

Mentor Guidance for the Sunstone Innovation Challenge

As a mentor for the Sunstone Innovation Challenge, you play a crucial role in guiding and supporting our student entrepreneurs. We sincerely thank you for volunteering your valuable time and expertise to nurture the next generation of innovators. This document outlines key requirements and best practices for effective mentorship.

1. Time Commitment

- Commit to at least 3-4 meetings with your assigned student team(s) throughout the program.
- Be reasonably available for consultation on business plans and presentations.

2. Business Plan Review

- Review and sign off on the student team's business plan.

3. Communication Protocol

- Establish clear communication preferences during the introductory meeting.
- Respond to student inquiries in a timely manner.

4. Confidentiality

- Maintain confidentiality of student submissions, concepts, and conversations deemed confidential.
- Return or destroy all confidential materials upon program completion.

5. Conflict of Interest

- Disclose any potential conflicts of interest to both the student team and program director.
- Recuse yourself if necessary or seek guidance from the program director.

6. Professional Conduct

- Act with integrity, respect, and professionalism in all interactions.
- Provide honest and constructive feedback to students.

Best Practices

1. Guidance Approach

- Help students identify blind spots and keep their feet on the ground while encouraging ambitious thinking.
- Offer strategic advice and make crucial introductions when appropriate.

2. Advisory Role

- Understand that your role is advisory. If disagreements arise regarding advice, encourage students to seek multiple perspectives and make their own informed decisions.

3. Networking

- Facilitate introductions to relevant industry contacts when beneficial to the student's project.

Additional Considerations

Marketing and Publicity:

- Be aware that your involvement may be used in the program's marketing efforts, including website, social media, and events.

Remember, your expertise and guidance can have a significant impact on a student's entrepreneurial journey. By adhering to these guidelines, you'll help create a positive and productive mentorship experience for the Sunstone Innovation Challenge.

Recommended Meeting Structure

We recommend a minimum of 3-4 meetings with your mentee team. Here's a suggested structure:

1. Introductory Meeting

- All team members and the mentor introduce themselves
- Establish overall goals for the mentoring process
- Set milestones for the team's progress
- Discuss communication preferences and meeting frequency
- Outline expectations for both mentor and mentees

2. Challenge-Solving Session

- Address a specific challenge faced by the team
- Provide guidance and expertise based on your experience
- Help the team brainstorm potential solutions
- Conclude with clear action steps for the team to implement
- Set deadlines for follow-up on these action items

3. Business Plan Review

- Team presents preliminary version of their business plan
- Offer detailed feedback
- Suggest areas for improvement or further research
- Discuss strategies for enhancing the overall business model

4. Business Plan Finalization

- Review the final draft of the business plan
- Offer last-minute suggestions and refinements
- Ensure all key components are well-developed and coherent
- Discuss presentation strategies for the written plan
- Prepare the team for submission to the Sunstone Innovation Challenge

5. Additional Meeting for Finalists: If your team becomes a finalist, schedule at least one additional meeting

- Have the team present their full pitch as they would in the challenge
- Provide constructive feedback on content, delivery, and visual aids
- Help refine the pitch to maximize impact within the time constraints
- Conduct a Q&A session to prepare the team for judges' questions