**WCU 2021 Summer Accelerator Program**

**Co-Hosted by**

**The Cottrell Entrepreneurship Center and The Office of Research and Sponsored Projects**

**Description**: A 10-week program delivered synchronously online for faculty, staff, and students to explore commercialization of their invention or innovation using lean startup concepts. This program is designed for teams of 2 or 3. Solo entrepreneurs will be matched with a qualified student to assist them in completing the program.

Teams will meet for four virtual two hour sessions during the 10 week period. The day and time for these sessions will be determined after the participating teams have been selected. WCU students, faculty & staff that participate in the Spring Accelerator will receive a stipend.

Team members will be asked to prepare for the virtual sessions by completing reading assignments, watching videos and conducting customer interviews.

Between each of the online, synchronous group sessions teams will work with their mentor and with The Cottrell Center team to develop their invention or innovation using the Business Model Canvas.

**Goals**

1. To assist faculty, staff, students and community members in determining if a viable commercial need exists for their “invention or innovation."
2. To enable participants to make decisions related to commercialization of their “invention or innovation.”
3. Create a plan "to move the invention or innovation forward to market" (if the decision is made to pursue this path).
4. Complete a Business Model Canvas related to the invention or innovation.

**Dates: Spring Session 2022 (February 14-April 22, 2022)**

Day & Time for Synchronous Sessions TBD

**Class Format**

All accelerator participants will meet virtually during Week 1, 3, 5, & 7. Each session will begin with a five minute presentation related to each teams’ invention or innovation. The Subject Matter Expert (SME) that is facilitating the session will give a presentation on the topic of the week, teams will complete an activity related to the topic and engage in group discussion with other participants, the SME and team mentors. Between sessions teams will be working to develop a Business Model Canvas related to their invention or innovation.

In Week 10, participants present key aspects of their business model to participants, mentors and guests on Demo Day which will be held in person at the WCU College of Business and Public Management.

**Topics for the Spring 2022 Accelerator**

* Lean Startup Methodology Introduction
* Customer Discovery
* Target Customer Definition
* Value Proposition

You can access the application to participate in the WCU Spring 2022 Application at [www.wcupa.edu/cottrellcenter](http://www.wcupa.edu/cottrellcenter) or by clicking [here](https://www.wcupa.edu/business-PublicManagement/CottrellCenter/programs.aspx).

The application deadline is January 25, 2022.

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Pattie Diggin, Cottrell Entrepreneurship Center Director at pdiggin@wcupa.edu.

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| 2 | Customers | Customer Discovery | Customer Interviews |
| 3 | Target Customers | Revenue models, funding, and exits | Crafting a Revenue Model  |
| 4 | Presenting your technology | Effective Presentations: Pitch decks, elevator pitches, and business plans | Developing a Pitch Deck |
| 5 | Participant Presentations & Wrap-up |

**For more information or to apply to the program please** **pdiggin@wcupa.edu**