BIG IDEAS

2017-2018
MENTORSHIP
HANDBOOK

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
100 Blum Hall, #5570
Berkeley, CA 94720

bigideas@berkeley.edu | (510) 664-7424

2017-2018 Big Ideas Mentor Handbook

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a mentor for the 2017-2018 Big Ideas Contest!

Big Ideas mentors have the opportunity to preview and provide feedback on students' innovative ideas. By serving as a mentor, you'll have an opportunity to give back while also getting a first-hand look at some of the most creative ideas being developed by graduate and undergraduate students. In addition, mentors will have the opportunity to build their own professional networks by attending Big Ideas events where they can meet other mentors, contest judges, faculty, and students.

On behalf of the finalists and the Big Ideas staff, we thank you for your commitment to fostering student-led innovation. Your support is an invaluable resource that helps transform student ideas into real-world impact.

2017-2018 Big Ideas Contest Statistics

- >300 pre-proposals submitted
- ~900 student participants
- 69 projects selected as finalists
- 11 eligible universities
- Up to $300k in prizes

This handbook will provide you with key information about the Big Ideas Contest, expectations for mentors, final round judging criteria, key dates, and FAQs.

In addition to this handbook, mentor resources are available at
http://bigideas.berkeley.edu/participate/mentors/

Lastly, the Big Ideas team is always happy to answer any questions you may have.
You can email us at bigideas@berkeley.edu or reach us by phone at: 510-664-7424.

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About the Contest

Big Ideas is an annual innovation contest aimed at providing funding, support, and encouragement to interdisciplinary teams of undergraduate and graduate students who have "big ideas." Since its founding, the Big Ideas prize contest has inspired innovative and high-impact student projects aimed at solving the world's most pressing problems. By seeking novel proposals and then providing resources to help them succeed, Big Ideas has supported contest winners in making a difference all over the world.

This year the Big Ideas Contest has 8 categories and is open to innovative student teams from 11 leading universities, including:
- University of California Berkeley
- University of California Davis
- University of California Irvine
- University of California Los Angeles
- University of California Merced
- University of California Riverside
- University of California San Diego
- University of California San Francisco
- University of California Santa Barbara
- University of California Santa Cruz
- Makerere University (Uganda)

Structure of the Contest

The Big Ideas Contest is split into a pre-proposal round in the Fall and a full proposal round in the Spring.

Round 1: Pre-proposal (Fall)
Eligible students submitted their 3-page pre-proposal on November 15, 2017. Depending on the number of applicants per category, between 5 and 13 teams were selected as finalists to participate in the full proposal round in each contest category, based on judges' scores and feedback. All pre-proposal teams received detailed feedback from the judges, regardless of whether or not they are selected as finalists. All pre-proposal applicants were notified in mid-December 2017 about whether they would be moving on in the Contest.

Round 2: Full Proposal (Spring)
Finalist teams will have the opportunity to develop and refine their pre-proposals into 10 page full proposals by March 7, 2018. In the full proposal round, finalists will expand on the ideas presented in their pre-proposals, edit their proposals based on judges' feedback, and refine their project ideas through collaboration with a Big Ideas mentor. From the finalist pool, between 4 and 8 award winners will be selected in each category. This packet includes information on what judges will be looking for in making their final selections.

2017-2018 Contest Categories

Art & Social Change	Create an innovative arts project that meaningfully engages with issues of advocacy, justice, and community-building.
Connected Communities	Propose a novel solution that leverages the capacity of technology to engage and enhance the capacity of campuses, communities and cities.
Energy & Resource Alternatives	Encourage the adoption of clean energy and resource alternatives that are sustainable and have the potential for broad impact.
Food Systems	Address challenges in food systems and develop solutions around food security, sustainability, access, waste and nutrition.
Global Health	Develop an action-oriented, interdisciplinary project that will help alleviate a global health concern among low-resource communities.
Hardware for Good	Describe plans to develop an innovative hardware technology, or design a technology-led solution that uses an existing hardware/product in a novel way.
Workforce Education & Development	Develop workforce solutions that provide individuals with the technical knowledge, practical skills, and readiness necessary to secure employment.
Scaling Up Big Ideas	For previous Big Ideas award winners who have advanced their ideas, and are looking to take their projects to the next level.

Full Proposal Components

Finalists are instructed to submit full proposals <u>no longer than 10 pages</u>, single-spaced (including their budget and implementation timeline, but not references or appendices). Big Ideas recommends the format below to ensure students include critical proposal components, however, students are allowed to modify the order and presentation of the information as needed to tell their story. The basic components we ask students to include are:

1. Problem Statement

This section includes a clear description of and background information on the identified problem. An effective problem statement is thoroughly researched, shows a deep understanding of the issue, and builds a strong case to support why the project is needed. This includes but is not limited to: research/statistics on the problem, and/or research/statistics about the target community or market.

2. Existing Solutions

This section is an overview of any existing services, programs, interventions or products that have been designed or implemented to address this problem. Where applicable, applicants should discuss the limitations of these approaches, the gaps that still exist, and present research on what has been done in the past and where those solutions fell short.

3. Proposed Innovation

This section includes a summary of the innovative project (e.g. program, service, good, etc.) how it works, and its intended impact. This is the "nuts and bolts" portion of the proposal and focuses on what the project will look like in its <u>1st year of implementation</u>. It explains any implementation challenges that may arise and how they will be addressed. It may note (but does not focus on) whether the project intends to scale up or expand in future years.

4. Implementation Timeline

The timeline describes the key next steps for implementing the idea for the <u>1st year only</u>. Big Ideas awards will be disbursed in June/July 2018. Therefore, for the purposes of this contest, the 1st year is defined as June 2018-June 2019. Teams are allowed to mention work conducted prior to or after this 1-year timeline, but it should not be considered in their scoring.

5. Measuring Success

Teams should include information about how they will monitor or measure the impact or success of their project throughout the 1st year of implementation (June 2018- June 2019). This does not need to be a formal monitoring and evaluation plan, but can take the form of basic metrics gathering systems to make sure they can track their progress.

6. Budget

Includes both expected costs and revenue for the <u>1st year of the project (June 2018-June 2019).</u> *Note: The average Big Ideas award is approximately $5,000 and proposals should not request more than $10,000 from Big Ideas. The requested amount from Big Ideas is typically seen in the "Funding Gap" section of the budget template we have suggested for use (available here: http://bigideas.berkeley.edu/ wp-content/uploads/2014/06/04-BI-budget-template_2013-14.xls. Not all teams may choose to utilize this tool). Teams may also include any plans to leverage additional funding sources, if appropriate.*

7. Team Bios
A list of key project team members with brief biographies that explain the capability of the team to pursue their idea.

8. Past Progress (Scaling Up Big Ideas finalists ONLY!)
List the name of the original project, the year it received a Big Ideas award, and a quick description of the original project idea. Report on project progress since the time of the original award, and detail any milestones and accomplishments (e.g. number of people reached, products delivered, partnerships developed, additional funding secured, registering as a formal entity, employees hired, or social impact). Include key lessons learned and best practices, and if applicable, pivots or strategy revisions.

Full Proposal Judging Criteria

Viability (40%)

> Given the project description and the team members' expertise, skills, and training, the team is likely to meet their proposed goals. (Please keep in mind that we asked teams to explain how their project would look and consider implementation in only the 1st year of their project.) For example:
> - The proposal demonstrates consideration of potential obstacles to implementation/ adoption and has proposed convincing solutions to address these challenges.
> - The team has considered all relevant aspects of development, created viable marketing goals and strategies, and developed realistic training and recruitment procedures for personnel or volunteers, if applicable.
> - The team has identified and developed relationships with potential community partners, where applicable.
> - The project team members and partners possess the necessary skills and experience to be successful in implementing the project.

Community or Market Familiarity (15%)

> The team demonstrates a great deal of familiarity with the market or community they plan to enter (either through research, professional, or volunteer experience). The proposal discusses similar programs, projects, or products that currently exist (especially with regard to the target population), the issues that have emerged with those other initiatives, and specifically how their project compares. The proposal demonstrates that the applicants have given sufficient consideration to the cultural, ethical, and legal implications of their proposed intervention.

Potential for Impact (15%)

> The proposed project addresses a pressing and important social problem. The team provides the reviewer with sufficient statistics and research to understand the problem, and makes a clear and compelling case that their project addresses this need.

<u>Realistic Budget (10%)</u>

The proposal includes a thorough and realistic budget that outlines all relevant expected expenses and revenue for the project's 1st year. The budget demonstrates that the applicants have given sufficient consideration to necessary supplies, equipment, travel expenses, etc. **The funding requested from Big Ideas is no greater than $10,000**. If the projects' expenses are greater than $10,000 total, the team has a reasonable plan to raise additional funds (e.g., the team has plans to submit additional grant applications, fundraise, etc.).

<u>Measuring Success (10%)</u>

The proposal demonstrates a viable plan for measuring success in achieving the project's goals. The exact measurement tools (e.g. survey instruments) need not be developed at this stage, but the proposal should explain what will be measured, when/how it will be measured, and justify how those measurements lead to the achievement of the team's desired impact.

<u>Quality and Creativity (10%)</u>

The project is innovative, the overall merit of this idea is high, and this is an idea worth funding.

About the Mentorship

Mentorship Basics

The Big Ideas mentorship program is designed to support students in critically analyzing the viability of their project ideas before they are asked to submit a full proposal in the final round of the contest. In the pre-proposal round, judges gave strong consideration to the creativity and innovation of the projects. In the final round, judges will increasingly consider the extent to which their projects are viable in their 1st year of implementation. **As a result, mentors assist students in thinking about the implementation and design of their project ideas, with an eye toward viability and impact.**

Mentorship Minimum Requirements

To this end, Big Ideas teams and their mentors are expected to work together for approximately **1-2 hours per week** (via email, telephone, or in person meetings, to be negotiated with team members) from January 21 to March 7. During these communications, mentors assist students in reviewing the feedback teams received from pre-proposal judges, coach teams through implementation plan development, and provide feedback on relevant aspects of the project—taking into consideration which areas are weighted most heavily in the judging criteria. Mentors are advisors to the project and should not contribute extensive research or writing to the proposal.

To begin the process, please fill out the mentorship agreement form below with your team to align expectations, goals, and timelines. The team will then return this form to the Big Ideas team (bigideas@berkeley.edu) by no later than February 1, 2018.

Before mentorship begins, mentors are highly encouraged to join their finalist team either in person or online at our Final Round Kickoff Event on Sunday, January 21 from 5:00-6:00pm PT in the Blum Center for Developing Economies' B100 Blum Hall on the UC Berkeley campus. During this event, mentors will have the opportunity to meet their teams, and learn more about expectations for the mentorship program and the application requirements for the final round of the contest. Mentors and teams not located in the San Francisco Bay Area can tune in online at bigideas.berkeley.edu/workshops and have the option to hold their 1st meeting via Skype or phone directly after the event. Likewise, mentors and teams that can attend the event in person are invited to stay afterward and use the room as a workspace.

At the end of the mentorship period, Big Ideas will ask each mentor and student team to fill out a survey form indicating areas of success and challenge in their mentorship relationship. This form will be viewed by Big Ideas staff only and is designed to assist staff in improving the mentorship program in future years. As always, you are more than welcome to reach out to the Big Ideas team at any time to express any concerns or feedback you may have.

PLEASE NOTE: Many of our applicants hope to launch ventures following the contest. It is expected that mentors will maintain the confidentiality of the proposals before, during and after the mentorship process. Collaboration between teams and mentors beyond the March 7 deadline is optional and up to the discretion of the team and mentor.

Tips for Successful Mentorship

Based on feedback from last year's mentors and finalist teams, the Big Ideas team has developed a list of tips for successful mentorship:

1. Establish clear objectives, work goals, and deadlines at the outset of the mentorship and be accountable to those goals.
2. Discuss expectations and boundaries of the mentorship relationship at the 1st meeting. Teams must keep in mind that Big Ideas mentors are volunteering their time and often have challenging schedules. Teams must be as flexible as possible to accommodate these scheduling constraints, and be responsive in their communication with their mentors.
3. Set up a regular time for meetings each week.
4. Conduct face-to-face meetings when possible (in person, Skype), and establish a desired means of communication for all parties (email, phone, Skype).
5. Setting an agenda for each meeting can lead to more productive use of mentors' time.
6. Be upfront about potential scheduling difficulties that may occur, including travel and work or school deadlines.
7. Review the judging criteria before mentorship begins to ensure that both mentors and the team understand how their proposals will be judged in the final round of the contest.
8. Review feedback provided to the team by pre-proposal judges.
9. Mentors should practice active listening and ask questions to challenge the team.
10. Mentors should encourage the team to take an active approach to problem solving rather than rely solely on you as their mentor to develop solutions for their issues.

***In sum, this mentorship opportunity is entirely what mentors and teams make of it.* Therefore, it is essential that teams and mentors establish and maintain a clear schedule and good communication throughout the mentorship phase.**

Helpful Reads
- Seven Habits of Highly Effective Mentors (SSIR): https://ssir.org/articles/entry/seven_habits_of_highly_effective_mentors
- What it Takes to be a Good Mentee (Fast Company): https://www.fastcompany.com/3043724/what-it-takes-to-be-a-good-mentee

Mentorship Agreement Form

This document outlines responsibilities and expectations of mentors and team members and includes a worksheet for mentors and teams to fill out to determine goals for the mentorship relationship.

Relationship and Commitments

By signing this agreement, mentors agree to spend approximately **1-2 hours per week** communicating with students (via email, telephone, or in person meetings, to be negotiated with team members) from January 21 to March 7, 2018. During these communications, mentors are expected to assist students in reviewing the feedback teams received from pre-proposal judges, coach teams through implementation plan development, and provide feedback on relevant aspects of the project—taking into consideration which areas are weighted most heavily in the judging rubric. Mentors should not contribute to the writing or researching of extensive portions of teams' proposals.

By signing this agreement, teams understand that it is their responsibility to fully explain the rules of the Big Ideas contest to their mentors, including the judging criteria for the full proposal round of the contest. Students are primarily responsible for engaging their mentor by suggesting topics for discussion and questions to confer with their mentors about, as necessary.

By signing this agreement, both mentors and students agree to respect each other's time, to attend mutually scheduled meetings, and request assistance from Big Ideas staff as necessary during the mentorship period.

_____

Project Name

_____   _____

Signature of mentor   *Date*

_____   _____

Signature of team leader   *Date*

Mentorship Worksheet

Please note that this is an optional, but useful tool for mentors and teams to utilize during their mentorship. The Big Ideas team requires that all teams send us an email by February 7, 2018 with an update of whether or not they have met with their mentor, and how the process is going.

Mentor Resources

Mentors, please list your areas of expertise/experience that you think may be beneficial to this particular team. Please share these strengths with your finalist team.

1.

2.

3.

Mentor Suggestions/Goals for Mentorship

After reading the team's pre-proposal and/or meeting with the team to hear about their project ideas, please provide your initial suggestions or recommendations for improvement. Please share these thoughts with the team.

1.

2.

3.

Student Goals for Mentorship

Student teams, after reviewing the feedback provided by pre-proposal judges, please indicate the areas of your proposal you wish to significantly improve, or areas you would like help from your mentor to think about and improve. Please share these areas with your mentor.

1.

2.

3.

Mentorship FAQs

Who participates in the Big Ideas Contest?

All students on the 11 eligible campuses are encouraged to participate, regardless of their academic major. In past years, participants were approximately 60% undergraduate and 40% graduate students. The eligibility of each finalist team has already been verified during the pre-proposal round. Students come from a wide range of fields, including scientific and technical studies, liberal arts, law, public health, and business.

Who funds the contest?

For a complete list of current sponsors, please refer to our Sponsors page: bigideas.berkeley.edu/participate/sponsors.

Is Big Ideas a business plan competition?

No. While some proposals take the form of a formal business plan, not all ideas will result in the creation of commercial ventures. Applicants are encouraged to submit project plans with a business model (for-profit, non-profit, hybrid) and a realistic budget that will enable their venture to have the intended social impact.

Who judges the Big Ideas contest?

Judges hail from a variety of fields and have diverse expertise to assess ideas and provide valuable feedback. Judges are academics, business people, social entrepreneurs, and non-profit and creative professionals.

Do mentors edit or help write proposals?

Mentors are responsible for helping students think through issues of project design and implementation. Mentors are not responsible for idea generation, completing portions of the proposal, or proofing or editing proposals.

How are teams paired with mentors?

We individually match student teams with mentors who can provide necessary expertise and help them develop skills in project management and business development or other specific skills requested by the finalist teams.

Is mentorship mandatory?

No. Student teams are not required to work with a mentor, but all finalists were given the opportunity to complete a mentor matching form, signifying their desire and commitment to work with a mentor during this phase of the contest.

What should student teams do if the feedback they received from judges is contradictory? Must student teams address all comments made by pre-proposal judges?

Judges reviewed pre-proposals independently, meaning that some judges may disagree on the relative strengths and weaknesses of a proposal. In collaboration with their mentor, student teams can determine to what extent the weaknesses pointed out by pre-proposal judges should be

addressed. However, we strongly encourage student teams to consider their pre-proposal feedback as they work to strengthen their proposals for the final round.

Who do I contact if I have any issues or concerns?
Please email bigideas@berkeley.edu or call 510-664-7424. Also, students are welcome to attend drop-in office hours with Big Ideas advisors. Please check the Big Ideas website for the list of our updated hours: bigideas.berkeley.edu/advising/

BIG IDEAS

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