

Student Team Guidance Document for the Sunstone Innovation Challenge

Welcome to the mentorship program for the Sunstone Innovation Challenge at CSULB's Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. This document outlines what you can expect from your mentor relationship and how to make the most of this valuable opportunity.

1. Meeting Requirements

- Commit to at least 3-4 meetings with your assigned mentor throughout the program.
- Be prepared for each meeting with specific questions or topics to discuss.

2. Business Plan Development and Presentation Preparation

- Work closely with your mentor to develop and refine your business plan.
- Ensure your mentor reviews and signs off on the final business plan.
- If selected as a finalist, participate in at least one presentation pitch training session with your mentor, either via Zoom or face-to-face.

4. Communication Protocol

- Establish clear communication preferences with your mentor during the introductory meeting.
- Respect your mentor's time by being punctual and responsive.

5. Confidentiality

- While mentors are expected to maintain confidentiality, clearly indicate any information you consider confidential.

6. Professionalism

- Treat your mentor with respect and professionalism at all times.
- Be open to feedback and willing to consider different perspectives.

7. Commitment

- Demonstrate your dedication to your project and the mentorship program.
- Follow through on tasks and suggestions provided by your mentor.

Making the Most of Your Mentorship

1. Preparation

- Come to each meeting prepared with updates, questions, and specific areas where you need advice.
- Be proactive in scheduling meetings and following up on action items.

2. Openness to Guidance

- Be open to your mentor's advice and perspectives, even if they challenge your current thinking.
- If you disagree with advice, seek to understand the reasoning behind it and consider multiple viewpoints before making decisions.

3. Utilize Mentor Expertise

- Take advantage of your mentor's industry knowledge and network.
- Don't hesitate to ask for introductions or resources that could benefit your project.

4. Personal Growth

- Use this opportunity not just for your project, but also for your personal and professional development.
- Seek guidance on leadership skills and handling challenging business situations.

5. Conflict Resolution

- If conflicts arise with your mentor, address them professionally and seek guidance from the program director if necessary.

6. Feedback

- Provide constructive feedback about your mentorship experience to help improve the program for future participants.

Remember, your mentor is volunteering their time to support your entrepreneurial journey in the Sunstone Innovation Challenge.

By actively engaging in the mentorship process and showing commitment to your growth, you'll gain invaluable insights and support for your venture. Make the most of this opportunity to refine your business plan, improve your pitch, and develop crucial entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills.

Recommended Meeting Structure

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

1. Introductory Meeting

- Introduce all team members to your mentor
- Share your project idea and current progress
- Discuss your goals for the mentorship and the challenge
- Establish communication preferences and meeting schedule
- Ask your mentor about their background and expertise

2. Challenge-Solving Session

- Present a specific challenge your team is facing
- Be open to your mentor's advice and suggestions
- Actively participate in brainstorming solutions
- Take notes on action steps and assign responsibilities
- Set deadlines for implementing these actions before the next meeting

3. Business Plan Review

- Present your preliminary business plan to your mentor
- Be prepared to explain each section in detail
- Take note of your mentor's feedback and suggestions
- Ask questions about areas where you need more guidance
- Discuss strategies for improving your business model and financials

4. Business Plan Finalization

- Show your mentor the revised business plan
- Highlight the changes you've made based on previous feedback
- Seek final advice on refining your plan
- Ask for any last-minute insights

Additional Meeting for Finalists: If you become a finalist, arrange at least one more meeting with your mentor:

- Deliver your full presentation as you would in the challenge
- Ask for feedback on your content, delivery, and visual aids
- Practice answering potential questions from judges
- Seek advice on presenting confidently and handling nerves
- Discuss strategies for standing out among other finalists