# ACCELERATE: INNOVATION
## IMPROVE A TECHNOLOGY, PROCESS OR EXPERIENCE

## THE IDEA

An innovation accelerator is an internal innovation grant program designed to engage staff and improve quality. Staff self-organize to innovate or improve a process, technology or experience, and pitch the idea to a leadership panel. Selected teams receive support and resources to design and implement the innovation or improvement within set timeframe.

## THE GOALS

- ☐ Inspire and enable staff to innovate.
- ☐ Improve quality of technology, process and/or experience.
- ☐ Advance the organization's strategic priorities.
- ☐ Promote connection, cooperation and collaboration.
- ☐ Encourage creativity, problem-solving, and optimism.
- ☐ Strengthen user empathy and user-centered design.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- ✓ Sponsorship
- ✓ Coordinator
- ✓ Manager support
- ✓ Interested staff
- ✓ Staff time
- ✓ Proposed training
- ✓ Proposed technology
- ✓ Proposed equipment
- ✓ Permission to try
- ✓ A technology, process or experience to improve
- ✓ Some good ideas

### STEP 1: Seed the idea

Talk about the idea so you start to get clearer and more articulate about it. Run it by peers in and outside of your organization, throw it out to your leader, "what if we could", "I saw this at UCCSC…"

- ☐ Write it down. Really.
- ☐ Run it by 8-10 people.
- ☐ Re-write it.
- ☐ Share in good forums.
- ☐ Seed with leaders

### STEP 2: Make a plan

Two pages. Really. Share big picture and detail in a way someone outside of your field could understand it. Include specifics on who, what, when, where, *why.*

## WHAT TO PUT IN THE PLAN

**PURPOSE**  Consider big picture impact. Align with the CIO's priorities, strategic plan or other guiding ideas. Speak their language. List the goals.

**PEOPLE**  Who can apply? Who *can't* apply? Who chooses the winning proposal? What's leaders role?

**PROCESS**  How does this work, what happens in what order. What's needed at each step.

**TIMELINE**  Pre-Launch, Launch Day 1 to Day 90, post-launch. Adjust for org's calendar and work flow.

**RESOURCES**  How much is it gonna cost? What other resources are needed, from who, by when?

### STEP 3: Get the green light

Try to get facetime. Share the big idea, talk about how it will impact the organization and campus. Focus on benefits. Be upfront about costs. Speak their language. Move down the leadership to get all support.

### STEP 4: Generate interest

Consider innovation, problem-solving, elevator pitch workshops—look to the business school. Get a design, catchy phrase. Post flyers, slack, social media.

### STEP 5: Launch it

Teams self-organize, usually around a problem they experience together. Consider an event to network people and ideas for cross-collaboration and new folks. Set the deadline and post the application. Consider 3 weeks to let teams ideate and submit.

# THE APPLICATION

While only two pages, the application is designed to get teams to think it through, be clear about the problem they want to solve, and connect their idea to the end user and the organization.

**What is the name of the proposal?**

**Who is proposed for the team (name, role, unit)?**

**Have you organized a team that tapes expertise and enthusiasm across the organization?**

**What problem do you want to solve? Please describe the pain points.**

**Is this a technology, process or experience?**

**What is the root cause of the problem? Use the *5 Whys* to break it down.**

**What impact does this problem have on the organization? Include data if you have it.**

**What are the goals in addressing this problem?**

**What are the current ideas for solving this problem?**

**Which organizational priority or strategy are you addressing by solving this problem?**

**What are the short- and long-term benefits you believe solving this problem will achieve and how will you measure them?**

**What resources are requested (Consider software, equipment, time, training, funding)?**

**Have you limited the scope of the problem to something that can be address in this 3 month program?**

## STEP 6: Accept & review proposals
Close proposals on the deadline. Really. Consider reviewing for technical compliance, staff in good standing.

## STEP 7: Get the pitch
Teams pitch their ideas to a panel from in and outside of org, staff as audience. Keep it short—7 minutes—it's a pitch not presentation. Time it and have a hard stop. Questions/comments from panel only.

## STEP 8: Select proposals
The # selected can depend on the # received. Consider staff voting on pitches for input into selection. Decision may be made by judge's ranking, staff input and executive decision. Announce and honor.

## STEP 9: Engage with teams
Immediately. They've only got 90 days. Take a project management approach. Identify obstacles right away. Consider time of internal processes like purchasing, contracts. Have regular check in w/ execs.

## STEP 10: Celebrate success
Let everyone know what happened, what progress was made, recognize the work that was done, roll-out any new solutions, decide on next steps, kick off another round! And iterate on your Accelerator!

# HOW TO CHOOSE

| | MISSING<br>0 pts | NEEDS WORK<br>1 pt | SATISFACTORY<br>2 pts | EXEMPLARY<br>3 pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PROBLEM STATEMENT** | Does not identify problem | Problem stated unclear, ambiguous, irrelevant or vague | Sufficiently identified a problem | Clearly identified a problem so IT and non-IT could understand |
| **ROOT CAUSE** | Does not identify cause | Mentions or identifies root cause but does not break it down | Breaks down root cause but not entirely clear | Clearly identifies root cause and breaks it down for understanding |
| **PROBLEM'S IMPACT ON ORG** | Does not identify impact | Mentions impact but not in a way that's easily understood | Identifies impact with sufficient clarity | Clearly identifies impact and includes data to support |
| **IDEAS FOR SOLVING** | Does not identify ideas | Presents unclear, vague ideas for solving; difficult for non-IT | Presents one or more ideas for solving | Presents clear, thought-out idea/s doable within 3 months |
| **CONNECT TO ORG'S STRATEGY** | Does not identify any | Identifies a priority or strategy without explanation | Identifies a strategy or priority and connects to project | Clearly and fully connects strategies and priorities |
| **SHORT/LONG-TERM BENEFITS** | Does not identify benefits | Identifies some short and long term benefits without explanation | Identifies short and long term benefits with explanation | Clearly identifies short/long tern benefits w/ metrics & explanation |
| **RESOURCES** | Does not address resources | Requests but without specificity | Specifically requests resources but not amount, hours, $, staff, tech | Specifically requests resources with amounts: hours, staff, $, tech |