



**StartingBlock
Madison**



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACTS:

CHANDRA MILLER FIENEN

Phone: 608.335.7522

Email: chandra@StartingBlockMadison.org

SCOTT RESNICK

Phone: 608.807.7962

Email: scott@StartingBlockMadison.org

KATHLEEN GALLAGHER

Phone: 414-269-8330

Email: kathleen@mkei.org

NEWS RELEASE--“Madwaukee Talks” Bridge Wisconsin’s Two Biggest Cities

Madwaukee – A new, unprecedented collaboration called Madwaukee Talks is bringing Madison and Milwaukee together to share the costs and benefits of common speakers who will inform, enlighten and motivate our communities.

“For Wisconsin to compete on a national stage, Madison and Milwaukee, our two largest cities, need to be working together,” said Chandra Miller Fienen, Director of Operations and Programs at StartingBlock Madison. “These talks will help our innovation communities understand the same data and have the same starting points for conversations about the opportunities and challenges that we face in driving strong economic growth.”

“Madison and Milwaukee have complementary skill sets and resources; together they can reinforce and support regional economic growth and job creation,” said Kathleen Gallagher, executive director of the Milwaukee Institute. “The time has come for a more concerted effort to bring these two cities together.”

Wisconsin’s venture capital numbers were down considerably in 2017, but they are just one metric that contributes to the health of a startup community. Unlike any other time in the state’s history, we’re seeing new venture funds open and a rebirth of startup companies, said Scott Resnick, Entrepreneur-in-Residence at StartingBlock.

“We hope to dive into the numbers to discover new opportunities for Madison and Milwaukee -- two cities that are critical to the health of the state as a whole,” Resnick said.

“Madwaukee Talks offers a unique chance to forge true collaborations and show that the whole is worth more than the parts,” Resnick added.

Madwaukee Talks will offer at its first event an opportunity to learn from a national expert on startup metrics and how to keep that momentum building, despite an off year for venture capital.

Tom Chapman, our first speaker, chairs the startup data committee for Startup Champions Network, a national sharing group dedicated to supporting innovation ecosystem builders across the United States and the entrepreneurs they serve. Chapman also manages Chapman and Company, a boutique management consulting company based in Omaha and active in the Startup Champions Network.

Chapman will discuss his cutting-edge models and hot-off-the-press data related to the state of startups in Madison, Milwaukee and Wisconsin in general. He also will provide insight into Wisconsin's infrastructure and how to improve it.

Valerie Linton-Reed and James Hischke, technology advancement leaders at Northwestern Mutual, will moderate the Milwaukee discussion. It will take place at 3:00 pm on Tuesday, January 30, at Ward 4, a co-working space in downtown Milwaukee.

Aaron Olver, Managing Director of University Research Park, will moderate the Madison discussion. It will take place at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, January 31 at Foley & Lardner's downtown Madison office.

There is no cost to attend, but registration is required at [this link](#) for Milwaukee and [this link](#) for Madison.

Madwaukee Talks is organized by StartingBlock Madison and the Milwaukee Institute. Sponsors of the inaugural event are Technology Innovation Center at Research Park, University Research Park, Ward 4, and Wispolitics.

ABOUT

StartingBlock Madison: StartingBlock's mission is to creating intersections that cultivate entrepreneurs, build innovative companies, and drive ideas into reality. We help entrepreneurs launch great companies, accelerate their growth and foster innovation. At StartingBlock, entrepreneurs find a collaborative innovation community of startups, support, resources, connections, mentors, programming. Opening in June 2018, StartingBlock will have 50,000 sq. ft. of flexible office space that allows Madison startups to scale as they grow, conference rooms, classroom, event space, and IT and innovation resources, including video and audio resources.

Milwaukee Institute: Milwaukee Institute is a not-for-profit that helps forward-thinking Midwesterners learn, connect, and unlock the potential of advanced technologies and high-growth businesses to help our region thrive.

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