



## **DO YOU HAVE A TECH-BASED STARTUP, OR ARE YOU INTERESTED IN STARTING ONE?**

Funding is available for entrepreneurs to learn about writing a business plan and conducting customer discovery. Any student, entrepreneur or existing company can attend the Business Training and submit an application to request funding to help bring your idea to life. The first round is \$1,500 for customer discovery and the second round is \$10,000 for business plan implementation.

## **South Dakota FAST Launch**

South Dakota FAST Launch is a growing program provided through BioRise, a new nonprofit initiated by South Dakota Biotech designed to help connect early-stage companies with funding. FAST Launch is designed to assist South Dakota entrepreneurs and small businesses with beginning and expanding their business.

**STEP 1:**  
*Business Training*

**STEP 2:**  
*Developing a Business  
Model: Customer Discovery*

**STEP 3:**  
*Write a Business Plan*

The Federal and State Technology Partnership Program provides funding through the U.S. Small Business Administration to organizations to execute state and regional programs from women, socially or economically disadvantaged individuals and small businesses in underrepresented areas – typically rural states. FAST awards build the SBIR/STTR ecosystem through outreach, technical and business assistance, and financial support.



**MORE INFO &  
APPLY HERE**



# South Dakota FAST Launch TESTIMONIALS

“ *The support and mentorship I received through the FAST Launch program were transformative for our company. As a student entrepreneur, I had an innovative product concept, but the program helped me refine that idea into a viable business. -The guidance from mentors and collaboration with fellow participants helped me identify critical areas for improvement and gave me a solid foundation in business principles. The resources provided allowed us to secure early funding and achieve our first sales, which were pivotal moments for our company.*

*I am deeply grateful for the opportunity and would recommend the FAST Launch program to any aspiring entrepreneur looking to bridge the gap between innovation and market success.”*

– Zack Holloway  
Co-Founder of **Airborne Dynamic Systems**

## ABOUT AIRBORNE DYNAMIC SYSTEMS

At Airborne Dynamic Systems, we lead the drone industry with innovative, American-made solutions crafted in South Dakota. We enhance safety, efficiency, and connectivity across various industries, committed to quality and continuous technological advancement.

“ *Our journey as entrepreneurs has been challenging, yet the rewards have been immeasurable. The support from FAST has propelled us to make substantial leaps and bounds in our business, and we are eager to explore the limitless possibilities that lie ahead. Grateful for the opportunity to focus on our passion, we look forward to furthering the success of our venture. The entrepreneurial path is demanding, but the gratification derived from our accomplishments makes every challenge worthwhile.”*

– Melissa Dittberner  
**Straight Up Care**

## ABOUT STRAIGHT UP CARE

Straight Up Care, the largest online certified peer specialist telehealth platform. We're on a mission to revolutionize the way people seek help in navigating life's obstacles by providing convenient, discreet, and affordable access to certified peer workers.

At Straight Up Care, we understand that seeking professional assistance for substance use and mental health issues can be daunting. That's why we're here to make it easier than ever before. With just a few clicks, you can access professional help anytime, anywhere, through our secure and user-friendly platform. Through web chat, audio calls, video calls, and even in-person sessions, Straight Up Care ensures that you have the flexibility to choose the mode of communication that suits you.”



## Katherine Cota FAST Launch Business Coach

Katherine Cota brings 29 years of entrepreneurial education experience to the Lamberti Center for Rural Entrepreneurship director position and Buena Vista University Harold Walter Siebens School of Business faculty position. She taught academic and non-academic courses at the University of Northern Iowa and co-directed the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center. She has directed the Carlson Center at California State University Sacramento and the Paulson Center at Dakota State University (South Dakota). In those positions, she taught academic classes, non-credit workshops, coached companies, managed incubator and co-working programs, secured private and grant funding, managed an equity fund for area investors, and was the intellectual property officer for each university. She has helped hundreds of businesses start as well as several of her own. She holds a BA in Anthropology (physical and cultural), a Master of Communication Studies (corporate and non-verbal), and an MBA. Prior to working for universities, she worked for various companies including a law firm, a farm equipment manufacturer, an office equipment company, an industry magazine, a newspaper, an internet service provider, and numerous food establishments.