



Innovation • Development • Enterprise • Action • Service

Final Application Instructions Applications due April 15, 2009

Your final application should be submitted on the IDEAS on-line application website <<http://ideas.mit.edu/start.html>>.

Please note, you should include only non-confidential information in your IDEAS application. The judging process includes a project display session that is required of all entrants and is open to the general public.

The ideas and plans that you submit must be your own, and you must credit any partners you are working with. Be sure to fill in all requested information in the application web form, including the following:

- **Team leader:** You must assign a team leader who will be your primary contact with the IDEAS staff.
- **Biographies:** Include the relevant experience of each participant and describe their responsibilities and the strengths they bring to the team. Note that at least one third of your team must be full-time registered MIT students.
- **Project Summary:** Clearly, concisely, and completely describe your project, including its innovation, feasibility, and community impact, so that a person reading only the summary can understand your project and its merits. Some judges will read only your summary.

Your final proposal should be single-spaced with **1-inch margins** and **12-point font**; it should be submitted in either .doc or .pdf format. In order for the application website to process the proposal, the name of the document must be 8 letters or less, and the file must be **less than 1 megabyte**. **The proposal is limited to 10 pages plus the budget table** and should include:

- **Background** (1-2 pages)
 - Need (What community will you assist? Who in that community will benefit from your design or product? Why is it important that the need be filled?)
 - Prior art (What sorts of devices or other solutions are already being used? What are their benefits and drawbacks?)
- **Innovation** (2-3 pages)
 - Describe your solution. (How does it solve the problem? How is it innovative?)
 - Justification (How is your idea better than existing solutions for the community needs?)
- **Feasibility** (2-3 pages)
 - Work to date (What sort of preliminary planning or work have you done already? What have been your major milestones? Do you have a prototype, business plan or other plans? How long have you been working on this as a

team? The judges need this information in order to gauge your progress so far. IDEAS winners can be at very different stages of project development).

- Implementation plan (Describe your approach and a general plan for proceeding.)
 - Challenges (What are the challenges that you'll face in developing your project? How will you address these challenges?)
 - Support network (Describe the set of community partners and advisors who will assist you with your project development.)
 - Timeline (Sketch out the main steps in a Gantt chart or timeline.)
 - Scope (Describe your plans for project development, and implementation.)

- **Community Connection & Impact** (1-2 pages)

- Connection (Who are you working with in the community you intend to serve? How do you know you are providing a service to the community?)
- Magnitude of effect (Who will be affected by your work? How will it affect the people for whom it is intended?)
- Additional effects (What other effects do you anticipate from your work? Will it assist you or others in some additional ways?)

- **Budget** (Word table)

- You **MUST** include a proposed budget for your project as a Word table at the end of your proposal. This budget is not included in the 10 page limit. The budget must itemize the projected costs of your project and indicate how you plan to use funds from IDEAS and other sources.

(Note: winning teams may use their award to pay wages for team members to work on their project providing the team member is a current or graduating MIT student, the team member is in the Cambridge area, and the team can provide a suitable supervisor to oversee their work on behalf of the IDEAS Competition.)

Feel free to include illustrations, diagrams, graphs, photographs or tables to clarify your application, but be aware that these are included in the 10-page limit. The file submitted cannot be greater than 1 MB, so very high resolution graphics are discouraged. You may provide a link to a webpage that has supplemental illustrations, but be aware the judges may not review it. Prototypes, videotapes and other items not submitted electronically can be displayed at the Judging and Poster Sessions (see below).

Judging

Our panel of judges will know of your project only through this final application and a very brief meeting with your team, so be sure that your application is well-written and explains your project effectively. Respect the 10-page limit, as our judges have limited time to review each application.

Some judges will only read project summaries, so make sure yours is clear and concise. The judging criteria are:

- **Innovation:** Is the project an original, innovative project or a significant improvement on previous attempts at solving the same problem? (Innovation generally does not mean bringing an existing solution to a new, similar location.)
- **Feasibility:** Can significant progress be made in the next year, with the award money? Has the team clearly described how they will make this progress?

- **Community Connection & Impact:** Has the team investigated the community to be served?
Does the project meet a true need? Has the project been developed based on the community need? How much of a difference will it make in the community/to the individual?

Judging & Project Display Session

A judging session will be held on the evening of **April 27**. At that time, all teams who submit final applications will have a brief opportunity (about 5 minutes per judge) to explain their projects to some of the IDEAS judges, display a poster, and present supplementary materials, such as prototypes.

This event is mandatory for IDEAS applicants and will be open to the public.

We also require final applicants to showcase their projects at the awards ceremony on **May 4** at 7:30pm (room TBA). Your display will allow you to exhibit what you have been working on to the greater community: representatives from MIT, industry, and community service organizations will attend, many of whom could be potential funders for your project.

All teams must produce a poster for the judging session. Posters must be printed at 20" x 30" and must include the name of your team. CopyTech in building 11-004 can print posters this size, but needs at least 48 hours notice. Do not mount your poster - IDEAS will provide one blank 20" x 30" poster board and mounting clips for each team and will bring these to the project display session.

IDEAS will reimburse each team for receipts of up to \$50 for printing posters or for other presentation materials. You may display more than one poster, but all posters must match these guidelines.

Please note, the IDEAS Competition will keep your poster after the project display session and may use it at future events.

Requirements & expectations for IDEAS applicants and winners

Each winning team will be required to do a brief presentation describing their project at the awards ceremony. Every team should prepare and send 2 - 3 Power Point slides to Nick Fontaine (nickf@mit.edu) by Friday, April 24 at 5:00 pm.

The MIT IDEAS Competition will publish the project summaries of all applicants on the IDEAS web site unless you request us not to do so by sending an explanatory email to ideas-admin@mit.edu.

All winners will be required to attend a retreat on May 26-27. In addition, winners will need to give written and in-person updates on their project six months and one year following the receipt of the award.