weekly. The speakers will be

from local, Silicon Valley and wider U.S. tech and entrepreneurial communities as well as from abroad. The sessions will aim to contribute to the overall community development beyond the direct beneficiaries of Hero House Glendale. Some of the weekly sessions will be conducted by professionals from HyeTech and AESA networks.

### **Mentor hours**

The mentors are high-profile professionals from U.S. to Australia with varying backgrounds. They are both mentors from the Hero House community and special guests by invitation. The office hours are available on a weekly basis in-house or remotely. They are designed to give strategic guidance to startup founders on growth hacking, product development, sales strategy development, and more to foster the rapid growth of these companies. As of now, our community features a pool of more than a hundred mentors worldwide (see the complete list in Annex 1). Hero House will be working towards acquiring more mentors from the local and Silicon Valley tech entrepreneurial ecosystems during the three-year timespan.

### **VC hours**

The startup community of Hero House Glendale can book VC hours on a bi-weekly basis to receive guidance on investment-related questions. Both in-house and guest VCs are available for consultation on-premises and remotely. These office hours are meant to advise startups on the steps and procedures of startup financing, make introductions to potential investors and help with the overall fundraising process.

### **HyeTech Entrepreneurship Immersion Program**

HyeTech Entrepreneurship Immersion Program will be co-organized by Hero House Glendale and HyeTech targeting local and international founders. For international founders, the 10-day program will start with a 3-day visit to the Los Angeles area before a one-week exposure to Silicon Valley. The program includes sessions and talks by high-profile domain professionals; visits to leading companies such as Google and Facebook Silicon Valley Bay Area and ServiceTitan in Los Angeles; meetings with founders and partners of some top accelerators such as MuckerLab in Los Angeles and BoostVC in San Mateo and will be culminated with a Demo Day where the participants will pitch their ideas to investors from Silicon Valley and key industry players.

### **Marketing and Branding**

Hero House Glendale will have a structured and deliberate approach to marketing initiatives that will showcase participants of Scaling Heroes to the tech community and wider audience and attract more high-potential teams to join other cohorts of the program. Meanwhile, Gateway to LA will brand itself as the premier bridge for companies in media, entertainment, space and health tech to California. It will build a reputation of solid pipeline builder for VC and angel groups in California and a top choice of the founders in the select niche of industries.

Active social media presence and monthly newsletters are two important verticals to use to spotlight Startup Program participants, events and activities as well as alumni achievements.

Regular blog posts will be published in Hero House Glendale website and in third-party platforms to emphasize the startup program participants' key learnings and program highlights, as well as events available for the wider tech community.

Smaller scale branding initiatives include branded gifts to mentors, speakers, guests and community members that will raise awareness about Hero House Glendale programs and activities to a wider audience (e.g. hoodies, stickers, cups, socks etc). A special welcome pack will be distributed during the program launch.

Well-attended Demo Days will allow for further promotion, draw extensive media attention and act as a solicitation platform for the follow-on batches. Weekly events with special guests and hackathons organized and/or hosted by Hero House Glendale also indirectly serve this purpose and ultimately attract more and more high-growth tech companies to the region and the Scaling Heroes acceleration program.

**The brand of Hero House will become a holistic part of Glendale's overall tech image and will feature Glendale as top destination to headquarter a tech business which targets the LA area.**

## Success Measurement Metrics

Hero House Accelerator Program success will be evaluated on two dimensions:

- The short-term and long-term effects of the program on the participant startups, as well as the accelerator progress over time,
- The importance of the accelerator for the City of Glendale to achieve the goals outlined in the Tech Strategy.

### 1. Accelerator program success

Accelerator program success metrics presented below are applicable for both Scaling Heroes and Gateway to LA startup programs and can be grouped into three subcategories:

#### Program-specific metrics:

- Number of participating companies and graduates,
- Establishment of a company or new products/services,
- Number of networking opportunities,
- Total funding raised by companies,
- New partnership benefits available for startups,
- Net Promoter Score,
- Sponsorship dollars generated.

#### Company-specific metrics (measured by pre- and post-program monitoring surveys):

- Improvement of business operations,

- Increase of market share,
- Market expansion,
- Technical development,
- Team development and talent management,
- Investor interest in the startup,
- Network and connectivity in the ecosystem,
- Major milestones achieved.

#### Long-term metrics:

- Return on investment of early stage investors (where applicable),
- Company revenue growth,
- Company valuation,
- Number of \$100m companies (measured each 5 years),
- Number of unicorn companies (measured each 5 years),
- Number of Exits (measured each 5 years),
- Total Exit Volume (measured each 5 years).

## 2. Glendale Tech Performance

Glendale Tech Performance metrics will measure how well Hero House Accelerator addresses the roadmap for the tech sector improvement as outlined in the Glendale Tech Strategy and the overall economic development of the region, particularly:

- Growth of Tech sector employment,
- Number of tech-based businesses,
- Tech-based company average sales,
- Square footage devoted to and/or recently converted to tech-based businesses or uses,
- Number of Media placements (per quarter),
- Internet Media metrics (website and social media metrics),
- Individual talent migration to Glendale or the Tri-city region,
- High-growth startup relocation or market expansion to Glendale or the Tri-city region,
- Number of mentors available for local entrepreneurs on the premises and remotely,
- Innovation / Innovative landscape (based on perception survey),
- Connections between the program and the larger Glendale area innovation ecosystem (based on perception survey).

#### The measurements will be conducted through:

- Annual surveys sent out to Hero House Glendale and wider tech community to assess the strength of the ecosystem,
- In-depth interviews with direct stakeholders of Hero House Glendale,
- Internal and external data analysis.



## Advancing the Glendale Tech Strategy

### **Hero House Glendale with its Accelerator program and other affiliated activities will promote Glendale as a thriving Tech Hub internally through:**

- Featuring the accelerator program and Hero House Glendale at “Tech on Tap” monthly meet-ups,
- Hosting “Tech on Tap” meet-ups at Hero House Glendale,
- Organizing well-marketed and well-attended Demo Days with guests from LA area and Silicon Valley tech entrepreneurial ecosystem and from abroad,
- Organizing “Open Hero House” events featuring our programs and accelerator participants, as well as opportunities for young professionals and students,
- Engaging key partners and local tech ecosystem players to co-organize and host hackathons, tech conferences, and other events,
- Inviting high-profile professionals from LA area, Silicon Valley and abroad for weekly sessions and mentorship,
- Hosting AESA, AGBU YP and HyeTech events in Hero House Glendale,
- Taking students from local colleges and universities on an internship or volunteering bases to help organizing Hero House Glendale activities to attract them to careers in the tech industry,
- Acting as a channel to place students from local universities in the accelerator participant startups and other companies from the ecosystem,
- Partnering with local leading companies to share their expertise with starting entrepreneurs,
- Creating a VC infrastructure available for local companies – own pool of angels, partner angel networks and VC funds,
- Connecting ecosystem players under one roof at co-working space,
- Creating mentoring, networking, and fundraising opportunities for local entrepreneurs,
- Participating in Glendale Tech Week and Hero House Accelerator participants.

### **Hero House Glendale programs and initiatives will broaden Glendale’s reach beyond the Tri-City area through:**

- Acting as a HyeTech base in Los Angeles, hosting HyeTech events in Hero House (talks, workshops, brainstorming events, conferences, etc), connecting experts from HyeTech network with Glendale entrepreneurs for mentorship,
- Exposing local entrepreneurs to the tech scene and startup dynamics of Silicon Valley via Entrepreneur Immersion Program and 2-week visit to Draper University as part of Scaling Heroes startup program,
- Expanding our network through AESA, hosting AESA events in Hero House, having AESA professionals as mentors for local entrepreneurs, making national connections through AESA-New York and AESA-Michigan sections,

- Creating US-wide connections via AGBU Young Professionals network, run joint projects with AGBU Silicon Valley Chapter,
- Connecting local entrepreneurs with the tech ecosystem of Silicon Valley in the scope of cooperation with Draper University in San Mateo,
- Connecting entrepreneurs with operational excellence to technology companies from Eastern Europe,
- Attracting startup entrepreneurs from Eastern Europe to develop their ideas and/or expand their operations in Glendale via Gateway to LA Startup Program,
- Hosting in Glendale HQs of high-growth companies from Eastern Europe,
- Attracting investors from beyond the region,
- Raising Glendale's profile and credibility in the tech community by attracting tech conferences,
- Working deliberately with the media to feature Glendale as a thriving technological hub.

## Benefits to the Wider Community

Hero House Glendale is aiming to provide tangible benefits to the wider community of Glendale beyond the tech entrepreneurial ecosystem. With this in mind, Hero House Glendale seeks to introduce some products developed by Armenia-based companies that can scale/have already scaled in Glendale and the locals can benefit from. Some examples include:

- [GG](#), a leading on demand transportation platform with presence in Armenia, Russia, Georgia and in the US,
- [Robin by Expper Technologies](#), an AI-powered medical companion robot for children allowing to generate and adapt emotions based on human interaction currently doing pilots in California and Massachusetts,
- [YerevanRide](#), a reliable last mile bike, electric bike and electric scooter rental that can promote easy transportation options along Brand Boulevard,
- [EarlyOne](#), a customer flow management system that can minimize the waiting time in queues and improve customer service,
- [Lucky Carrot](#), a peer-to-peer employee recognition and reward system,
- [Embry Tech](#), a technology for turning any shoe into a biometric data tracking and wellness monitoring device (has already done manufacturing setup in Glendale).



## People



### Manana Mesropian **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

#### **Current Position:**

Freelance public policy consultant

#### **Qualifications:**

Manana has nearly 10 years of experience in corporate management, startup advisory and accelerator management, consulting on strategy, investment and sales, as well as partnerships and community management. Formerly, she was **General Manager at Revolution Workspace (SOSV)**, "The Accelerator VC" with \$250M in assets under management. As part of the founding team, Manana has been responsible for the establishment of **SOSV's flagship San Francisco HQ**, oversaw facility operations and managed the community of 80 startups. Prior to joining SOSV, she was the **Program Director and Community Manager at Runway**, a technology innovation hub in San Francisco curating companies 5 of which have **raised over \$25M**, 4 have become profitable without outside funding, and 3 exiting for a total of more than \$10M. Manana has closed corporate sponsorships with **SAP** and **Sheppard Mullin** and hosted **over 500 events in less than 2 years**. As former co-founder and COO of Zenio, Manana has extensive experience in managing overseas software outsourcing teams. She is well connected with numerous Eastern European software development companies and related business infrastructure.

#### **Responsibilities:**

Responsible for strategic program management, operational and financial plans, fundraising, communication with stakeholders and vendors, managing the educational programs, communication with portfolio of startups during and post program.



## Hambardzum Kaghketsyan

### **CUSTOMER & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MENTOR**

#### **Current Position:**

Founding Partner at SmartGateVC, Co-founder of Hero House.

#### **Qualifications:**

Hambardzum has over 10 years of experience in accelerator management, **customer development and mentorship of high-tech early stage companies**, as well as consulting on strategy, performance management, and business valuation, VC investment management and facilitation, investment advisory and deal structuring, stakeholder and partnerships management, and Systems Design. Hambardzum has been doing business development consulting for companies located in Eastern Europe, mainly Belarus, Ukraine and Poland.

Hambardzum has previously worked at **World Bank Group** consulting the design of new regulatory framework of state supervision in Armenia. He was also an **EIR (Entrepreneur in Residence) at Draper University**.

He has designed the **technology development strategy** for the Russian-Armenian University, re-organized the university's IT Department, and established Masters program in Machine Learning.

He is currently a **Founding Partner** at **SmartGateVC** - seed VC fund focusing on AI, IoT, Cybersecurity, emerging Biotech, Quantum Computing and Blockchain.

Hambardzum has a significant expertise on the startup landscape of Eastern Europe. He took part in numerous startup events/talks in Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus (including Startup Grind) and is well connected with key stakeholders in the startup ecosystems in those countries.

#### **Responsibilities:**

Responsible for establishing the VC infrastructure, creating a network of VC and Angel investors around Hero House, and connecting startup founders with potential investors; managing high level stakeholder engagement; Hero House Glendale strategic positioning in the ecosystem; ongoing mentorship with program startups.



### Ashot Arzumanyan

## **INVESTMENTS & CAPITAL ATTRACTION MENTOR**

#### **Current Position:**

Founding Partner at SmartGateVC, Co-founder of Hero House.

#### **Qualifications:**

Ashot has nearly 15 years of combined experience in accelerator management, VC & PE Investment management and facilitation, investment advisory and deal structuring for high-tech companies, mentorship, as well as consulting on finance, strategy, performance management, business valuation and sectorial research in the US, CIS and Middle East.

Previously, Ashot was an **Investment Advisor at Gulf Equity Partners, UAE** advising on deal origination, and managing portfolio and partner networks. He was a **Business Consultant at EV Consulting** involved in investment and financial advisory, strategy execution, commercial due diligence for high-tech, food processing, construction materials and pharmaceutical companies in **Armenia, UAE and Russia** as well as public policy advisory for the **Government of Armenia, the World Bank, EBRD, ADB, EABR** and other institutions. Additionally, he has extensive **C-level executive** experience.

Ashot is currently a **Founding Partner at SmartGateVC** - seed VC fund focusing on AI, IoT, Cybersecurity, emerging Biotech, Quantum Computing and Blockchain. In the last few years, Ashot has been extensively screening deals from Eastern Europe. He has also been invited to several local startup events as a guest speaker and currently supports local companies with their fundraising rounds.

#### **Responsibilities:**

Responsible for establishing the VC infrastructure, creating a network of VC and Angel investors, and linking startup founders with potential investors, pipeline generation and development, partnerships management.



**Vazgen Hakobjanyan**  
**TECHNOLOGY MENTOR**

**Current Position:**

Founding Partner at SmartGateVC, Co-founder of Hero House

**Qualifications:**

Vazgen has more than 15 years of experience in bringing cutting edge computer science algorithms to enterprise/real-world applications including image/signal processing, pattern recognition, AI and EDA. He is the **Co-founder** and previously **VP of Engineering** at **Teamable Software**. He is a **Board Member of YerevaNN**, a leading AI and ML research non-profit lab, and **Gate42**, the first and only Quantum Computing Lab in Armenia. Formerly, Vazgen was a senior R&D engineer at **Synopsys**. He is now mentoring deep-tech companies based in **Ukraine and Moldova** and consulting on AI implementation solutions.

Vazgen is currently a **Founding Partner** at **SmartGateVC** - seed VC fund focusing on AI, IoT, Cybersecurity, emerging Biotech, Quantum Computing and Blockchain.

**Responsibilities:**

Responsible for Technology guidance; direct work with batch participant startups to advise on technical solutions; responsible for Hero Science initiatives.

**Besides Managing Director, the operational team of Hero House Glendale will consist of a Community Manager and 2 Junior Program Assistants. Besides SmartGateVC partners as mentors, 2 more mentors will be hired by Hero House Glendale for the smooth run of Hero House Accelerator.**

## Budget and Timeline

Total initial budget for 3 years of Hero House Glendale operations is estimated to be between \$1,5 to \$2 million with the first year being \$624,500. SmartGateVC contributes \$291,500 for the first year of operations in the form of cash and in-kind contributions. Line item budget for the first year is presented in Annex 2.

Due to the fact that the current proposal might become public and available upon request to anyone, and because of the competitive nature of VC industry, with reference to SmartGateVC competitors, proof of leverage funding is not included in the current proposal in any form. However, SmartGateVC will be willing to introduce the proof during interviews for private review.

Timeline is in Annex 3.



**City of Glendale  
Disclosure - Campaign Finance Ordinance  
Applicants Seeking Entitlement**

**Submit to Permit Services Center, 633 E. Broadway, Rm. 101.  
For more information, call 818-548-3200.**

**(To be Completed Prior to Preparation of Staff Reports for Consideration of Entitlement Matter by Council, Agency, or Authority, or at Time of Appeal to the City Council if the Applicant is also the Appellant)**

In August 2011, the Glendale City Council adopted Ordinance No. 5744, which becomes effective on September 9, 2011 ("Ordinance"). The Ordinance prohibits campaign contributions from "applicants seeking entitlement," their contractors and subcontractors (including their architects, engineers, and design professionals) while the application is "pending" and for 12 months thereafter. The Ordinance also prohibits Council Members from voting on any matter pertaining to an entitlement if the Council member has received a campaign contribution from the applicant seeking the entitlement, or certain contractors or subcontractors of the applicant, within the 12-month period preceding the vote.

The Applicant and the Owner/Lessor hereby discloses as follows:

**I. Name of Applicant and Name of Owner/Lessor on whose behalf application is filed:**

Name	Title	Business Address	City	State	Zip
Hambardzum Kaghketsyan	Managing Member	Hero House, 2a Barbusse Street	Yerevan	Armenia	0028

**II. Officers or owners / investors of Applicant Entity. Please also disclose the following persons or entities related to applicant entity:** CEO/President, Chairperson, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Financial Officer, any member of the Board of Directors, and any individual or entity that owns 10% or more contractor of applicant seeking entitlement as well as any campaign.

Name	Title	Business Address	City	State	Zip
Hambardzum Kaghketsyan	Managing Member	Hero House, 2a Barbusse Street	Yerevan	Armenia	0028
Ashot Arzumanyan	Managing Member / Director	Hero House, 2a Barbusse Street	Yerevan	Armenia	0028
Vazgen Hakobjanyan	Managing Member	Hero House, 2a Barbusse Street	Yerevan	Armenia	0028

### III. Contractor of Applicant(s) Seeking Entitlement\*:

Name	Title	Business Address	City	State	Zip
Draper University, LLC	N/A	Draper University, 44 E. 3rd Avenue	San Mateo	CA	94401
Timothy Draper	Founder, Draper University	Hero City, 55 E. 3rd Avenue	San Mateo	CA	94401
Andrew Tang	CEO, Draper University	Draper University, 44 E. 3rd Avenue	San Mateo	CA	94401
Asra Nadeem	President - Draper University Entrepreneurship Programs	Draper University, 44 E. 3rd Avenue	San Mateo	CA	94401
Samantha Zaugg	Chief Operations Officer	Draper University, 44 E. 3rd Avenue	San Mateo	CA	94401
Manana Mesropian	N/A				

\* "Contractor of Applicant Seeking Entitlement" means a person who has or has been promised a contract as an architect, design professional, engineer, or general or prime contract with an applicant seeking entitlement. "Contractor of applicant seeking entitlement," includes not only the contracting party but also the CEO/President, Chairperson, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Financial Officer, any member of the Board of Directors, and any individual or entity that owns 10% or more the contractor of applicant seeking entitlement, as well as any campaign committee that is sponsored and controlled by the contracting party. Please list the names and addresses of all of these parties.

### IV. Subcontractor of Applicant Seeking Entitlement:

Name	Title	Business Address	City	State	Zip
N/A					

\*Subcontractor of Applicant Seeking Entitlement means a person who has, or has been promised, a subcontract as an architect, design professional, engineer, or perform other work with a "contractor an applicant seeking entitlement".

"Subcontractor of applicant seeking entitlement," includes not only the contracting party but also the CEO/President, Chairperson, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Financial Officer, any member of the Board of Directors, and any individual or entity that owns 10% or more the contractor of applicant seeking entitlement, as well as any campaign committee that is sponsored and controlled by the subcontracting party. Please list the names and addresses of all of these parties.

V. Disclosure. The Applicant Seeking Entitlement has made campaign or office holder contributions in the preceding 12 months to City of Glendale elected officials as follows:

Elected official	Name of Individual or Entity	Date of Contribution
N/A		

I hereby certify, on behalf of the above-named applicant(s) and owner(s)/lessor(s) that the applicant seeking entitlement has made the campaign contributions as set forth above. I also certify that the names of all contractors of applicant and all subcontractors of applicant, as of today's date, are fully set forth above. I further acknowledge that the applicant has a continuing obligation to update this disclosure form if the applicant selects additional or substitute architects, design professionals, contractors or subcontractors within ten (10) days of the selection or change. I hereby certify that I have been legally authorized by the applicant/owner/lessor to submit this disclosure form and certify to the content hereof.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on March 11, 2020 at Glendale, California

Applicant's Signature  Full Name: Hambardzum Kaghketsyan

Applicant's Address: Hero House, 2a Barbusse Street, Yerevan 0028, Armenia

Applicant's Contact Phone Number: +374 99 490151

Applicant's Email Address: [hambardzum@smartgate.vc](mailto:hambardzum@smartgate.vc)





# HEROHOUSE

INTERIOR DESIGN CONCEPT



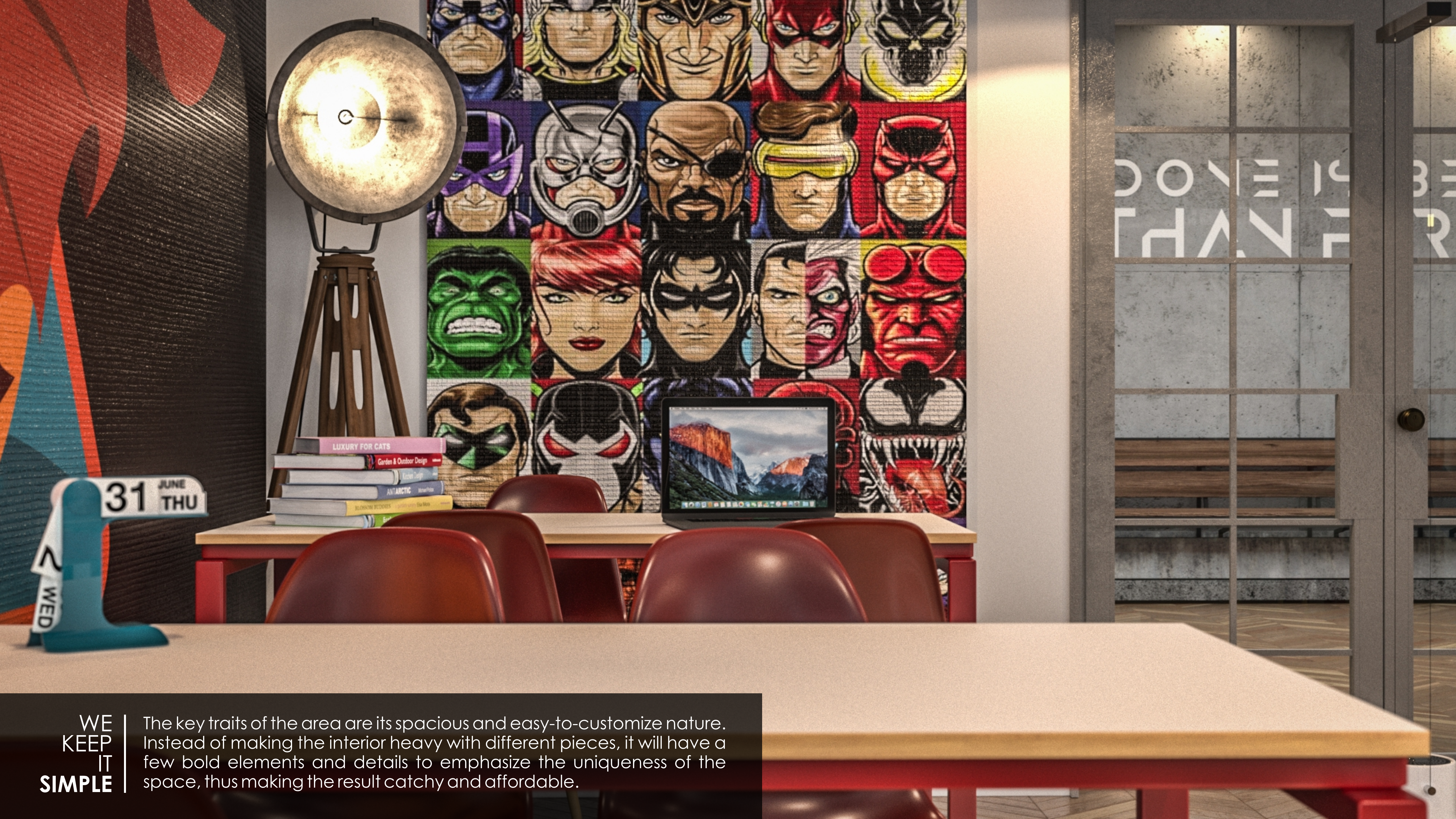
EVEN  
**SUPERHEROES**  
NEED A PLACE  
TO WORK

Industrial Loft combined with retro  
styled comics and vivid accents  
create the right balance of cozy and  
fresh ambience to be productive.

BE SO **GOOD**  
THEY **CAN'T**  
IGNORE **YOU**







WE  
KEEP  
IT  
SIMPLE

The key traits of the area are its spacious and easy-to-customize nature. Instead of making the interior heavy with different pieces, it will have a few bold elements and details to emphasize the uniqueness of the space, thus making the result catchy and affordable.



**From:** [Chris Lucas](#)  
**To:** [Hiramoto, Jennifer](#); [Pogossian, Ani](#)  
**Subject:** Asra Nadeem -- Reference for Hero House  
**Date:** Monday, May 04, 2020 3:58:46 PM  
**Attachments:** [image006.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)  
[image008.png](#)  
[image009.png](#)

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**CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links, open attachments, or reply if you are unsure as to the sender.**

Jennifer,

On April 30, 2020, I spoke with Asra Nadeem who is the President of Draper University. She spoke very highly of Hambardzum Kaghketsyan. Indeed, he and his team have a great relationship with Draper University and with Tim Draper. Tim is a significant investor in SmartGate, their venture capital fund. They are also in discussions to raise a larger fund for Armenian based and backed companies.

In Armenia, they have been involved in setting up many programs and continue to deliver results there as well as here in the U.S.

She believes that they are hardworking and humble and would be an excellent fit for Glendale. Asra highly recommends them.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like me to expand on any topic.

Thanks,

Chris

Christopher B. Lucas | Managing Director  
**Black Diamond Ventures**  
450 N. Brand Blvd., Suite 600  
Glendale, CA 91203  
T | 818.245.6251



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# MENTORS & INVESTORS



**Hamlet Azarian**

**Growth Hacking**  
Founder of  
Retail Merchant Group



**Vach Hovsepyan**

**Vertical SaaS,  
Customer Success**  
Head of International Strategy  
& Operations at ServiceTitan



**Nerses Ohanyan**

**Product, Customer Success,  
Healthcare**  
Senior Vice President of  
Customer Success



**Lucy Hakobyan**

**Mobility, Blockchain**  
Head of Program at Mobility  
Open Blockchain Initiative (MOBI)



**Drew Kutcharian**

**Technology**  
Co-founder and CTO at DISQO



**Spartak Buniatyan**

**Enterprise, Deep Tech**  
Founder and CEO of Beta Particle



## Armen Margarian

**Strategic Management, LegalTech**  
Founder and CEO at AppearMe,  
Lecturer at USC,  
Former President of the Armenian  
Graduate Student Association



## Zarik Megerdichian

**Angel Investments**  
Founder and Investor at  
Hye Rise Investments



## Al Eisaian

**Science and Technology**  
Co-founder and CEO  
of IntelinAlr



## Levon Brutian

**Growth Hacking**  
Founder and CEO  
of Collectly



## Ronald Weissman

**Venture Capital & Angel Investment**  
Chairman of the Software Industry  
Group at Band of Angels



## Rem Darbinyan

**Artificial Intelligence**  
Founder and CEO  
of SmartClickAI

**Product Managers, Sales Managers, Customer Success and Marketing professionals from Service Titan and DISQO** as well as a network of

more than **50 active mentors** from **Silicon Valley** and **Los Angeles** area will mentor Hero House Glendale residents.

## Hero House @ Glendale

### Annual budget

Position	Proposed person	Total cost of operations	Contributing parties		Comments
			City of Glendale	SmartGateVC	
Operations Management					
Managing Director	Manana Mesropian	65,000	65,000	0	Responsible for managing and coordinating the educational process, content creation including development of program and program supporting events, supervision of program assistants, recruitment of mentors/trainers, logistics of partners and participants, execution of the program and post-program follow-ups, communication with portfolio of startups during and post program.
Community Manager	n/a	44,000	44,000	0	Responsible for social media and communication campaigns and strategies, organizing and managing events to boost brand awareness, coordinating Marketing, PR and Communications activities, building relationships with community stakeholders.
Junior program assistants / interns (2)	n/a	48,000	48,000	0	Responsible for assistance in project implementation, budget preparation and reporting.
Total Operations Management		157,000	157,000	0	
Mentors & ambassadors					
Customer & business development mentor	Hambardzum Kaghketsyan	20,000	0	20,000	Responsible for implementation of customer and business development techniques and tracking tools, supporting the teams in technology architecture, identifying the gaps in current technology, tracking the process of technology development, identifying the data needs and applications. Active participation in program content development. Support in fundraising strategy and efforts. Introductions to potential customers from Hero House network as potential early adopters.
Technology mentor	Vazgen Hakobjanyan	20,000	0	20,000	
Investments & capital attraction mentor	Ashot Arzumanyan	20,000	0	20,000	
Investments & capital attraction mentor	n/a	20,000	20,000	0	
Business and marketing strategy mentor	n/a	20,000	20,000	0	
Draper University Programs	n/a	50,000	50,000	0	Providing accomodation in Silcon Valley, program and mentorship for Hero House Glendale startups
Total Mentors & Ambassadors		150,000	90,000	60,000	
Other program costs					
Promotion content and materials		7,500	7,500	0	
Promotion events in Glendale		15,000	5,000	10,000	Catering, photography
Promotion events in Eastern Europe (including Armenia)		21,000	10,500	10,500	7 promotion events, \$1500 per event twice a year
Promotion related travel		42,000	21,000	21,000	2 team members travelling to 7 locations (\$3000 per trip) twice a year
Demo days		15,000	5,000	10,000	Catering, photography
Sponsorship of in-house and external events		15,000	15,000	0	Piloting Hero House events such as Startup Boost Weekend, as well as sponsoring relevant programs such as Innovate@UCLA
Misc.		2,000	2,000	0	Gifts for external mentors, guests and speakers, other costs
Total other costs		117,500	66,000	51,500	
General and admin costs					
Space & utilities		180,000	0	180000	Space and utilities are covered by Hero House Glendale sponsors and partners
Legal & accounting		10,000	10,000	0	
Other		10,000	10,000	0	
Total general and admin		200,000	20,000	180,000	
Grand total		624,500	333,000	291,500	

Development Cycles		Phase 1			Phase 2	Phase 3					Phase 4		
Timeframe		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
Pillars	Prerequisite	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring
Heroes on Scale	Selection Panel initiated Mentor Panel initiated Sourcing of Outsourcing companies	Solicitation, Selection	PROGRAM			Solicitation, Selection	PROGRAM			Solicitation, Selection	PROGRAM		
Gateway to LA		Solicitation	Solicitation, Selection	PROGRAM		Solicitation	Solicitation, Selection	PROGRAM		Solicitation	Solicitation, Selection		PROGRAM



## SmartGateVC | Special References

The following references can be contacted, if needed, for validating the information specified in the Proposal regarding partnership prearrangements.

Name	Position	Email	Role
<a href="#"><u>Asra Nadeem</u></a>	President of Draper University and Investor at DU Ventures	asra@draperuniversity.com	Strategic Partner
<a href="#"><u>Richard Ohanian</u></a>	President of AESA, Lecturer at California Institute of Technology, and Principal Electrical Engineer at Cruise Automation	rkohanian@gmail.com	Strategic Partner
<a href="#"><u>Drew Kutcharian</u></a>	Co-founder and CTO at DISQO	drew@disqo.com	Ecosystem Partner
<a href="#"><u>Vach Hovsepian</u></a>	Head of International Strategy & Operations at ServiceTitan	vach@servicetitan.com	Ecosystem Partner
<a href="#"><u>Rem Darbinyan</u></a>	Founder and CEO of SmartClickAI	rem@rem.am	Mentor and Investor
<a href="#"><u>Ben Toker</u></a>	Board Member of AGBU Silicon Valley Chapter	btoker@gmail.com	Ecosystem Partner
<a href="#"><u>Salpi Ghazarian</u></a>	Director at USC Institute of Armenian Studies	salpigha@usc.edu	Ecosystem Partner
<a href="#"><u>Raffi Simonian</u></a>	Senior Program Manager at University of California, Los Angeles	rsimonian@oit.ucla.edu	Ecosystem Partner

## SmartGateVC | Relevant Experience and References

Since its establishment in 2017, SmartGateVC has initiated 2 startup programs - Armenia Startup Academy 12-week early-stage startup acceleration program, and Artificial Intelligence Incubator, 26-week incubation program. Both Programs were hosted by Hero House.

### Startup Program 1: Armenia Startup Academy

#### Program Description

Armenia Startup Academy is a 12-week pre-acceleration program for selected early stage high-tech companies and startups based on the best international experiences and models from leading startup hubs. The goals of the program include preparing investable companies to enter leading regional and global accelerators and to penetrate new markets as well as contributing to the development of tech entrepreneurship ecosystem in Armenia.

The mission of the Armenia Startup Academy program is the training of the individual entrepreneurs as well as the creation of scalable businesses with access to global customers and alternative sources of financing. It is a cornerstone capacity building institution in the Armenian startup landscape helping the entrepreneurs gain access to cutting edge business development tracking, curriculum, and advanced mentors and advisers.

The key components of the program are Customer Development tracking, 1-1 general business development mentorship, bi-weekly sessions, talks, and workshops, and Pitch deck design and pitching. Throughout the previous batches, a network of more than 100 key-note

mentors have worked with the companies among them:

Ronald Weissman, Chairman of the Software Special Interest Group of the Band of Angels,

Al Eisaian, Formerly CEO and Cofounder of Integrien (acquired by WMWare), CEO and Co-founder of IntelinAir,

Vahe Kuzoyan, President and Co-founder of ServiceTitan,

Brian Bordley, Vice President of Berkeley SkyDeck Fund,

Meruzhan Danielyan, CEO of Teamable Software,

Aram Adourian, Partner at Flagship Pioneering,

Noubar Pechdimaljian, CFO at Blue Cloud Ventures,

Laurie Jacobson Jones, VP of Development at Oracle.

Throughout the 5 cycles of the 3-month program:

- more than **90 startups** and **220 entrepreneurs** were involved;
- more than **500 one-on-one meetings** have been held,
- more than **175 sessions**, workshops, breakfasts and dinners have been held,
- a network of over **100 high profile professionals and mentors** spanning supported the companies,
- **over €3 million of funding** from different financing sources has been raised including angel and venture

funding, EU-STEP, EU-IMG and other grants.

## Program Financing

The scope and impact of SmartGateVC initiatives have attracted EU-level financing. The Armenia Startup Academy was implemented in the framework of the Support to SME Development in Armenia (EU-SMEDA) Project within the EU4Business initiative for the timeframe of September 15, 2017 – May 31, 2018 (Batches 1 through 4).

The current Winter 2020 Batch is financed by EFSE Entrepreneurship Academy again under EU4Business initiative.

## Program Dates

Batch 1: Fall 2017	Oct 2017 – Feb 2018
Batch 2: Spring 2018	Feb 2018 – May 2018
Batch 3: Fall 2018	Sep 2018 – Jan 2019
Batch 4: Spring 2019	Feb 2019 – May 2019

## Current Status of the Program

Batch 5: Winter 2020 is currently in progress and will be culminated in a Demo Day scheduled for March 28, 2020.

To fill the gap of knowledge for growth hacking, sales and follow on fundraising strategy development Armenia Startup Academy will be implementing programs starting from Q2, 2020:

### 1. Armenia Startup Academy Regular program,

### 2. Armenia Startup Academy Advanced program (for Scaling Startups).

## Location

Yerevan, Republic of Armenia

**Physical Space:** Hero House

**Size:** 4500 square feet

**Amenities:** Meeting room, Hall, Library, Printer/Scanner, Security infrastructure, Chill-out area, Kitchen, Table tennis and board games.

## Team

### Armine Galstyan

#### **Program Director**

*Responsible for general oversight of the program, communication with stakeholders and vendors, as well as finance management.*

### Anna Tantushyan

#### **Program Manager**

*Responsible for managing the educational process, content creation, program supporting events, supervision of entrepreneurial assistants, recruitment of mentors/trainers, logistics of partners and participants, execution of the program and post-program follow-ups, communication with portfolio of startups during and post program.*

### Ashot Arzumanyan

#### **Financials and capital attraction trainer**

*Responsible for presentation of finance management and investment practices, specifics of business management, winning strategies of getting important deals, as well as program content development.*

### Hambardzum Kaghketsyan

### **Customer & Business development trainer**

*Responsible for presentation of customer and business development techniques and implementation of tracking tools, as well as program content development.*

### **Vazgen Hakobjanyan**

#### **B2B Business development trainer**

*Responsible for presentation of specifics of business management, winning strategies of getting important deals, as well as program content development.*

### **Technology (AI, EDA, new technology architecture) trainer**

*Responsible for technical advice and guidance, tracking the technology development process.*

## **Success Metrics**

The main metrics tracked for the regular acceleration program to assess its impact are:

- Number of new/innovative ideas that lead to the establishment of a company or new products and services,
- Amount of follow on funding (innovation grants, crowdfunding, angel investments etc.) raised by batch graduate startups.

## **Startup Program 2: Artificial Intelligence Incubator**

### **Program Description**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Incubator brings together companies having AI implementation potential, research supervisors from universities and industry, researchers conducting research in **machine learning** or adjacent disciplines, and students from Armenian universities, to create an effective collaboration mechanism and

learning environment as an input to ultimately improve generation of **applied knowledge of artificial intelligence (AI)** in the country. On the other hand, it supports the improvement of pipeline for scalable and investable startups. The program targets startups during critical stages of product development, prototyping and deployment and matches them with technical expertise to accelerate their development. This aims at the creation of sustainable and investable enterprises.

In addition, the AI incubator aims to establish **science – education – science collaboration** with seed projects which should lead to future more intense **Science – Business** collaboration projects.

## **Program Financing**

AI Incubator has attracted sponsorship from Support to SME Development in Armenia (EU-SMEDA) Project within the EU4Business initiative.

## **Program Dates**

3 Jun, 2019 - 30 Sep, 2019

## **Current Status of the Program**

Currently, the program is not active. The successful implementation of the pilot program has validated the proposed model and 4 more batches of the incubation program are currently planned for the period of 2020-2022. The proposed timeline is as follows:

<b>Batch 1</b>	Feb 15, 2020 – Aug 15, 2020
<b>Batch 2</b>	Aug 15, 2020 – Feb 15, 2021
<b>Batch 3</b>	Feb 15, 2021 – Aug 15, 2021
<b>Batch 4</b>	Aug 15, 2021 – Feb 15, 2022

## Program Location

Yerevan, Republic of Armenia

**Physical Space:** Hero House

**Size:** 4500 square feet

**Amenities:** Meeting room, Hall, Library, Printer/Scanner, Security infrastructure, Chill-out area, Kitchen, Table tennis and board games.

## Team

### Vazgen Hakobjanyan

#### Senior Technology Supervisor

*Responsible for technical advice and guidance, identifying and formalizing key research problems in information visualization and interactive data analysis and communication, understanding how data is used throughout the lifecycle of a company and assisting in the creation of both internal and external applications, tracking the technology development process, identifying relevant deadlines and milestones in collaboration with teams.*

### Armine Galstyan

#### Program Manager

*Responsible for collecting feedback and iterating on the incubation program throughout 12 weeks, overseeing the management and execution of event schedule, Demo Day organization, communication management with the founders and trainers, leading the setup of incubation processes including teaching, research and transfer of information to founders.*

## Success Metrics

The main metrics tracked for the incubation program to assess its impact are:

- Number of companies with first assessment and validation for newly developed AI solutions,
- Number of students hired by the companies to continue the research started during the incubation program.

## References

Name	Position	Company	Email
<u>Ronald Weissman</u>	Board Member Chairman	Angel Capital Association Software Industry Group at Band of Angels	rweissman@gmail.com
<u>Vahe Kuzoyan</u>	President and Co- founder	ServiceTitan	vahe@servicetitan.com
<u>Al Eisaian</u>	Co-founder and CEO	IntelinAir	aeisaian@gmail.com