IN

INCEPTION

STUDIO

2024

Inception Studio Organizers

John Whaley
2x exited founder (UnifyID, Moka5)
Raised $100M+ from top VCs
MIT B.S., Stanford CS Ph.D
22 years in Silicon Valley
Teaches at Stanford
Advisor, Mentor, StartX

Mike Morris
25 years Engineering in SV startups
Early engineer @ VMware 2001-2012
VPE @ exited startups (Netcitadel, UnifyID)
Harvey Mudd

Ada Heinrich
13 years executive experience
Scaled 3 unicorn companies
MIT MBA, marketing and public
leadership credentials from
Stanford and Harvard

Jessie Fischer
10 years in startup operations
Real estate investor and superhost
Hotel and guest experience since age 12
B.S. in Business

Traditional accelerators are not a good fit for the most talented builders.

- Serial entrepreneurs.

- Exited founders.

- Highly experienced engineers.

- Specialists with deep domain expertise.

Founders of this caliber have different standards.

Quality	Higher standards than inexperienced founders.
Earliest stage	Looking for ideas and co-founders of similar caliber.
Time/value	Don't want to waste time in a low value-add program.
Intensity	Thrive in the most high-pressure environments.

Inception Studio is a new accelerator model for the most experienced builders.

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An exceptional community of Inception founders

- Built around our intense in-person retreats.

- Carefully curated cohorts of world-class talent.

- Intensely-focused, 72-hour, in-person cohort retreats.

- Focus on prospective cofounder relationships and idea validation.

- High-stakes pitch at a Demo Day on the 3rd day.

Inception Studio retreats are part hackathon, part founder matchmaking and part early-stage startup workshop.

Our retreats manufacture serendipity

- Change of surroundings, removing distractions.

- Diverse, smart, creative people working in the same physical space.

- Ultra-rapid iteration of ideas and prototypes.

- A culture of cooperation and open collaboration.

- High-pressure scenarios to stress-test relationships and form deep bonds.

We provide long-term value to our Inception Founder community.

Ongoing support after the event

- Market validation, pitch, fundraising support.

- Network of experienced advisors.

- Discord/WhatsApp community for ongoing connections.

- Weekly in-person "Mini-Inception" co-working days.

- Other sponsored Inception Founder events.

Inception Studio - 8 Cohorts Later...

101 FOUNDERS PARTICIPATED

87 FOUNDER NPS

728 NOMINATED/REFERRED

12% ACCEPTANCE RATE

36 COMPANIES PITCHED

18 COMPANIES RAISED

>$50M RAISED

13y AVERAGE WORK EXPERIENCE

17% PHDS FROM TOP SCHOOLS

27% REPEAT FOUNDERS W/ SUCCESSFUL EXITS

27% FEMALE

14% UNDER REPRESENTED MINORITIES

Cohort Feedback

This was a magical event. An intense, concentrated, espresso shot of ideas, building, and connecting. Potentially life-changing.

One of the most positive experiences in my life!

This was really an amazing experience, so just thanking you again for putting it together!

You are doing great work, keep doing more of that.

Best in-person event since the pandemic!

The way you care about the founders is unmatched! Thank you so much!

Honestly, more of the same - the vibe was incredible and I hope Inception can recreate that spirit in follow-on cohorts.

I'm delighted to witness first-hand that the future is being shaped by compassionate individuals, which fills me with hope. Meeting so many down-to-earth and kind people has been a truly gratifying experience. Their positive energy is contagious and uplifting.

It was a really great program and I'm so happy to have participated! Really, cannot thank you enough for everything! I'm happy to help in the future as much as I can.

Thank you soooo much for having me! I really really enjoyed the program! All my encounters & experiences there are my treasures in my life!

Inception Studio is the only product to truly start a new business by landing on business problem, customer and solution AND connect it to a product for investors.

Thank you so much for hosting an amazing event! Everything from the people to the planning was all done very thoughtfully and very well. Thank you!

Had a great time and am really appreciative for the opportunity. Met many awesome people and excited to stay connected and help in any way I can!

It's like entrepreneur summer camp!

I loved the caliber of people and energy of everyone hacking away at a project!

I loved Inception and look forward to being a part of the community!

Cohort 1—November 2022 | Lodi, CA

Cohort 2—March 2023 | Vacaville, CA

Cohort 3—April 2023 | Vacaville, CA

Cohort 4—June 2023 | San Jose, CA

Cohort 5—August 2023 | Woodside, CA

Cohort 6—September 2023 | Woodside, CA

Cohort 7—November 2023 | Woodside, CA

Cohort 8—January 2024 | Woodside, CA

Selected Inception Companies/Founders

Ventrilo.ai

AI-powered quality partner for developers

Raised **$10M** Seed from a16z

Andy Chou
Stanford PhD in CS
Coverity Founder/CTO in 2003
(acquired by Synopsys)

coframe

Automatically refine UX with AI

Raised **$9M** Seed from Khosla, Nat Friedman

Josh Payne
2x Stanford dropout
Founder Autograph (unicorn), AccessBell (acquired)
20+ papers/patents in AI

LIGHTY AI

Specialized AI to help you in the workplace

Raised **$2.4M** Pre-Seed from E14, Zelda

Richard Rabbat
MIT PhD, 20+ years in Product
Founder Gfycat (acq. by Snap)
Twitter, Google, Zynga

Synthpop
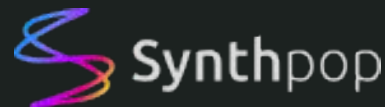
Unlocking AI for healthcare

Raised **$2.6M** Pre-Seed from Newfund, OVO, Zelda

Elad Ferber
Stanford GSB
Founder of Spry Health
15+ in digital health

Jan Jannick
Stanford PhD in CS
Founder of imeem and VoiceBase.
25+ years startup experience,

Selected Inception Companies/Founders

Spectral

AI platform for multimodal (video, images, audio) search and analytics.
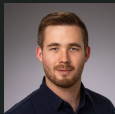
Raised **$2M** Pre-Seed

Mac Klinkachorn
Stanford BS, MS CS & Physics
Building ML infrastructure
@Cresta, Amazon, GE, Dept of
Defense, Kleiner Perkins
engineering fellow

Axiom

Replacing lab and animal testing with AI.

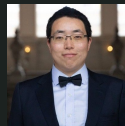Raised **$7M** Seed from Amplify, Zetta

Alex Beatson
Princeton PhD in ML
ML Lead and Scientist at
Redesign Science, Genesis
Therapeutics, Google

Generative ALPHA

Financial AI foundation model

Raised **$4.4M** Pre-Seed

Bill Sun
Stanford Math PhD, Portfolio
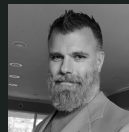Manager at Millennium, Google
Brain, Citadel, P72.

Redcoat AI

Cybersecurity for Personal Devices

Raised **$4.2M** Pre-Seed from Pear, angels

John Whaley

Mike Morris

Kelly Byrd

Marcus Lannie

Selected Inception Companies/Founders

Glasp
Social creation platform
300k+ MAU

Raised **$1M** Seed from angels

Kazuki Nakayashiki
M Eng. UTokyo, Business at Berkeley, Google, 2x Founder On Deck, Launch House, Sky Deck

Truco
Customer intelligence platform for modern businesses

Raised **$1.3M** Pre-Seed

Swetha Mandava
8+ years of ML at Nvidia, You.com
MS ECE from CMU

hexus
Convert traffic with AI-powered demos & guides
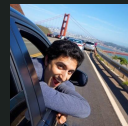
Raised **$1.5M** Pre-Seed from Pear, Liquid2

Sakshi Pratap
MS-CS @Georgia Tech
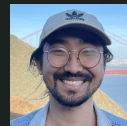Stairwell (Accel-backed), Google Ads, Oracle

Scorecard AI
Automated evaluation and testing of AI products

Raising soon

Darius Emrani
Simulation and evaluation expert Prior founder ex-Waymo, SpaceX, Uber

Jesse Hu
Lifelong ML guy Prior founder ex-Waymo, YouTube, Meta

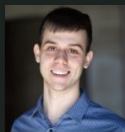# Selected Inception Companies/Founders

Atlas^pro

Geospatial AI Agent for automating workflows, quantitative analytics, asset management.
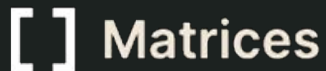
Raising soon

Gloria Felicia
Exited Founder (menubites.ai)
CS, IT, Business
B.S. at UVA

Nikolas Papastavrou
Amazon AWS AI, Health[at]Scale, Yelp, CS B.A. at Pomona College

[ ] Matrices

Get work done 100x faster with a fleet of agents running in parallel

Raising soon

Dina Yerlan
Product Lead at Adobe Firefly, Founding Engineer at Source AI (acquired), Enterprise AI/ML at BCG

GoodReps AI

Intelligent automation of repetitive and data-intensive tasks

Raising **$1M** Pre-Seed

Olexandr Prokhorenko
Engineer by trade turned Product in big-tech (Splunk, Facebook). Previously founded profitable startup automating logistics in B2B.

HypeFactor

AI-powered, human-perfected ad agency

Ed Kim
3-Time Agency Exec
PwC
UCLA

Selected Inception Companies/Founders

INVEST CAPITAL AI

Democratizing AI co-pilot development for data solutions

proQur

Part procurement automation for mechanical engineers

embed

Financial data engine accelerating analysis and closing
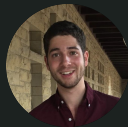
fielder

Enable organizations to deeply understand people at scale

Erika Bahr
10+ years of data pipeline management and Machine Learning for Fortune 500 companies

Alex Gruebele
Stanford Robotics PhD Founded Mezli (YC'20)

Spencer Braun
Stanford Statistics, Enterprise AI research at Primer AI, LLM Research at SAIL, Operations at Hudson River Trading

Pablo Bariola
3x founder, Former CEO, VP of Design, Head of Design. Carnegie Mellon University MHCI. MIT AI Strat. Ulima Systems Engineer B.Sci

2024 Event Calendar

8 cohort retreats between
late January & November 2024

Each cohort:
- 12-15 builders
- 3-5 teams
- Target: 1-2 funded companies

Other Inception Events
- Weekly Mini-Inceptions
- Quarterly Super Demo Days
- Cohort kickoff Happy Hours
- Company Launch Parties
- Private Donor-only Events

Want to be a part of Inception?

Sign up on our mailing list!
https://inceptionstudio.org/signup

Prospective Founder? Apply here:
https://inceptionstudio.org/apply

Want to nominate a Founder? Go here:
https://inceptionstudio.org/nominate

Prospective Sponsor? More info here:
https://inceptionstudio.org/sponsor

Want to make a tax-deductible donation?
https://inceptionstudio.org/donate

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