



Head-Start Workshop

Next Event: January 11, 12 and 20, 2018

Location: Campus House, 17 Main Street, Geneseo NY

What is the Head-Start Workshop? The Head-Start Workshop¹ is a component of the entrepreneurship program, VentureWorks, at SUNY Geneseo. It is a 2 ½ day event which rallies campus and community talent and resources to investigate and transform potentially commercializable ideas and technologies into pre-seed stage companies which can then be further investigated and advanced in the undergraduate course INTD 425 “Idea2Venture”.

Well-Structured Teams. For the workshop, 6-7 teams are formed around 6-7 business ideas originating from students, faculty, staff, and community member. The teams attempt to simulate real start-up companies with the “visionary” (who has the business idea) surrounded by balanced expertise in technology, business, finance, law, etc. The students on the teams are those who are enrolled in the Idea2Venture Course for the spring. The adult mentors are typically alumni and volunteers from the on-campus and off-campus communities who have relevant expertise, e.g., IP and start-up attorneys, accountants, industry experts, and commercialization experts who serve as coaches.

High-Intensity Process. During the Workshop, the Facilitator systemically leads the teams through a series of nine well-validated, hands-on, idea analysis sessions on:

1. *The Idea or Technology: Do you have a commercializable product?*
2. *Technology to Market Map: To whom will you sell?*
3. *Market Need: Where is the pain?*
4. *Competition: Why will you win?*
5. *Value Propositions: Who cares?*
6. *Business Model: How will you operate?*
7. *Revenue Potential: How big is this opportunity?*
8. *Management Team: You and what army?*
9. *Technology Status: What does the roadmap look like?*

During these analysis sessions, teams are addressing the 20 key questions that need to be addressed when potentially establishing a new start-up company. They are also producing 12-13 slides that constitute the foundation for a “skinny” commercialization plan, i.e., a 15 minute presentation that they deliver on a Saturday morning one week after the initial sessions before the collective group. The mentors will provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each business idea and where the students need to focus their follow-on efforts.

After the Workshop. Mentors will “hand-off” the plan to students. Students start the semester with the “skinny” commercialization plan and some indication of questions still unanswered about the potential business. During the semester, students will conduct an in-depth analysis on the business opportunity, develop an investor presentation, and write a business plan. Mentors who participated in the workshop will continue to be loosely associated with the teams throughout the semester in that they are just a “phone call away”. They will also be invited back to class for a mid-semester “check-in”, as well as, to the end-of-the-semester presentations delivered by the students to a professional panel of judges.

¹ The Head-Start Workshop is a modified version of the Pre-Seed Workshop (PSW) which has been customized for the Geneseo community. More information on the PSW can be found at www.preseedworkshop.com.