Terms of Reference (ToR)

Questions should be directed to the GSA’s Awards Chair @ awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca

Purpose

This award aims to support and develop innovation among the University of Calgary’s graduate student body and stimulate an entrepreneurial mindset in graduate students by making funds and expertise available to graduate students with innovative and promising product or service ideas (referred to as project hereafter). Although this award supports early-stage ideas, priority is given to ideas that are closest to market.

Award Value

First place: $10,000
Second place: $7,000
Third place: $4,000
‘Fan Favorite’ award: $2,000

Eligibility

1. All current full- and part-time students in the Faculties of Graduate Studies (FGS) at the University of Calgary are eligible to apply for the Innovation Development Awards. FGS students who graduated within the same academic year of the award may still apply¹.

2. The primary applicant must be a full- or part-time students in the Faculties of Graduate Studies at the University of Calgary. Non-UCalgary graduate students or non-UCalgary students can be part of the team, but will not be eligible to receive funding.

3. Applicants are eligible to apply to Innovation Development Awards in every cycle it is offered.

¹ For the purpose of this award, an academic year starts in September 1st of a year and ends in August 31st the following year.
**Evaluation Criteria**

Eligible applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. The applicant and his/her team (if applicable). The team will be evaluated on various factors including team composition, demonstrated team cohesion, and criticality of each team member role in the project.
2. The proposed product or service, the amount of money and time invested in it so far, and potential employment it may create.
3. The degree to which this fund will contribute to the success of the product or service.
4. Overall presentation and organization of the application (including spelling and grammar).
5. The degree to which the proposed project fits the University of Calgary's Research Themes

**Deadlines and Submission Guidelines**

Applications documents are due **February 10th, 2017 @ 11:59 PM**.

1. Late applications will **NOT** be considered.
2. Decisions are made approximately six to seven weeks after the closing date.
3. Completed applications **MUST** be submitted digitally to awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca. Paper applications will not be accepted.
4. All submitted documents **MUST** be in PDF format. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all documents can be viewed properly in any operating system.
5. Applications **MUST** be submitted through a University of Calgary email address. Applications submitted through any other email address may be rejected.
6. Applications **MUST** be written in English.
7. Applicants are expected (and may be asked) to provide evidence to any claims made in their application.

**Evaluation Procedure:**

Complete applications will undergo a three stage process to select the winners:

1. **Stage 1:** Applications will be prescreened by the GSA Awards Committee based on the criteria described above. A score will be given to each application. These scores will be made available on the GSA website at the end of application cycle.
2. **Stage 2:** Top 10 applications will be forwarded to a panel of expert external judges who evaluate the applications. A new score will be derived from the scores of stages 1 and 2.
3. **Stage 3:** The three top ranked teams will be awarded the Innovation Development Awards. These teams, and additional highly ranked teams, at the discretion of the GSA Awards Committee, will be given the opportunity to pitch their application in a Pitch Contest, to compete for the Fan Favorite Award.
Funding Procedure:

1. Each winning team is paired with a mentor from Innovate Calgary.
2. Mentors and teams will meet 5 times during an eight-month period (May to December) for a total duration of 10-15 hours on or around the dates specified below:
   a. Initial meeting (May 1st): Defining monthly and term milestones; and
   b. Follow-up meetings (July 1st, September 1st, November 1st, December 1st): Following up on the progress
3. Funds will be released following each follow-up meeting to the eligible team members if the progress was found to be satisfactory.

Conditions of Award:

1. Successful applications are required to acknowledge the GSA’s role in funding the project in public presentations, interviews, published or other material.
2. Successful applications will be kept for 2 years after the date of notification of the award. Unsuccessful applications will be kept for 8 weeks after the same date. Both will be deleted after these respective time periods.

Other Regulations

1. In the case that an application is related to the research of any of the team members, the relevant team member(s) must declare on the application form that they understand Intellectual Property rules and adhere to them. It is of utmost important that all parties involved in the relevant research (e.g. supervisor and collaborators) are aware of this application and have no issues with it going forward.
2. For the purpose of this award, ONLY University of Calgary graduate students are eligible to receive the funds of this award.
3. The amount of money for each rank will be divided equally (as equal as possible) amongst a project’s eligible team members who achieved that rank. See Award Value section for amounts corresponding to each rank.
4. Each eligible team member of a successful application will receive a cheque written out to him/her.
5. Innovation Development Awards (IDA) regulations regarding award procedure, prize amounts, prize delivery mechanism, in-kind services, and criteria, are subject to change. Notifications of any changes will be made through relevant media outlets, such as GSA Newsletter and GSA website.
6. The Awards Committee is committed to answer applicants’ questions regarding awards when possible. However, questions that arrive less than 24 hours before the deadline may not be answered.
7. The GSA will not be responsible for any tax liability, legal disputes, intellectual property issues and/or conflicts incurred by the awarding of funds.
8. Winners are expected to commit to their projects for an eight-month period. In the case where a member needs to withdraw from the project, (s)he must contact the Awards Chair immediately to make him/her aware of this decision. Funding of this member will be withdrawn.
9. All team members are expected to attend all meetings with the corresponding mentors. A team member that misses a meeting is expected to justify it. Funding will not be paid out to absent member(s) unless justification is given.

10. In the case that a team member(s) drops from the project, the team is expected to contact the Awards Chair regarding the matter. Funding of this member will be withdrawn.