GrayShares

FOUNDING SELECT COHORT BRIEF

Shared upside for startup offers.

A compensation network that helps startups hire and retain talent.

What GrayShares is

GrayShares is a shared-upside compensation network for startups. Companies use it to make offers less binary: salary, company equity, and GrayShares Bonus Points. A company gives employees Bonus Points as part of compensation. Bonus Points vest over time. If approved companies in the GrayShares network have major liquidity events, employers can pay employees with vested Bonus Points in cash.

Problem

Startup offers are too binary: salary plus one-company equity. Candidates are asked to trade cash for equity in one private company.

Product

GrayShares adds a third line: employer-granted Bonus Points tied to a curated startup compensation network.

Outcome

Founders get a stronger offer story. Employees get potential shared upside. CFOs get an employer-run comp plan, not an employee investment account.

How it works

1 Company joins GrayShares

The company adopts GrayShares as a compensation program.

2 Employees receive Bonus Points

The company gives GrayShares Bonus Points to eligible employees.

3 Bonus Points vest

Bonus Points vest over time like a normal compensation benefit.

4 Network companies have liquidity events

If approved companies have major cash-out events, value can flow through the network.

5 Employers pay employees

Employers can pay cash bonuses to employees with vested Bonus Points through payroll.

Why companies care

For founders

A stronger offer story without only raising salary bands. Founders and leadership may also be eligible for Bonus Points through the company-approved plan.

For CFOs

Employer-granted Bonus Points, vesting records, reporting, and payroll payout support. The employee relationship stays with the employer.

For People teams

Cleaner candidate explanation: salary, company equity, and GrayShares Bonus Points. A less all-or-nothing startup offer.

Broad platform. Curated network.

Qualified startups can use the Platform. Approved companies participate in the Network. Select is invite-only. Everyone can use the rails. Not everyone gets the crown jewels.

Platform

Bonus Point plan, offer language, vesting/admin, reporting, and payroll workflow.

Network

Approved companies can receive network participation and company-account allocations.

Select

Invite-only flagship basket built to keep the premium network scarce and credible.

Trust notes

Employees do not buy or trade startup shares through GrayShares. A company gives Bonus Points to its own employees as part of compensation. Any employee cash payout is handled by the employer through payroll. The first cohort is curated and conditional. No company name or logo will be used publicly without approval. Legal, tax, securities, and accounting treatment will be reviewed before launch.

Founding cohort next step

We are looking for founders, CFOs, Heads of People, and investors to pressure-test the first GrayShares cohort.

Request Founding Cohort Access

Book 20-minute call

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