



National Science Foundation

DOE Laboratories of the Future Workshop Series

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https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/teams





I-Corps Program Vision

Reducing risk associated with translating technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace



What is I-Corps?

7-week entrepreneurial training program to

GET YOU “OUT OF THE LAB”

NOW “OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE”

to learn how to actually

EVALUATE MARKET OPPORTUNITY

You will “travel” (now virtually) to meet with

OVER 100 POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS,

Partners, and other stakeholders



I-Corps Program Aims

- **Support commercialization of “Deep Technologies”**
 - **Primarily technologies resulting from fundamental discoveries in science and engineering at universities and research institutions**
- **Address skill and knowledge gap associated with transforming basic research into deep technology commercial ventures**
 - **Identify customer segments and value proposition; i.e., someone that cares and why**

Most
companies
fail because
they develop
something
NO ONE CARES
ABOUT



I-Corps Program Basics

- Real-world, hands-on experiential learning through customer and industry discovery
- Based on Steve Blank's Lean LaunchPad course at Stanford
- A process to quickly assess commercial interest and feasibility

**The Customer Discovery Method
developed by Steve Blank**

&

**The Business Model Canvas
popularized by Alex Osterwalder**



National I-Corps Eligibility

- Two Eligibility Pathways:
 - Have received a prior research award from NSF in a related science or engineering field that has been active within the past 5 years
 - Lineage extends to PI, Co-PIs, Senior Personnel, Post-Docs, Grad Students and Professional Staff
 - Have participated in an I-Corps Node or Site Regional Program and receive a recommendation to a National Cohort
- Other Requirements:
 - Must have a **technology connection** to a university, research institution
 - Current agreements with other federal agencies: NASA, DHS, DoD
 - Diversity and inclusion is a priority for NSF



I-Corps Success Story*

- **Teams: >1900**
- **Participants: >5500**
- **Startups formed: 1036**
- **Startup funding: \$760M**
 - **Public funding \$425M**
 - **Private funding \$335M**
- Program launched in 2011
- Now recognized widely as an effective training program in the US and internationally

* From 2012 – 2020 Summer Cohorts



Submission Mechanics

- **Form a Team: Entrepreneurial Lead (EL), Technical Lead (TL), Industry Mentor (IM)**
- **Participate in a Regional I-Corps Program**
 - **Receive letter of recommendation**
- **Submit an application through the National I-Corps portal: <https://nsfgov.secure.force.com/icorps>**
- **Schedule an interview with I-Corps staff**
- **Select a National I-Corps training Program**
 - **At least 3 per quarter: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall**



Recent Program Changes Due to COVID-19

- **All 2021 Cohorts will be held virtually**
 - **Winter Cohorts filled – All Spring Cohorts available**
- **No Travel Required**
- **Customer Discovery Interviews will be conducted by phone or video conference**



CORPS
NSF Innovation Corps

NSF National I-Corps Program

Thank You!

Questions?

I-Corps Teams Website: https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/teams.jsp