2018 Entrepreneurship Academy Mentoring Overview

Thank you for your interest in mentoring at an upcoming Entrepreneurship Academy. Your time and expertise is of great value to our academy constituents and we appreciate your consideration.

Below you will find the academy overview and details on the mentoring sessions (each session is a two-hour time commitment). We hope you will be able to join us and look forward to hearing from you soon.

ACADEMY OVERVIEW

The Entrepreneurship Academy is a three-day program designed for community entrepreneurs, upper-division undergrads, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, faculty and other participants to explore the commercial potential of their ideas.

The academy combines focused lectures, practical exercises, networking sessions and hands-on experiences in an innovative format to help attendees explore how their ideas or research can make a broader impact in industry, the marketplace and the world. With your help, they will learn to effectively present their ideas, identify market needs and opportunities, and develop a network of experts to support their venture.

Mentoring Format

Mentoring sessions allow you to help participants refine their ideas through one-on-one pitching and feedback in a timed rotation format spanning two hours.

- Each “idea” (either an individual participant or a team) will be assigned a number displayed on the table in front of them.
- Mentors select a table and number to start. Each participant/team will briefly pitch their idea to the mentor and gather feedback through two-way questions and discussion. After 15 minutes, a chime will indicate time for mentors to rotate to the next highest number.
- Since each mentoring engagement lasts approximately 15 minutes, and the mentoring session spans two hours, you can anticipate exploring ~6-8 business ideas in an evening.

Participants/teams will be at various stages in their idea development, but most have formulated their initial elevator pitch, an overview of their business concept and some initial market and customer validation.

Mentor Responsibilities
Mentors help the participants learn more about the commercialization process and the tools they need to validate potential ideas and technologies they come across every day in the lab and in their work. The mentor’s job is to provide support, enthusiasm, business acumen and questions that will help them get excited about continuing to work on their idea. During the mentoring session, you spend time with each participant/team reviewing their idea and asking additional questions to help guide the idea development. Participants bring to the session:

- The elevator pitch – ideally, their one sentence description
- A lengthier description of their research technology and/or innovation
- Some questions that could lead to information that may help move the idea forward

Things to think about when talking to the participants:

- Is their Elevator Pitch concise and to the point? Did they answer the key questions around who, what, why and how?
- Did they define a market, customers and competition for the new venture?
- Did they identify a business model? What suggestions can you provide them on their model?
- What feedback can you provide them to help them refine their market and business model?

Questions?

For questions or more information about being a mentor, please contact Niki Peterson, Senior Program Manager, at ndpeterson@ucdavis.edu or (530) 400-9531.