

OPEN OFFICE HOURS

FAQs

What is Open Office Hours?

Open Office Hours is a free service offered by the Venture Cafe Foundation which aims to connect entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs to experts for advice and coaching. Expert advisers post their availability for 30-minute consultations with entrepreneurs and innovators on a variety of topics.

Who can attend Open Office Hours?

Anyone. These are Open Office Hours. They are designed for anyone who considers themselves a Small Business Owner, Entrepreneur, Innovator, or has an idea (“small” or “big”). We support those starting out on their first venture or those are serial entrepreneurs.

Who are the Advisers for Open Office Hours?

We have dozens of experts from the Boston Entrepreneurial Ecosystem who are dedicated to giving back and helping where they can. They must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Entrepreneurs with a successful track record
- General business professionals with 10+ years management experience
- Industry-specific professionals with significant early-stage or industry expertise with 10+ years of experience
- Investors with 3+ years of experience

What is a typical first meeting like?

While this varies greatly based on the topic area of the adviser, most meetings are 30 minutes. Advisers will need to know certain details about the company/project. Being prepared with a high-level pitch deck with the following is very useful:

- The problem you are addressing
- The size of the market
- The team
- The product offering
- The exit strategy

How to book Venture Cafe Office Hours?

Visit our website here: <http://vencaf.org/book-office-hours>

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Do advisers sign NDAs?

Our Advisers do not sign Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs). We aim to build relationships based on trust. These Office Hours are about open advice and sharing but please do not feel obligated to share confidential information or trade secrets. Likewise, Advisers should not feel legally obligated to keep nor share any information shared in the meeting.

Is my idea protected?

Your idea is not protected by Venture Cafe Staff, Partners, or Advisers. If you have confidential information or trade secrets you wish to protect, please do not share them with anyone not legally obligated to protect that information.

Should I pay adviser?

No. These sessions are free and open to the community members. If an adviser asks to be paid for time at Venture Cafe Office Hours, please contact the on-site staff or email officehours@vencaf.org.

Can I meet an adviser outside of Venture Cafe?

Do not expect the adviser to be available outside of their office hours at Venture Cafe. The advisers are donating their time during the Office Hour sessions and should not be expected to meet outside of those sessions. Should the adviser suggest an additional meeting outside of the Cafe locations and hours, please understand that the Foundation has no purview over these meetings.

How many times can I book office hours?

Unless an adviser indicated they would like to meet more or less often, please limit meetings with advisers to one 30 minute session per month.

What if an adviser says or does something I believe is inappropriate?

Please contact the on-site Venture Cafe Staff or email incidents@vencaf.org immediately!