



Innovation Development Award Frequently Asked Questions

We strongly encourage you to read the award's Terms of Reference as it contains critical information about this award and may already have answers to your questions.

This award application seems very involved and requires plenty of information, some of which I don't have answers to. Is it worth it to apply?

Although the application package may seem a little intimidating because of the amount of information it requires, it should not discourage graduate students from applying. Our application and evaluation process is developed specifically to give us a holistic and detailed view of the project and progress from inception to market, which helps us determine the most suitable projects to support. Applications will be evaluated by our own GSA Awards Committee as well as a panel of industry-expert judges. That said, we are looking to support promising ideas, as opposed to already well established ventures. We encourage all graduate students to apply regardless of their project stage. We also encourage graduate students to answer all questions in this application because it will help you develop a deeper understanding of your project. Think of this award as an opportunity for students to test the feasibility of their ideas, and form their teams, build momentum, and push to their entrepreneurial endeavors to success.

I hold a major scholarship which has some restrictions on the amount of income that I am allowed while holding this scholarship. Would the IDA funding cause any issues in this case?

We encourage you to discuss this with the office that offers your scholarship.

I hold a major scholarship. Can I still apply to IDA?

Certainly! We have no restrictions regarding currently held scholarships.

If I win this award, will the GSA, Innovate Calgary, or the University have any claim to the intellectual property of my ideas?

GSA, Innovate Calgary, and the University will not make any claim to the IP of your ideas based on this award. That said, we encourage you to discuss IP with all involved parties, i.e. your supervisor, collaborators, before you apply to this award.

Would the GSA Awards Committee, external judges, and Innovate Calgary mentors be bound by a non-disclosure agreement with respect to my project's specifics?

Our evaluators are bound by GSA's conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.

This is a question that is often received and is a topic that students are often misinformed about. First, our evaluators are bound by the GSA's policies regarding conflict of interest, and confidentiality but we cannot comment as to whether the mentors at Innovate Calgary will be open to signing a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) or any other form. Typically this is not something to worry about during the ideation phase of your business. Essentially, if your idea is so easily stolen that just hearing the concept is enough to allow anyone to replicate it and launch it better than you, then you need to reassess your investment in this idea. This is because this idea will certainly be replicated by others when it reaches the market or before that when you have to pitch it to a large number of high-calibre investors who have relevant experience, social capital, and financial capital to implement it themselves. An idea that is easily replicable by others is a high-risk idea and one we are not likely to fund.

[Click here](#) to read an article that goes into specifics on non-disclosure agreements.

[Click here](#) to read a Quora question that explores the same idea.

If you have spent a long time working and developing your idea, then know that you have become an expert in your idea and its domain. Others are not likely to have the same levels of knowledge and skills you have to bring your idea to reality before you when you have had such a big head-start.

Who is the audience of the pitch contest? Is this a public presentation?

The audience will be determined and invited at a later stage of this award depending on the domains of the winner applications, amongst other factors. We cannot foretell who will attend. You can expect to see various University of Calgary students, leaders, and faculty members as well as some entrepreneurs and industry individuals.

The GSA keeps successful and unsuccessful applications, but who will have access to them? Will the GSA actively circulate the applications as examples in the future, or are they kept for reference only?

We keep successful the applications for two years for many reasons internal to the GSA's Awards Committee including evaluation procedures for repeat applicants and statistics. We will obtain consent from applicants if we decide to use their application as a sample.