



# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ThinkTank Innovation Introduces TacticalLaunch Veteran's Incubator Program

*TacticalLaunch created to help veterans, and soon-to-be-transitioning military personnel, in starting and growing a business. Program is the first ThinkTank partnership of public and private institutions to help further develop San Diego as a leading entrepreneurial and technology center.*

(SAN DIEGO, California, 20 February 2018) – ThinkTank Innovation, Inc., a nonprofit public benefit corporation, today announced that its ThinkTank Veteran's Incubator will start its first class on March 1st, 2018. The program is supported by VentureMoney Management Co.; SDSU's Zahn Innovation Platform Launchpad; UCSD's Office of Innovation and Commercialization; WeWork; and Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch, LLP.

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, veterans represent a significant number of successful small business owners. Nearly one in 10 small businesses nationwide are veteran-owned and collectively, these 2.4 million small businesses employ almost 6 million Americans while generating more than \$1 trillion in receipts. In the private sector workforce, veterans are 45 percent more likely than those with no active-duty military experience to be self-employed.



ThinkTank's TacticalLaunch program is committed to advancing the post-service lives of America's service members and veterans. Supported by a world-class executive board and public and private partners, our professional staff delivers unique and innovative programs in career, vocations, and entrepreneurship education and training to post 9/11 veterans, as well as tailored programs to veterans of all eras.

TacticalLaunch is offered for free and is open to all veterans or soon to be transitioning active duty service members, including Airforce, Army, Coastguard, Marines, Navy, Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Navy Reserve. We support military veterans throughout the journey of starting a business: from the idea stage - where members are thinking about what to do post-service - through the growth stage of an existing company looking to hire, raise capital, and expand into new markets. The program involves participation on a part-time basis over a twelve week period.

"Being a member of the Navy Seals Taught me the importance of being thoroughly prepared for anything that I do - including starting a new business enterprise." said Jonathan Marden, retired Navy SEAL and TacticalLaunch program participant. "TacticalLaunch is helping me to prepare effectively to launch my own business in a manner that I could not have accomplished on my own."

"SDSU ZIP Launchpad is excited to be working with ThinkTank on their first TacticalLaunch cohort." says Cathy Pucher, Executive Director at SDSU ZIP Launchpad. "ZIP Launchpad is proud to be helping SDSU student veterans launch their startup from their early stage idea. TacticalLaunch is a great resource for our veteran entrepreneurs and will provide complimentary, veteran specific entrepreneurial programming."

"We have created a program that provides our participants with the tools and knowledge to develop their ideas into a viable and commercially feasible business. While our veteran's obtained unique and valuable skill sets through their military service, many find it challenging to transition to a civilian lifestyle - especially if they intend on starting a business." said Mark Bernier, ThinkTank's Executive Chairman. "We have designed TacticalLaunch to address these challenges and to teach veteran founders how to best leverage their military training and skills. The ability to make our program available in a nonprofit structure provides us with a flexibility that we wouldn't



have otherwise. TacticalLaunch is offered free-of-charge and we do not take equity in participating companies. We have had great response thus far with twenty-six company applicants and 2 to 3 team members per company up to this point.”

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**ThinkTank Innovation, Inc.** is a nonprofit California public benefit corporation organized for public and charitable purposes as an innovation district that brings together public sponsorship with private investment in a manner that creates an environment for entrepreneurs and that fosters leading-edge innovation. Our programs are made possible in part by partnerships with leading colleges, universities, businesses of all sizes, and cooperation with government organizations. ThinkTank is located at WeWork, 600 B Street, 3rd Floor San Diego, CA 92101 telephone: (619) 981-9700.

**Zahn Innovation Platform Launchpad** (ZIP Launchpad) is an incubator and entrepreneurial community that supports San Diego State University (SDSU) innovators and aspiring entrepreneurs to launch viable startups. ZIP Launchpad’s top priority is to help SDSU students, faculty, and staff from all majors and departments to launch startups, in a way that brings valuable, rewarding, experiences our participants. On average, ZIP Launchpad is home to 40 start-up concepts, spanning several industries. We provide services and training to traditional start-ups, as well as Social Enterprises. The program at ZIP Launchpad has developed a strong supportive, and collaborative entrepreneurial community here at San Diego State University.

**Cathy Pucher** is Executive Director at SDSU ZIP Launchpad, which is located in San Diego, California and can be contacted by telephone at (619) 925-9055 or by email at [cpucher@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:cpucher@mail.sdsu.edu).