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Technology

Charlotte-backed accelerator pushes five emerging tech startups toward scale



Founders from Charlotte-based startups Codd AI, Troodie, Touio, FlightSuite.ai, and OpenScope Health participated in the gBETA Charlotte program pitch night on Dec. 8 at Co-Lab.

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Story Highlights



- Five startups completed gBETA Charlotte's no-equity accelerator program on December 8.
- Previous gBETA cohorts raised over \$820,000 and created 50-plus jobs.
- The program connects founders with mentors and investors in Charlotte.

Charlotte's startup pipeline gained fresh momentum Monday night as five early-stage founders stepped into the spotlight.

A startup pitch showcase marked the finale of the latest gBETA Charlotte cohort, a no-equity accelerator backed by gener8tor and the city of Charlotte, held Dec. 8 at the Co-Lab at UNC Charlotte Center City. The program selected five companies – Codd AI, Troodie, Touio, FlightSuite.ai and OpenScope Health – from more than 40 applicants for intensive mentorship, investor access and business-development support.

City leaders say the investment is already translating to measurable impact. The first two gBETA cohorts have raised more than \$820,000 in capital and created more than 50 jobs since the program launched less than a year ago.

"Entrepreneurship is probably one of the key aspects in the growth of a city when you can raise the capital," said Shahid Rana, director of economic development for the city of Charlotte. "And what this program does is make sure that you're properly equipped to receive the capital and to also make sure that you grow responsibly."

The program builds on the pipeline established in May 2024 by [gALPHA Charlotte – a shorter, four-week, venture-creation program](#) that helps entrepreneurs pressure-test concepts before transitioning into gBETA for growth and investor readiness.

Each founder is tackling a different problem, but all are betting on Charlotte as their base for scale.

- Touio, founded by Ali Hosseini, makes Internet-of-Things deployments easier for businesses by simplifying how connected devices are built and managed.

Hosseini said the accelerator helped him quickly expand his network, noting he spoke with “30 to 40 mentors and probably the same amount of investors.”

- FlightSuite.ai, led by Fitzgerald Light, uses AI to run CRM (customer relationship management) systems automatically so business owners don’t lose time entering data or following up with leads. Light said the program “opened up my mindset to be able to think bigger” as he targets enterprise clients.
- Troodie, built by Taylor Davis, connects restaurants with content creators and tracks how influencer-driven marketing converts into diners. The pace of the program pushed her to move faster, she said, learning “how quickly you actually need to be hitting goals.”
- Codd AI, founded by Ravindra Punuru, uses generative AI to help companies analyze structured and unstructured data instantly – cutting out months of manual reporting work. Punuru said gBETA enabled him to connect with “20-plus investors” as he prepares for growth.
- OpenScope Health, created by Bryce Piro, uses intelligent symptom evaluation to guide patients to the right care – while helping health systems route them more efficiently. He said the mentorship available through the program showed that “having mentors is super helpful when you’re just starting out.”

Founders described gBETA as a rare opportunity to plug into Charlotte’s broader entrepreneurial network.

Weekly accountability gave structure to fast-moving decisions around pricing, pilots and product road maps. Mentors and investors provided perspective typically reserved for more mature startups. And access to fellow founders offered a sense of shared community that many said they had been missing.

Charlotte economic-development leaders say programs like gALPHA and gBETA are strengthening the city’s reputation as a hub for early-stage technology. They believe the support is helping ensure startups born here scale here.

“We as a community provide opportunities like gener8tor, like these accelerators, because we believe in them and we believe in our community, we believe in Charlotte, which is why we’re so excited that this gener8tor accelerator is the first real accelerator that focuses on Charlotte companies,” said Juan Garzón, managing director of Innovate Charlotte and the city’s head of innovation-led entrepreneurship.

Hosseini said he plans to grow a team locally. Light, Davis and Punuru said Charlotte's market and network give them room to expand nationally while staying rooted. And Piro sees the city positioning itself as a health-tech hub that can connect innovation to hospital systems and patient needs.

"I think gener8tor coming in and building up this program and putting us in contact with the right people, I think this is going to be a big step in Charlotte becoming more of a hub for early founders, and I think it's something that will keep growing up from here," Piro said.