



# Veterans Entrepreneurship Program

Feb. 18 – Feb. 25, 2017  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma



RIATA CENTER  
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

AT SPEARS BUSINESS



# A Unique Entrepreneurship Program for America's Heroes

**The Veterans Entrepreneurship Program** provides a rigorous entrepreneurial learning and development opportunity for disabled veterans and those who distinguished themselves in their military service. It is designed for veterans who are interested in starting a venture as a means to financial independence or have an existing business that they would like to grow profitably.

The VEP offers a unique, highly innovative training program built around hands-on learning, personalized interaction and exposure to inspiring role models. Our purpose is to foster the creation of successful, profitable ventures. A team of world-class faculty, distinguished entrepreneurs and industry experts work closely with delegates, providing a challenging, interactive and informative experience. The program provides opportunities to develop entrepreneurial ideas while also learning leading-edge concepts, tools and frameworks. Most importantly, VEP participants will learn how to apply these principles and tools to current or potential businesses. Through our consortium, VEP has served 400+ veterans.

Due to an overwhelming number of applications and national support for VEP, we are proud to announce that VEP is now also offered at the University of North Dakota, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and University of Florida. Please visit their websites for more information about their program and schedule for 2017.

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga:

[utc.edu/college-business/academic-programs/vep](http://utc.edu/college-business/academic-programs/vep)

University of Florida:

[warrington.ufl.edu/centers/cei/vep](http://warrington.ufl.edu/centers/cei/vep)

University of North Dakota:

[ndvep.com](http://ndvep.com)



*“The Veterans Entrepreneurship Program gave me a strong foundation on understanding better business practices. Most military veterans are always looking for ways to minimize risk in our jobs. VEP helped me minimize the risk of starting and expanding my company by exposing me to great business workshops, classes, networking with other veteran entrepreneurs, and mentorship with established entrepreneurs.”*

– Matt Butler, Airforce, VEP 2015 Delegate

**Imagine > Believe > Create**

# VEP Specifics

At the heart of VEP is an intense, eight-day training program at Oklahoma State University, which will cover topical modules comprising the critical areas of success for new and early stage ventures. These eight days are preceded by a five-week self-study component and are then followed by a 10-month period of mentorship and online peer-to-peer networking. This integrated model — a three phase program covering the key elements of successful entrepreneurship — offers an innovative and effective combination of focused, practical training in venture creation and growth, accompanied by a support structure for graduates of the program.

## **VEP Phase I: Concept Development and Self Study** **Jan. 9 – Feb. 12, 2017**

Over the initial five-week period, delegates will participate in a self-study curriculum developed for the VEP, facilitated by an online discussion and assessment module that will be moderated by entrepreneurship faculty from the Spears School of Business. This phase enables delegates to work on development of business concepts and prepare for the boot camp to be held at the OSU Stillwater campus in early 2017. Those with existing businesses will work on understanding and shaping relevant business issues.

## **VEP Phase II: VEP Boot Camp** **Feb. 18 – Feb. 25, 2017**

Like a military boot camp, this eight-day residency in Stillwater, Okla., is intense, rigorous and demanding. It is an opportunity for hands-on learning and interaction with faculty, guest entrepreneurs, business experts and peer delegates. The boot camp exposes VEP participants to the “nuts and bolts” of business ownership through experiential workshops and lessons from world-class entrepreneurship faculty representing nationally ranked programs around the country.

## **VEP Phase III: Mentoring and Venture Development** **Feb. 27 – December 2017**

Delegates are provided with 10 months of ongoing mentorship from entrepreneurship experts at Oklahoma State University and online peer-to-peer networking. This phase of the VEP will enable delegates to get specific feedback regarding their ventures, provide access to professionals who can answer specific technical questions and offer extended hands-on support.

## **Sample Topical Modules Include:**

- Business Concepts — how do I know if my idea is a viable one?
- Business Plans — do I need one and how do I develop something that actually helps my business?
- Funding — how much money do I really need, and how do I get it?
- Marketing — what is the best way to define and reach my market, and how do I get the answers?
- Accounting — what do I really need to know about the numbers, and how do I use that information to make smarter decisions?
- Operations — what are the keys to service delivery, cost controls, dealing with suppliers, using the Internet and other things that make the business work?
- Human Resources — what about employees and the challenges of hiring, firing, outsourcing and staffing?
- Legal Issues — when should I hire a lawyer, and how do I ask the right questions?
- Manufacturing and Prototypes — how do I set up manufacturing, and how do I get a prototype made?
- Intrapreneurship — what does it mean to be “entrepreneurial” in the corporate world?
- Commercialization - how do I get my product into the market?
- Social Media - how do I utilize it to market my business?
- ... and much more!

## **New topics for 2017 VEP will include:**

- Social Entrepreneurship — how can an entrepreneur be a change agent for society?
- Intro to Agriculture - how can veterans impact rural communities?

# VEP Schedule

## May 1 – Nov. 18, 2016

Applications are accepted for the VEP through midnight Nov. 18, 2017.

## Nov. 25, 2016

Applicants are notified of admission or rejection on a rolling basis. Final notification is made to all applicants by this date. As there are a limited number of spots, the selection committee must receive a signed commitment letter within one week of acceptance.

## Jan. 9 – Feb. 12, 2017

Phase I — Self Study and Business Concept/Issues Development

## Feb. 18 – Feb. 25, 2017

Phase II — VEP Entrepreneurs' Boot camp — Delegates arrive in Stillwater the morning of Feb. 18 and depart on Feb. 26, 2017.

## March 1 – December 2017

Phase III — Follow up Mentoring and Business Development Support and Online Peer-to-Peer Networking

*"Never give in. Never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."*

— Winston Churchill



## Oklahoma State University

Oklahoma State University is a modern land-grant system which cuts across disciplines to better prepare students for a new world. Oklahoma's only university with a statewide presence, OSU improves the lives of people in Oklahoma, the nation and the world through integrated, high-quality teaching, research and outreach. OSU has more than 32,000 students from all 50 states and 110 nations across its five-campus system and nearly 21,000 on its Stillwater campus. Established in 1890, OSU has graduated more than 200,000 students who have made a lasting impact on Oklahoma and the world.

## Spears School of Business

OSU's Spears School of Business is a comprehensive business school with instructional, research and outreach missions. The academic arm of the Spears School of Business is composed of seven academic departments with more than 100 tenure and tenure-track educational professionals. The Spears School of Business offers 18 undergraduate degree programs, seven master's degree programs and two doctoral degree programs. The student body is made up of more than 3,900 undergraduate students and 800 graduate students. All programs are fully accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

## School of Entrepreneurship

With one of the most comprehensive academic entrepreneurship programs in the world, the OSU School of Entrepreneurship is a leading innovator in educating current and future entrepreneurs. The faculty includes thought leaders who are changing the way entrepreneurs around the world approach venture creation. OSU has one of the few schools of entrepreneurship in the United States. The school offers an undergraduate major, a minor, an MBA concentration, a master's degree and a doctorate in entrepreneurship. The OSU entrepreneurship faculty are strongly committed to innovative engagement with entrepreneurs.

## Riata Center for Entrepreneurship

The Riata Center for Entrepreneurship is dedicated to entrepreneurial outreach on the campus, in the community, in Oklahoma and across the United States. The Riata Center is engaged with the entrepreneurial community and is strongly committed to experiential learning for students.

*"A young man who does not have what it takes to perform military service is not likely to have what it takes to make a living."  
— John F. Kennedy*



U.S. Small Business Administration

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# Cost

The VEP is free to veterans selected for the program. Travel expenses, lodging and meals for the Phase II boot camp are provided at no cost to each delegate. The costs of the VEP are underwritten by sponsors and private donors, with operations and program development provided by the School of Entrepreneurship and the Riata Center for Entrepreneurship at Oklahoma State University's Spears School of Business.

# Eligibility

VEP targets candidates who meet the following three requirements:

- (1) Have separated from active duty service or are currently in the administrative process of separating
- +
- (2a) Are identified as disabled by the Veteran's Administration or Department of Defense authority based on a "service-connected" disability
- or
- (2b) Are "service distinguished" for exemplary military conduct
- +
- (3) Demonstrate a strong interest in entrepreneurship and commitment to small business ownership

# How to Apply

The VEP has a rigorous and selective application process that reflects the unique opportunity and valuable resources being offered to eligible veterans as part of this entrepreneurial education initiative. Successful candidates demonstrate a strong interest in entrepreneurship and venture creation, the motivation to own and operate a business, and a high likelihood of active participation and completion of the entire VEP program.

Applications are online at  
[riata.okstate.edu/veterans](http://riata.okstate.edu/veterans)

For more information, contact:  
Riata Center for Entrepreneurship  
405-744-7552  
[vep@okstate.edu](mailto:vep@okstate.edu)



*"VEP was a game changer for me. I learned a great deal about being an entrepreneur and met incredible veterans who are impacting society!"*

*I am utilizing many skills learned at OSU for the future of my business. Just recently I spoke on resiliency, and implemented my idea of having a person impacted by trauma leading the session. My idea would not have come to light had it not been for OSU's VEP program."*

*– John Register, Army, VEP 2015 Delegate*



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