

FAQs:

-What is a MakerSpace/STEAM/Incubator, exactly? Think of it like a health club for tools. You join, pay a fee, and get access to all sorts of tools, space and resources. Most important, it's a co-op. Everybody has a share in it and a stake in keeping it running. Teaming with STEAM programs, we can share it with the schools in the area, and teaming with a business incubator, we can help make ideas turn into businesses and income.

-Is there an actual place, yet? Nope, but we're working on it. With the help of a bunch of people in the city, including MassDevelopment, the EDIC and LHAND, we have several locations in the downtown Lynn area targeted.

-How soon do you expect to be operational? We plan to start offering "pop-up" classes and workshops as early as mid-January, using various facilities and locations around the city. By Spring, we're hoping to have some solid funding in place, and will be hosting a Mini Maker Faire downtown. By the start of Summer, we hope to be open and operating.

-How can I help? If you're interested in helping out, contact us via email, here and let us know. We need help organizing, teaching and sharing skills and resources.

-How can I join? We also will start enrolling members soon, so stay in touch. Follow us on Facebook, check back here, or sign up for our mailing list here.

-How do you get all that equipment together? We rely on a combination of things to pull together the facility, and use a lot of tried and true tactics, proven out through the hundreds of MakerSpaces throughout the country. We are working to get investors, grants, loans and donations to buy equipment outright. We're pros at scanning auction sites and Craigslist for the best deals on great used equipment, so we're pulling hard on that front.

-The Artisan's Asylum has a strategy they've found to be particularly successful – offer pro-rated memberships in exchange for placement of equipment to companies and small shops. A company gets a space, puts a few of their machines in there, and not only has a ready-made showroom and demo area, but they get access to the rest of the stuff in the MakerSpace as well. Everybody wins.

-Is The Brickyard Collaborative a Non-Profit? Not yet, but that's one of our first priorities. We're working with one of our partners, an attorney, to start the process. Why? Simply because, as a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation, we are eligible for many grants and funding opportunities not available to for-profits. In terms of private donations and funding, a 501(c)3 makes a much more attractive package to a potential donor, whether private or corporate.

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