

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Launch Rural OK and Builders + Backers Launch Statewide Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative**

### ***Free Regional Conferences Will Help Rural Oklahomans Turn Business Ideas into Reality***

**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK** — Launch Rural OK and Builders + Backers today announced the launch of a groundbreaking rural entrepreneurship initiative designed to help Oklahomans transform their business ideas into reality. The program will feature four regional conferences across the state in February and March 2025, bringing world-class entrepreneurship training directly to rural communities.

The one-day conferences, completely free to participants, are scheduled for:

- Feb 14, at Eastern Oklahoma State College, West Main Street, Wilburton, OK
- Feb 28, at Southwest Technology Center, West Tamarack Road, Altus, OK
- Mar 14, at Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology, East 4th Street, Okmulgee, OK
- Mar 31, at Northwest Technology Center, Vo-Tech Drive, Fairview, OK

"Rural entrepreneurship is vital to Oklahoma's future," said Amarie Bartel, Oklahoma Farm Bureau Rural Economic Development Coordinator. "These conferences represent a significant investment in our rural communities, providing residents with the tools, training, and connections they need to build successful businesses right where they live."

Research shows that while 62% of adults have ideas for new businesses, less than 2% take action. "Every day, we see incredible ideas sitting on the sidelines because people don't know how to get started or think they first need technical expertise or large amounts of capital," said Donna Harris, CEO of Builders + Backers. "Our proven methodology helps anyone, anywhere, regardless of their background or experience, take those first crucial steps toward building a successful venture."

Each event will provide intensive, hands-on training using Builders + Backers' proven methodology that has helped launch over 1,000 new ventures nationwide. Each conference will feature:

- Expert-led training on idea validation and business development
- Interactive workshops and hands-on exercises
- Connection to local entrepreneurial resources
- Digital tools and frameworks for continued progress
- Opportunity to compete for funding through an informal pitch competition

Part of the Launch Rural OK consortium, this initiative builds on Builders + Backers' track record of helping thousands of Americans bring their ideas to life. The program welcomes anyone with a business

idea, whether it's a main street business, a side hustle, or a scalable startup. No prior experience required.

"What makes this program unique is its focus on rapid experimentation and practical application," added Harris. "Instead of traditional business planning, we help entrepreneurs quickly test their ideas in the real world, reducing risk and increasing the likelihood of success.

Interested participants can learn more and [sign up here](#). Registration is now open, with spots filled on a rolling basis.

An agenda for already-existing businesses is also available at the conferences, where entrepreneurs will gain practical marketing tools, information about funding opportunities like grants, loans, and venture capital, and proven insights from successful entrepreneurs and business support resources.

### **About Launch Rural OK**

Launch Rural OK is a consortium of rural Oklahoma business support organizations -- including state agencies, CareerTechs, colleges and universities, incubators, accelerators, funding partners, and more -- who work in collaboration to bring business resource accessibility and continuity for rural Oklahoma entrepreneurs. Our group brings an interactive resource map, conferences, and more to rural Oklahomans' front door. More: [www.launchruralok.com](http://www.launchruralok.com)

### **About Builders + Backers**

Builders + Backers helps entrepreneurial dreamers become Builders who create and grow promising new companies. Our innovative, research-backed workshops, events, and programs, combined with our full stack of philanthropic and investment funds, work together to create a "Universal Entrepreneurship Onramp," making it possible for anyone to bring their ideas to life and make a real impact in the communities they call home. More: [www.buildersandbackers.com](http://www.buildersandbackers.com)