

## Ion Announces Free Program for Houston Entrepreneurs Looking to Grow

*“Ion Startup University Powered by Improving” offers bi-weekly, bite-sized courses to educate and strengthen entrepreneurs in Houston’s innovation ecosystem*

**HOUSTON, September 28, 2022** – [Ion](#), Houston’s innovation hub, today announced its partnership with [Improving](#), a technology management and consulting services firm, to provide a free, six-month curriculum that covers a wide range of business topics. The program, called “Ion Startup University powered by Improving”, kicks off with its first session on Thursday, September 29, 2022. To sign up and learn more on the first session, visit this [link](#).

Open to the public, Ion Startup University powered by Improving was created to provide the Houston community access to educational courses. Whether preparing to launch a startup or pitching to investors, the courses are designed to help escalate growth at every stage of the entrepreneurial journey.

“At Improving, we are dedicated to providing innovative solutions and processes to those in need at any level of their career or phase of their business,” said Devlin Liles, Chief Consulting Officer and President of Improving–Houston. “We share a common goal with the Ion to support Houston’s entrepreneurs and business community who are eager to grow but need an extra boost to do so.”

The first three sessions of the curriculum focus on product creation and best practices for pitching and networking. To register for the first session, please visit the Ion’s event page [here](#).

- **[Product - Start Well \(September 29, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm\)](#)**: The session will focus on the “Product Thinking” aspects needed to launch a Minimal Viable Product (MVP). Led by Wade Pinder, Founder of the Houston Product Community, topics discussed will include framing the problem, considering product personas, forming a vision and strategy, ideation, building a product roadmap, and starting a product backlog.
- **[Pitch & Sell \(October 12, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm\)](#)**: Facilitated by Max Day, Chief Growth Officer of Wealth Assistants, the session will help entrepreneurs in pitch development. It will cover what a pitch should include, how to structure a pitch for the most impact, the best exercises for practicing pitching, and common mistakes to avoid.
- **[Why - Networking \(October 27, 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm\)](#)**: Learn the ins and outs of networking with Ion’s Senior Director of Ecosystems, Joey Sanchez. This session will focus on how to expand your “who,” when to engage with others and how, and the best practices for successfully making and maintaining meaningful relationships.

“Through our partnership with Improving, we are bridging the gap for entrepreneurs who may not have previously had access to resources to help bring their ideas or businesses to life,” said Jan E. Odegard, Executive Director of the Ion. “Ion Startup University powered by Improving is another proof point that Houston and the Ion are where you should come to get your startup launched.”

Sessions are offered bi-weekly for six months and each six-month program occurs twice a year, with new sessions introduced each year. Sessions include 45 minutes of content with a subject matter expert facilitating the conversation, followed by break-out workshops to apply learnings in real time. Attendees can choose the entire six-month curriculum or only the sessions necessary for current needs.

**About the Ion:**

Located in Ion District, the namesake building is the transformative centerpiece of Houston's innovation corridor. Designed to bring our city's entrepreneurial, corporate, and academic communities into collaborative spaces and programs, the sunlit structure of steel and glass is a home for advancing diverse knowledge, teams, technologies, and products that propel our world forward.

From Fortune 500s seeking flexible office space to first-time startups looking for the funding to design a prototype, the Ion provides wide-reaching space and support to connect every What if with What now?—welcoming individuals and teams of all kinds to a place to build a better way.

**About Improving:**

Improving is a modern digital services company dedicated to positively changing the perception of the IT professional. Improving offers innovative solutions through IT consulting, software development, and agile training to help thousands of clients achieve new heights in a competitive and ever-changing market.