CONTEST STRUCTURE

How Does Big Ideas Work?

The contest has two rounds: a pre-proposal round in the fall and a full proposal round in the spring.

Round 1: Pre-proposal (First Round)
Eligible students are invited to submit a 3-page, 1,600-word pre-proposal by November 20, 2019, at 12pm (PT) via the website. Approximately 30-40 teams will be selected to continue to the final round of the contest in the spring. All pre-proposal teams will receive detailed feedback from the judges, regardless of whether or not they are invited to participate in the final round. All applicants will be notified of their status in December.

Round 2: Full Proposal (Final Round)
Teams selected for the final round will submit a short application video (between 60 and 90 seconds) in addition to an 8-page written proposal by March 13, 2020 at 12pm (PT). In this round, teams will expand on the design of their social innovations and incorporate the judges' feedback. Additionally, to help further these proposals, teams are paired with a Big Ideas mentor (an experienced professional matched to the team based on expertise and background). Approximately 25-30 teams will be selected to receive awards ranging from $5,000 to $20,000. Prizes will be awarded only for high-quality submissions. Decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

Grand Prize Pitch Day & Awards Celebration
On April 30, 2020, the Big Ideas community will gather for its annual Grand Prize Pitch & Awards Celebration to recognize the most outstanding innovations in the 2019-2020 contest. A select group of finalist teams (6-8) will be invited to participate in the Grand Prize Pitch event for the opportunity to win up to an additional $10,000 for their project. Following the pitches, there will be a poster and demo session featuring all of the projects and innovators from the 2019-2020 Big Ideas Contest.

KEY DATES & RESOURCES

Big Ideas' fall events and resources support all aspiring student innovators, including those interested in submitting pre-proposal applications. For a full list of resources and updated information, please refer to the Big Ideas website: bigideascontest.org/events.

Fall Advising Hours
Schedule an in-person or remote appointment with a Big Ideas advisor to receive additional guidance on your pre-proposal application. Sign up: bigideascontest.org/advising.

Information Sessions: Sept. 12 & 25, 6pm (PT)
Learn more about Big Ideas rules, requirements, and eligibility in this overview of the contest. (Location: B100 Blum Hall)

Innovators@Cal: Oct. 10, 2019, 6pm (PT)
Attend this exciting event that fosters collaboration across UC Berkeley. Meet other student innovators, pitch your idea, build or join a startup team, and learn more about the entrepreneurial resources available on campus.

Writing & Advising Workshops: Oct. 23 & Nov. 5, 6pm (PT)
Learn more about the Big Ideas application process and receive tips and best practices for drafting a compelling pre-proposal. (Location: B100 Blum Hall)

Pre-proposal Application Deadline: Nov. 20, 12pm (PT)
Submit your 3-page pre-proposal and get ready to launch your Big Idea!

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RUDD FAMILY FOUNDATION

BIG IDEAS

2019-2020

GUIDELINES & APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Big Ideas is an innovation contest that provides up to $300,000 in funding, training, networks, and recognition to interdisciplinary teams of students who have transformative solutions to real-world problems.

CONTEST RULES

Who Can Participate in Big Ideas?

Applicants with innovative "BIG" ideas, who meet all of the eligibility criteria listed below, are encouraged to apply.

Student-Led: Projects must be initiated and led by an undergraduate or graduate student (or students) from an eligible campus. The project should not be an extension of faculty-guided research or led by a non-student established organization (i.e. non-profit or for-profit entity).

Early-Stage: Big Ideas supports early-stage projects. These can range from brand new ideas with a team just assembling, to projects that have formed recently (within 2 years).

Social Impact: Projects must have a clear social impact. The project should be centered around an innovation (technologies, services, programs) that produces a clear benefit with the potential for sustained improvement in the lives of groups or individuals.

Additional rules and requirements can be found on the Big Ideas website: bigideascontest.org/rules/

SOCIAL IMPACT TRACKS

What Types of Projects Does Big Ideas Support?

Big Ideas encourages students to propose innovative solutions across a broad range of social impact tracks. Based on the scope of the project, teams will indicate a primary track that best fits their project.* If applicable, teams may select additional (secondary) tracks. For more information on each track, refer to: bigideascontest.org/tracks/

Workforce Development	Energy & Resources
Global Health	Education & Literacy
Food & Agriculture	Cities & Communities
Financial Inclusion	Art & Social Change

*Teams should consult with a Big Ideas advisor if their project does not fall into one of the tracks above.

PRE-PROPOSAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

What are the Pre-proposal Application Requirements?

Pre-proposals must be submitted as a single PDF file. The document can be no longer than 3 pages and 1,600 words. The pre-proposal must contain the following content, but the specific structure and flow of presentations are flexible.

1. Problem Statement
A description of the problem or need that the project will address. The description should communicate an understanding of relevant research/statistics on the problem. (Recommended length: ½ – 1 page.)

2. Landscape Analysis
An overview of any services, programs, or products that have already been designed or implemented to address this problem (both current competitors and past attempts). The team should discuss the strengths and limitations of these approaches, as well as the gaps that still exist. (Recommended length: ½ – 1 page.)

3. Proposed Innovation
A summary of the innovation (e.g., project, service, or product), how it works, and its potential for social impact. Applicants should provide a brief description of how the project will look in its first year of implementation, and why it is different from other solutions. Applicants should briefly explain how they will address challenges to implementation. (Recommended length: 1 page.) Note: Judges are instructed to consider, above all, the degree to which the project idea is innovative and creative.

4. Team Bios
A list of key team members with brief biographies that explain the team's capability to pursue the idea. If the team has not yet found members with the skill sets required for the project, they should identify those gaps, outline those roles, and note how they intend to fill the positions. Non-student advisors may also be listed in this section. (Recommended length: ½ page.)

What is the Pre-Proposal Judging Criteria?

1. Innovation (40%)
The project presents a truly novel, innovative, or creative solution to the problem. Big Ideas defines "novel, innovative, or creative" as those solutions that a) propose a new idea, method, invention, or product, b) create a better or more effective product, process, service, technology, or idea, or c) improve upon or tailor an existing innovation to a new context.

2. Social Impact (30%)
The proposed project addresses an important social challenge. 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.

3. Long Term Viability (20%)
The proposal includes team members' expertise and skillsets and compelling evidence of the ability to implement the proposal. The team has identified implementation challenges and provided an initial strategy for addressing barriers. The team has thought through the partnerships and resources necessary to achieve its goals and objectives. (Note: Teams are required to consider implementation for only the first year of their projects.)

4. Proposal Quality (10%)
The team has put thought and effort into creating a professional, persuasive, and well-organized proposal that effectively communicates an innovative and potentially transformative "big idea." The overall quality of the proposal is high and convinces readers that the project is worth funding.

Want to Learn More About Big Ideas?

Website: https://bigideascontest.org/

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