



1



2

SOLUTION FACTORY



What Is a Venture Studio?

- Start Up Lab that Brings Ideas to Life
- Find Solutions & Creates Products for Real-World Problems
- Ideas Developed Internally Within Studio Among Team or Working With External Client
- Outcome Driven
- Leads to New Companies and/or Patentable Products
- 30% Higher Success Rate than Traditional Startups



3

VENTURE STUDIO vs. INCUBATOR

Feature

Who has the idea?

Level of involvement

Ownership

Stage of entry

Venture Studio

The Studio

Full team builds in-house

Studio is full partner

Idea/Concept stage

Incubator

The Entrepreneur

Guidance and Support

Incubator may take a small share

Early startup stage/after idea

June 9, 2025



4

SOLVING BIG PROBLEMS WITH SMART TECH



What Is Mercyhurst's Studio 26?

Domain

- Focused on creating startups in technological solutions
- **Cybersecurity** (keeping data safe)
- **AI** (smart tech that learns and solves problems).

Scope

- Builds tools that help businesses, hospitals, governments, non-profits, and social service agencies stay secure and efficient.



5

POWERED BY CAMPUS TALENT AND RESEARCH



How it works at Mercyhurst University

- Utilizes Mercyhurst's **faculty**, **subject matter experts**, **students**, research, and tech resources.
- Students gain **hands-on experience** launching startups.
- Turns university ideas into **real-world impact**.
- Supports the continued technological **development** and **growth** of Erie County



6

LEARNING BY DOING



Real Benefits to Students & Faculty

- Students work on real startups and gain valuable **experience, skills, and jobs**.
- Faculty can **commercialize research** and partner with industry.
- Leverages **culture of innovation** on campus and in Northwest Pennsylvania.



7

JOBS, GROWTH, AND STAYING POWER



Local and Regional Economic Opportunities

- **Creates local jobs** in tech and business.
- **Brain Gain v. Brain Drain**: keeps talent local instead of losing graduates to big cities.
- Provides **local businesses** with access to tech solutions to help them grow and compete.



8

WHY IT MATTERS



A Smarter, Safer, and Stronger Erie Region

- Positions Mercyhurst and Erie region as a leader in tech innovation.
- Ignites a pathway of **education** → **innovation** → **development** → **job creation**
- Builds a future-ready economy rooted in **knowledge, security, and growth**.
- Places Erie at the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution through tech-driven transformation and local talent development.



9

FUNDING REQUEST

Total Funding Request: \$500,000

Infrastructure & Technology Stack – \$300,000

- AI Development Tools & Licenses
- Cybersecurity Sandbox & Tools
- Cloud Hosting & DevOps Platforms
- Hardware Upgrades

Startup Project Kickoff – \$100,000

- Seed Funds for 2–3 Pilot Projects
- Legal/IP and Incorporation Services
- Mentorship & External Advising

Programming & Outreach – \$100,000

- Bootcamps, innovation sprints, pitch events
- Industry mentorship stipends
- Hackathons and student showcase events

Mercyhurst Matching Fund: \$500,000

Faculty & Research Access – \$150K

- Release time, research support

Facilities – \$125K

- Lab space, office space, utilities

Technology & Systems – \$100K

- Access to LMS, computing clusters, IT

Administrative Support – \$75K

- Legal, HR, grants, accounting

Marketing & Communications – \$50K

- Web, PR, design



10



THANK YOU, and CARPE DIEM !

