

The Future Is Small: One Silicon Valley Incubator Shoots for Quality over Quantity

By Martin Salvucci, J.D. Candidate 2018 | April 5, 2015

In the wake of fresh reports of [mixed economic signals](#), some Silicon Valley heavyweights are now placing large bets on a "small" plan. Last week, Expa - the "start-up studio" that was launched in 2013 by Uber co-founder Garrett Camp - [announced the close](#) of a \$100 million fund to support a different sort of incubator. Dubbed "Expa Labs," this new project will offer a high-touch, hands-on approach to growth and development.

Based from its offices in both New York and San Francisco, Expa Labs will offer [six-month engagements](#) to only a handful of start-ups at any given time. But the attention and the resources Expa Labs will provide should prove significant. In addition to [dedicated guidance and mentorship](#) from Expa's five partners, each start-up will receive \$500,000 in funding, as well as shared office space.

The decision to "go small" draws a [sharp contrast](#) with Y Combinator, Silicon Valley's most visible start-up incubator, as well as other, more conventional start-up funds. Expa Labs will debut amid [ongoing controversy](#) over seemingly excessive private valuations of early-stage companies, as well as a sharp pullback in recent venture transactions, despite otherwise-robust fundraising figures.

Several start-ups backed by Expa's parent entity have met with early promise. Operator, an application that markets itself as a "shopping concierge," received [positive attention](#) last year from the popular technology outlet *TechCrunch*. And another Expa-backed "concierge" application - this one a restaurant-reservation engine called Reserve - has likewise demonstrated [modest growth](#) in an otherwise-competitive space.