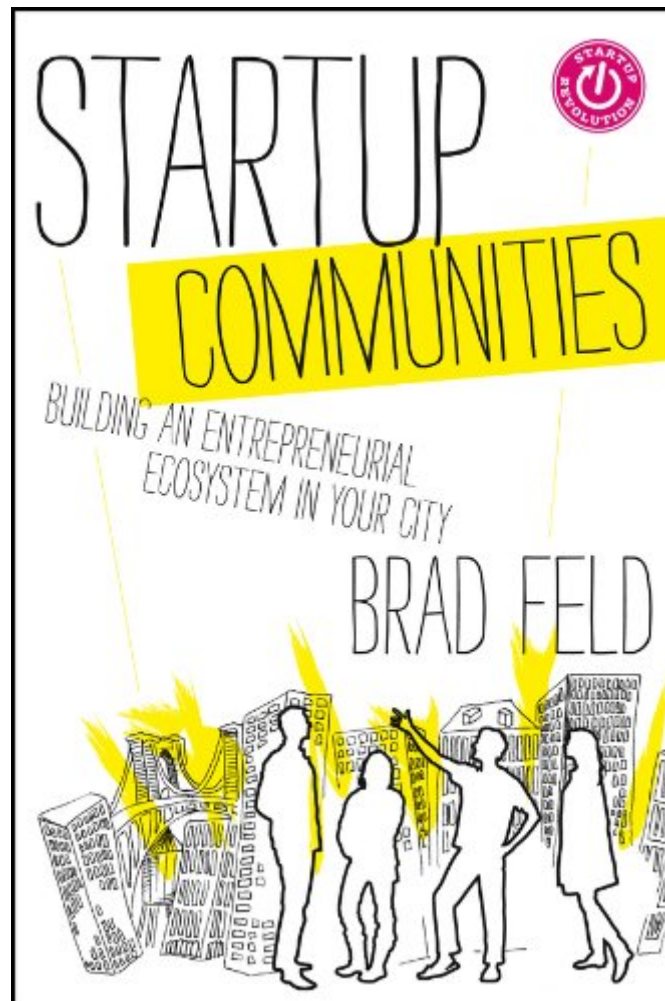


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Startup Communities: Building An Entrepreneurial Ecosystem In Your City



Synopsis

An essential guide to building supportive entrepreneurial communities"Startup communities" are popping up everywhere, from cities like Boulder to Boston and even in countries such as Iceland. These types of entrepreneurial ecosystems are driving innovation and small business energy. Startup Communities documents the buzz, strategy, long-term perspective, and dynamics of building communities of entrepreneurs who can feed off of each other's talent, creativity, and support. Based on more than twenty years of Boulder-based entrepreneur turned-venture capitalist Brad Feld's experience in the field as well as contributions from other innovative startup communities this reliable resource skillfully explores what it takes to create an entrepreneurial community in any city, at any time. Along the way, it offers valuable insights into increasing the breadth and depth of the entrepreneurial ecosystem by multiplying connections among entrepreneurs and mentors, improving access to entrepreneurial education, and much more. Details the four critical principles needed to form a sustainable startup community Perfect for entrepreneurs and venture capitalists seeking fresh ideas and new opportunities Written by Brad Feld, a thought-leader in this field who has been an early-stage investor and successful entrepreneur for more than twenty years Engaging and informative, this practical guide not only shows you how startup communities work, but it also shows you how to make them work anywhere in the world.

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Customer Reviews

It's a good book, but Mr. Feld exhibits the same confusion many other venture investors have concerning incubators and accelerators. There are two things that I find especially troubling:¹ Incubators and accelerators are not the same thing. Incubators often work with companies for years, not weeks like the modern day version of accelerators, and their clients have survival rates that far exceed the norm (on average surviving 85% of the time). Incubators often have acceleration programs, but they're for companies that have revenues, that have a management team, and that would like to jump (i.e., "accelerate") to the next level with the help of the competent and experienced advisers who work in incubator management teams. The current use of the term "accelerator" has been appropriated by people who needed a convenient term for their venture investment selection process. For a few thousands of dollars and 90-120 days of mentoring, venture investors see if a business idea (almost always in the software/mobile app/game domains) has the ability to scale. It's not about entrepreneurship, it's not about employment creation, it's not about any of the things incubators do to help their community grow. It's about having a very efficient way to grow a portfolio at the least cost. As an investment strategy, it's brilliant. Is it incubation? I don't think so.² Regional clusters are important, as Mr. Feld opines. But the conclusion that they can only be led by local entrepreneurs is, to say the least, a bit over the top. By its nature, the ecosystem has to be inclusive, and the leadership shared. Successful ecosystems - clusters - can be led by anyone who has a vision and ability to articulate what could be accomplished for the region, what it should look like, and how to get there.

I found Brad's book as an extraordinary framework and tool in which to work from in building a startup community. He even took the time to meet with some entrepreneurs from our community to help and discuss the book in detail. Below is the excerpt on what we learned:"We had the fantastic opportunity to meet with Brad Feld last Friday in Boulder. The agenda was focused on startup communities and more specifically how we could apply the concepts in his book to the Loveland/Fort Collins ecosystem. Ben West, Marshall Smith, and I made the drive over to Boulder and had an opportunity to sit down and have breakfast with Brad and ask him some questions. My takeaways are below: On Meetups Brad spoke about the success of the various organic meetups

that occur in Boulder. He talked about the beginning of the Boulder Open Coffee Meet Up at Atlas Purveyors. A key point he made is to be consistent about having the meetings every month. He said it is easy to get discouraged when there are only a small group of people starting out at first. He advised that the focus should be on the quality of the meetup and the value that each participant is getting from the event. Furthermore, to grow the meet up he said to have each participant invite one friend each month. Without consistency of meetups, then this aspect of the ecosystem will never grow and thrive. Our Action Items: 1. Ben West is likely going to lead a monthly Javascript Meetup and get assistance from Marshall. The plan would be to hold the meetings at DazBog, The Coffee Tree, and possibly at The Armory in Loveland. 2.

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