LEANSpark

GETTING STARTED

LEANSpark for Accelerators

Stand up your cohort and run the whole batch to demo day — a step-by-step setup

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Set up your cohort

Your portal's provisioned — create your first cohort in three fields and one permanent choice.

CHAPTER 1

Set up your cohort

You run the room; LEANSpark runs the mechanics. This guide takes you from your portal link to a running cohort in an afternoon — create the cohort, bring your teams in, watch them work, and see which ones are pulling toward demo day. (A note on wording: because your account is set to *Accelerator*, the portal labels your batches **"Cohorts"**; everything below uses that word.)

Start at your portal

Your **organization** — your program's home in LEANSpark — is provisioned for you when your account is set up; there's no self-serve "create an org" step. You'll get a link to your dashboard at **leanspark.ai/{your-program}/dashboard**. That's your cockpit. The first time you open it you'll see **"Welcome to {your program}"** and a **setup checklist** — this guide walks it.

> **Bring your team in as admins first.** Your program managers and co-directors — anyone who needs your full view — go in as **Admins** (left nav → **Admins**). Mentors who only coach teams get the lighter **Coaches** role. Set this up now so nobody's locked out mid-batch.

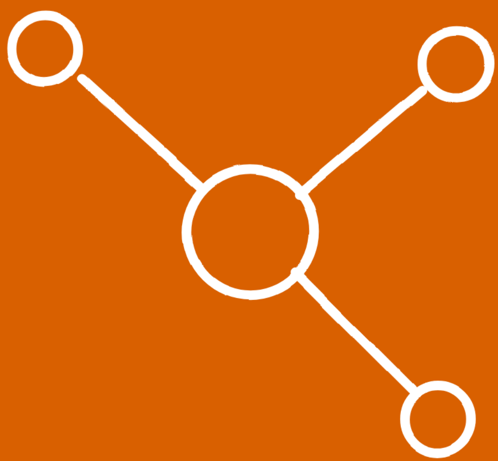
Create your first cohort

In the left nav, click **Cohorts.** The empty state opens straight to the create form — **"Create your first Cohort."** Two decisions:

1. **Name** it for the batch — e.g. *Summer '26 · Batch 4*. (There are no start/end dates; you close a cohort when the batch graduates.)
2. **Funding** — how each team's credits work. This is a **one-time, permanent** choice:
   - — **Per-founder allowance** — each team gets its own bankable wallet that never expires. *This is the one you want for a fixed batch:* each team has its budget for the program.
   - — **Shared cohort budget** — one pool, refilled monthly, that all teams draw from — better for a rolling, always-on program.

Click **Create Cohort.** Every cohort is **founder-led** — each team owns its own private workspace and its own venture. You see across the whole portfolio; each team sees only its own.

> **The funding choice is locked.** You can't change a cohort's funding model after you create it. For a fixed-length batch, **Per-founder allowance** is almost always right — pick it deliberately.



CHAPTER 2

Bring your teams in

Invite your accepted teams by email — they land in their own workspaces — then fund them.

CHAPTER 2

Bring your teams in

Invite your accepted teams

Your teams come from different companies with different email domains, so invite them directly. Left nav → **Invitations → Invite people.** Paste the founders' emails (one per line) or **import a CSV** (one `email` column) — your accepted-teams roster drops straight in. Pick the cohort and, optionally, a per-team credit amount, then click **Send Invitations.** Each founder gets an email, accepts, verifies, and is provisioned into their own workspace inside your cohort. The pending table lets you **Resend** or **Revoke** any invite.

> **A join link, if you have a shared domain.** If your program issues everyone an address on one domain (say `@youraccelerator.com`), you can instead open the cohort, set a **Seat cap** + **Email domain**, and share one **self-serve join link.** Most accelerators invite by email, since teams arrive on their own domains.

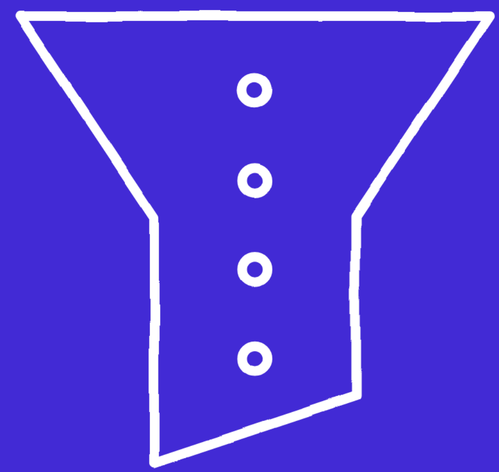
> **One gotcha at the door.** A founder who already pays for a personal LEANSpark subscription can't be dropped into a funded seat until they cancel it — you'll see them flagged.

Fund the cohort

Teams spend **credits** on the AI-assisted work — canvas help, interview synthesis, assessments — from three places:

- **Credits** (left nav) — your **credit pool** and a **runway** read: *"~N months left at current burn."* Amber under four months, red under two. Your program budget's fuel gauge.
- **Team wallets** — on the cohort roster, each team shows *"{n} credits left · {n} used this cycle,"* with an **Add credits** button when one runs low.
- **The credit-request queue** — when a team runs dry they can request more; you'll see **"{n} pending credit requests"** at the top of the cohort, each with a reason and **Approve** / **Decline** in one click.

> **Grants draw from the pool.** Adding credits to a team pulls from your program's pool; if it's empty you'll be prompted to top up first. Topping up the pool itself runs through your LEANSpark account rep.



CHAPTER 3

Run the cohort

Read each team's baseline, watch the cadence, and let the dashboard show who's pulling ahead — and who's stuck.

CHAPTER 3

Run the cohort

Read the baseline before your first check-in

Once a team scores its canvas, LEANSpark builds its **Validation Profile** — the seven dimensions (**Clarity, Desirability, Viability, Feasibility, Defensibility, Timing, Mission**; the first four are the **core**) mapped across five journey stages, with a quiet **Validation Index / 100**. Open it from any team's page → the **Validation** tab.

You don't run this — the *team* triggers its own scoring, so a profile is **empty until they've scored at least once**. Once it fills, you walk into office hours already knowing each team's weakest link — and spend the time on the conversation, not the read-up.

Watch the cadence

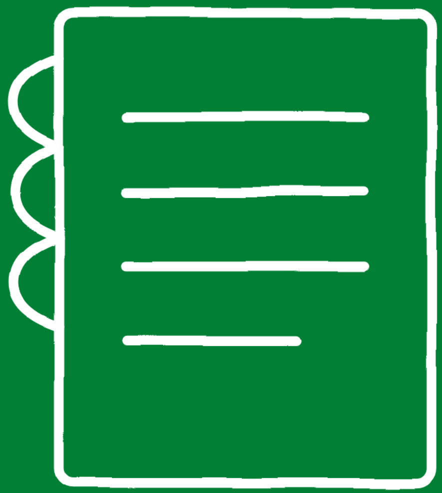
Teams work in **14-day experiment cycles** — plan, do, check, act. There's nothing for you to configure; the rhythm runs on the team side. What you see is the **sprint heat strip** on each team's row — the intensity of activity per sprint, a **"Sprint {n}"** marker when a cycle's in flight, or a soft **"Not started"** / **"Between cycles"** when it isn't. In a 12-week batch, that heat strip is your early warning for a team going quiet.

Let the dashboard triage for you

This is the leverage — one director, a whole portfolio. Your **Dashboard** opens to **Needs attention** by default — teams stalled or slipping sorted to the top, the ones running fine left alone. Across the top: counts for **at risk**, **quiet**, and **pending invites**. A **"Worth your attention this week"** band reads out **▲{n} advanced a stage · ▼{n} slipped · ●{n} need a nudge.**

Switch views with the chips — **Needs attention · Recently active · Recently enrolled** — and if you run more than one cohort, each card shows its own **"{n} need a nudge"** or **"All on track."** Click any team to drill in — **Canvas, Metrics, Insights, Validation, Experiments, Journal** — a read-only mirror of their work, so you're never chasing a status update.

> **Triage, not surveillance.** The point isn't to watch every team equally — it's to find the three teams a conversation changes this week, and trust the rest to run. Coach by need, not by calendar.



CHAPTER 4

Demo day & reporting up

See which teams to double down on, and report portfolio health to your stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4

Demo day & reporting up

Who's ready — and who to double down on

Every team has a confident story by demo day. The **Validation Profile** tells you which stories are backed by evidence. Read the portfolio through it:

- **The stage distribution** — how far each team has actually moved across the five journey stages, on the same seven axes. The teams that advanced stages on *evidence* are your demo-day leads.
- **The evidence underneath** — the **Insights** and Customer Forces Stories (real customers, real forces, not compliments), the **Experiments** run, and the commitments earned. That's the difference between a team that pitches traction and a team that has it.
- **The trajectory** — the **portfolio trends** on your dashboard show who's climbing and who's flat, week over week. That's your double-down signal.

Report up

Your stakeholders — a board, LPs, a corporate sponsor — want portfolio health, not anecdotes. From the Dashboard or any cohort, click **Export CSV** — one row per team: **stage, score, health, last active, credits allocated and used** — for the whole program or a single cohort. The **"Worth your attention this week"** band and the portfolio trends are the screenshot-ready rollups for a weekly update; the Validation Profile board is the deep artifact for a standout venture.

Go deeper

You now have a cohort that runs on evidence and a dashboard that tells you where you're needed. The mechanics are here; the craft — exposing the one constraint, holding the cadence, the tough love a founder is paying *not* to hear from a chatbot, and triaging a portfolio — is **The AI-Native Coach's Playbook** (No. 2 in this series). Read that next.

Your cohort is live. Set up your program at leanspark.ai.

A companion to The AI-Native Coach's Playbook. This is the hands-on setup — from your first cohort to demo day — on the LEANSpark org portal.

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