

BIG IDEAS

2015-2016

CALL FOR MENTORS



Big Ideas is an early-stage innovation contest that provides funding, support and validation to interdisciplinary teams of undergraduate and graduate students who have big ideas.

The competition spans across 18 campuses in the US, Australia and Uganda. Since its launch in 2006, Big Ideas has inspired more than 4,000 students to propose 1,250+ high-impact projects aimed at solving the world's most pressing problems. By encouraging novel ideas and providing the necessary support to develop them, Big Ideas has helped contest winners make a difference all over the world. This year's competition will award up to \$300,000 in prize money to students competing across 9 Big Ideas categories.

The success of the contest and the teams and ideas it produces is made possible by the 250+ enthusiastic professionals who serve as judges and mentors each year. Past judges have included industry leaders, professors, innovative thinkers, entrepreneurs, consultants, and project designers from one or more of our categories areas - including representatives from Google, Twitter, Packard, USAID, Yahoo, World Bank, Bain & Co and many others.

LEARN MORE: bigideas.berkeley.edu | bigideas@berkeley.edu

18
CAMPUSES

200+
BIG IDEAS

\$300K
AWARDS

500+
NETWORK

2015 CATEGORIES



ART & SOCIAL CHANGE



ENERGY & RESOURCE ALTERNATIVES



FINANCIAL INCLUSION



FOOD SYSTEMS



GLOBAL HEALTH



IMPROVING STUDENT LIFE



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR SOCIETY



MOBILES FOR READING



SCALING UP BIG IDEAS

BIG IDEAS MENTORS OVERVIEW

This year, student teams from across 18 universities submitted a record-breaking number of applications, which means we'll need more support from dedicated mentors who are passionate about working with inspiring students and getting involved with social innovations.

Each Big Ideas mentor that is matched with a finalist team supports this team through a 6-week mentorship period from January 24th to March 9th. Mentors spend approximately 2 hours a week with their respective finalist team (via phone / Skype / email / in person) refining their project idea, providing advice on design and implementation, and offering general guidance as teams develop their 10-15 page full proposals.

Each Mentor is asked to complete an interest form expressing their areas of expertise, their interests, and any preferences or limitations they have in regard to working with teams. When teams are invited to the final round in late December, they are asked to complete a similar form, expressing the types of skills, resources or support they would like to receive from a mentor. Teams and mentors are then matched based on their mutual interests and needs.

Because the actual pairing depends highly on what teams advance to the final round and what their exact needs are, mentors in our pool are not guaranteed a match. However, as a member of our mentor pool, you can still meet fellow mentors and students teams at our many networking events, including open-advising and feedback sessions, our Grand Prize Pitch Day, and the end-of-year Awards Ceremony.

Mentorships are an invaluable resource for student teams as they look to hone their ideas in the full proposal round. Year after year, teams cite the Big Ideas mentorship as one of the most value-added parts of the program. Your support is critical to the success of these student-led ventures, and we hope you will join us as a Big Ideas mentor this year!



PAY IT FORWARD by giving back to aspiring social innovators and entrepreneurs from 70+ disciplines



GET INSPIRED by novel ideas from the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs and changemakers from UC Berkeley and other top universities



GROW YOUR NETWORK by joining a network of 200+ industry leaders and professionals who support Big Ideas as judges and mentors

"We fully appreciated the guidance and support of our mentor who was a great source of perspective as well as a sounding board for new ideas. It was important for us to continually get fresh feedback as we refined our idea and operating model, and our mentor was an invaluable resource in that regard."

Iris Shim, Acopio, Scaling Up Winner, Big Ideas 2012