Epicenter Memphis & EpicenterU at A-State

> **Entrepreneurship Education | Student Fellowships | Startup Development | Mentorship | Accelerators**

Epicenter Memphis is a nonprofit entrepreneurship organization supporting innovative businesses across Memphis and the Delta region. Through entrepreneurship programs, startup accelerators, mentorship, and connections to capital and industry partners, Epicenter helps entrepreneurs develop, launch, and grow their ventures.

Arkansas State University partners with Epicenter through **EpicenterU: Students to Startups**, an initiative supported by the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) that expands hands-on entrepreneurship education and startup development opportunities for A-State students.

EpicenterU: Students to Startups at A-State

Learn entrepreneurship. Develop ideas. Explore startup opportunities.

EpicenterU connects university students with entrepreneurship education, experienced mentors, industry professionals, and opportunities to develop new businesses.

A-State is a founding university partner in this regional initiative, which aims to help students develop the skills and connections needed to turn promising ideas into viable ventures.

The program includes:

- **Entrepreneurship Coursework:** Hands-on learning focused on identifying problems, understanding customers, and developing business concepts.
- **Industry Engagement:** Opportunities to connect with entrepreneurs, business leaders, and mentors.
- **Startup Development:** Practical experience evaluating business opportunities and testing potential solutions.
- **EpicenterU Fellowship:** A competitive fellowship pathway designed to support selected students pursuing startup development.

Learn More About EpicenterU

EpicenterU Entrepreneurship Course

Spring 2027 Enrollment

MGMT 34303: Entrepreneurship

The EpicenterU entrepreneurship course provides students with practical experience exploring business opportunities, identifying customer needs, and developing innovative solutions.

Rather than beginning with a finished business idea, students learn to investigate real-world problems and evaluate whether those problems represent meaningful business opportunities.

What Students Will Learn

- Entrepreneurship fundamentals and design thinking
- Customer discovery and interviewing
- Identifying unmet needs and market opportunities
- Developing and evaluating business concepts
- Business models and value propositions
- Prototyping and testing potential solutions
- Communicating and pitching business ideas

The course emphasizes hands-on learning, practical exercises, and engagement with the regional entrepreneurial community.

Students interested in participating can contact the EpicenterU program director for additional information.

Inaugural Course: Fall 2026

EpicenterU launched its inaugural entrepreneurship course at A-State in Fall 2026 through the Neil Griffin College of Business.

Students spent the semester investigating real problems, interviewing potential customers, developing business concepts, and testing proposed solutions.

*The course culminated in the **EpicenterU Innovation Showcase on November 19, 2026**, where selected students presented their ventures to entrepreneurs, investors, alumni, and regional business leaders.*

Read About the Inaugural EpicenterU Innovation Showcase

EpicenterU Fellowship: A Future Opportunity for Student Founders

> **Competitive Fellowship | Startup Development | Mentorship | Financial Support**

The EpicenterU Fellowship is a planned next stage of the program, designed to help selected students pursue startup development beyond the classroom.

According to A-State's May 2026 announcement, the multi-year initiative includes a fellowship phase in which selected participants will receive financial support, dedicated mentorship, and opportunities to develop and showcase their ventures.

What Has Been Announced?

The publicly announced fellowship model includes:

- **$40,000 annual stipends** for selected fellows.
- **Up to $7,500 in company development funds.**
- Dedicated mentorship and guidance from experienced entrepreneurs.
- Opportunities to present ventures at regional pitch and showcase events.
- Support for developing scalable businesses with connections to the Delta region.

These figures describe the announced program model. Individual eligibility, funding conditions, selection procedures, and participation requirements will be established through official fellowship materials.

Fellowship Applications

Application Details Coming Soon

The fellowship is intended to provide a pathway for students interested in taking their entrepreneurial ideas further.

Additional information about eligibility, application requirements, deadlines, and selection will be shared as the program develops.

In the meantime, interested students are encouraged to:

- Explore entrepreneurship coursework and educational resources.
- Begin identifying problems worth solving.
- Conduct customer discovery.
- Develop and refine business concepts.
- Connect with the EpicenterU program team.

Learn More:

- A-State's Official EpicenterU Announcement

- EpicenterU Program Website

Explore Epicenter Memphis

In addition to EpicenterU, Epicenter Memphis offers programs, events, and resources supporting entrepreneurs at different stages of business development.

Students interested in entrepreneurship can explore these opportunities to expand their knowledge, connect with founders, and learn more about the startup ecosystem.

Startup Accelerators & Business Development

Epicenter offers programs that help entrepreneurs develop business concepts, strengthen customer relationships, and prepare for growth.

Examples include:

- **Epicenter Launch:** Support for developing and launching new ventures.
- **Customer Readiness Accelerator:** Training focused on customer development and sales readiness.
- **Capital Readiness Accelerator:** Guidance on preparing businesses to pursue investment and other funding opportunities.
- **ZeroTo510:** Specialized accelerator programming for medical device startups.

Explore Epicenter's Programs

Entrepreneurship Challenges & Innovation Opportunities

Epicenter also supports industry-focused challenges that bring entrepreneurs together to address business and technology needs.

Examples include:

- **Medical Device Operations Challenge:** Innovation opportunities related to the medical device industry.
- **Logistics Industry Opportunity Challenge:** Opportunities to explore innovation in logistics and supply chains.

These programs may be particularly interesting to students developing technology-based or industry-focused business concepts.

Explore Available Programs and Challenges

DelTech Conference & Regional Networking

DelTech is Epicenter's regional innovation and entrepreneurship conference, bringing together founders, investors, industry leaders, and others involved in the Delta's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The conference includes discussions, workshops, startup pitches, and networking opportunities.

The 2026 conference took place October 14–16 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Learn About the DelTech Conference

Events, Workshops & Community Connections

Epicenter hosts entrepreneurship events, educational workshops, startup showcases, and networking opportunities throughout the year.

These activities provide opportunities to learn from experienced entrepreneurs and connect with the broader business community.

Explore Upcoming Epicenter Events

Why Is Epicenter Useful for A-State Students?

Epicenter and EpicenterU may be particularly valuable if you are:

- Interested in entrepreneurship but unsure where to begin.
- Exploring a business idea or potential startup.
- Looking for hands-on entrepreneurship education.
- Seeking connections with entrepreneurs, mentors, or industry professionals.
- Preparing for a student business plan competition.
- Interested in startup accelerators, innovation challenges, or regional entrepreneurship events.
- Considering entrepreneurship as a career pathway.

You don't need to have a finished business idea to begin learning about entrepreneurship. EpicenterU's educational approach emphasizes discovering problems and exploring opportunities before committing to a particular solution.

Preparing for a Business Plan Competition?

EpicenterU coursework and Epicenter's broader programming can complement preparation for competitions such as Arkansas Governor's Cup, Tulane Business Model Competition, and other student entrepreneurship opportunities.

Students can use these resources to:

1. Explore meaningful customer problems.
2. Conduct customer discovery and evaluate assumptions.
3. Develop and refine a business concept.
4. Connect with mentors and industry professionals.
5. Practice presenting business ideas and receiving feedback.

> **Related A-State Resource:** Customer Discovery: A Practical Guide

---

Getting Started & Contact Information

EpicenterU at Arkansas State University

For questions about EpicenterU coursework, student participation, or upcoming fellowship opportunities:

Nicole Mansour
EpicenterU Program Director
Arkansas State University / EpicenterU

Epicenter Memphis

Website: Epicenter Memphis

Programs: Explore Epicenter Programs

Events: Upcoming Events

Email: info@epicentermemphis.org

Revision #1
Created 2026-11-23 21:49:30 UTC by Luna Acosta
Updated 2026-11-23 22:02:54 UTC by Luna Acosta