

Next XcellR8 Meeting to be held February 26th at UConn

XcellR8 welcomes the student team behind Mesa

February 22, 2018, Tolland, CT. Nerac is pleased to announce that its next XcellR8 meeting will be held on Monday, February 26th at 6:30pm on the UConn Storrs Campus, Peter J. Werth Residence Tower.

XcellR8 is a powerful advisory program designed to foster innovation in business and support entrepreneurs throughout Connecticut, particularly those originating out of UConn. Leveraging Nerac's strong and far-reaching network of innovators and entrepreneurs, XcellR8 meetings assemble a comprehensive array of expert professionals who serve to advise and mentor entrepreneurs in all of the various facets of business and product development. The meetings are energetic, interactive gatherings wherein entrepreneurs present their ideas and concepts and gather feedback and guidance from experts in attendance.

Beyond the meetings, XcellR8 aids technology-based and other startups in developing and executing effective, big picture strategic plans by connecting them to relevant, up-to-the-minute resources, including CTNext – Connecticut's go-to resource for entrepreneurial support. CTNext is partnered with Nerac in support of its XcellR8 and Incubator programs. As a member of the CTNext Partner Program, Nerac plays an important role in CT's innovation ecosystem by introducing entrepreneurs selected for its XcellR8 program to resources and support systems that can help them carry out plans with success post meeting. An extension of the XcellR8 program, Nerac's Incubator program makes ideal workspace opportunities available to Nerac's strong network and community of entrepreneurs.

On Monday, XcellR8 welcomes the UConn student team behind "Mesa," an Airbnb model applied to hosted, in-home dining and the belief that a market exists in shared social experiences and interests around food. The team consists of members Shemona Singh, Ernesto Ortega-Hernandez and Nicole Gauer, among others. They've also enrolled in this year's Innovation Quest ([iQ](#)) competition, looking to take their idea to the next level.

Challenges the team faces include validating their belief and underlying assertion that a community can be built with and around this tool. Who and where are the customers and what is the compelling reason for them to use Mesa? Readily identifiable user personas? Alternative models for community engagement? How to monetize the platform? What experiments could be used to test and rapidly evolve the value proposition for the community?

XcellR8@NextGen will provide a forum for a group discussion to brainstorm ways in which Mesa might go about gathering additional data to validate these latest assumptions. The team is also headed to a pitch competition and is likely to benefit from feedback on their pitch.

"The Tolland/Nerac XcellR8 group continues to build momentum as we leverage the innovative talent and creative energy of the people who attend the sessions and the UConn

entrepreneurial community,” said Kevin Bouley, CEO of Nerac. “It’s incredibly rewarding to see our members continue to succeed, and I look forward to having the group brainstorm ideas with the Mesa team.” [Contact XcellR8](#) to learn more today.

About Nerac

Nerac Inc. is a global research and advisory firm for companies developing innovative products and technologies. Nerac provides expert insights that equip clients with the knowledge to develop or refine a technology, explore market growth opportunities, evaluate intellectual property strategies and respond to regulatory changes. Nerac serves approximately 5,000 users worldwide and delivers over 12,000 research projects and custom alerts each year. Nerac has a long, successful consulting history in a wide-range of industries with significant expertise and extensive data resources supporting client requests in the areas of technology scouting, IP, medical device, engineering, chemistry and advanced materials.