

# 2023 President's Engagement and Innovation Prizes: Joint Information Session





**Seth Zweifler, Office of the President**

**zweifler@upenn.edu**





curf





“Penn grads win chance  
to change the world”



**Chicago Furniture Bank**  
Chicago, IL



**Healthy Pequeños**  
Miacatlán, Mexico



**rePurpose**  
Mumbai, India



**Avisi Technologies**  
U.S. (national)



# President's Engagement Prize: Brief History

Launched in  
**fall 2014**; first  
awarded in  
**spring 2015**



*Pictured: Katlyn Grasso, 2015 PEP cohort (for GenHERation)*



# President's Innovation Prize: Brief History

Launched in  
**fall 2015**; first  
awarded in  
**spring 2016**



*Pictured: Alfredo Muniz and Sade Oba, 2016 PIP cohort (for XEED)*



# Eligibility requirements for 2023 Prize cycle

- Must be a **Penn senior** graduating in December 2022 or May/August 2023
- Underclassmen, alumni, graduate students and/or non-affiliates may assist with projects but are considered **consultants** for purpose of Prize competition



*Pictured: Shadrack Frimpong, 2015 PEP cohort (for Cocoa360)*



# How many students can be on a PEP/PIP team?



- **PEP:** Max **three** per team; individual submissions are fine
- **PIP:** Max **five** per team; individual submissions are fine
- **No preference** by Selection Committee for individual or team submissions

*Pictured: Jodi Feinberg, 2015 PEP cohort (for Home, Heart, Health)*



# What are the basic project requirements?

- **PEP:** Project should be designed as a **nonprofit venture** with the capacity to produce a **positive impact** locally (in Philadelphia), nationally (across the U.S.) or globally
- **PIP:** Project should be designed as a **for-profit venture** with a positive social mission



*Pictured: Adrian Lievano, 2015 PEP cohort (for Everwaters)*



# President's Sustainability Prize



*Pictured: Eli Moraru (left), inaugural President's Sustainability Prize recipient*



# What does the meat of the application consist of?



- **PEP:** Project proposal (approximately 1,500 words total) plus a detailed budget planning form and written budget justification
- **PIP:** Four-page business plan, including a budget pro forma; optional elevator pitch video
- Full details are available on **CURF's website**

*Pictured: Matt Lisle, 2015 PEP cohort (for Everwaters)*



# Are there any additional application requirements?

- **Penn project mentor** commitment form
- Additional **letter of recommendation** for each team member
- **Resume and unofficial transcript** for each team member
- **Optional, but highly recommended:**  
**signed letters of preliminary interest/**  
**commitment from partners**



*Pictured: William Duckworth, 2016 PEP cohort (for Fever Smart)*



# How do I go pick a mentor and identify partners?



- The ideal mentor **knows you** and has **expertise** in your project area
- The project mentor is, in some regards, the “**adult in the room**”
- Pick partner organizations that are both **established** and **collaborative**
- Select an **appropriate number** of partner organizations

*Pictured: Melanie Mariano, 2016 PEP cohort (for Reaching HEALthy)*



# What do Prize winners receive?

- **PEP:** Up to **\$100K**, plus a **\$50K** living stipend per team member
- **PIP:** **\$100K**, a **\$50K** living stipend per team member, space at the **Pennovation Center** and ongoing mentorship from the **Penn Center for Innovation**



*Pictured: Vaishak Kumar, 2016 PEP cohort (for NESARA Agriculture Extension)*



# Who picks the Prize winner(s)?

- **President Magill** makes the final selection; she is advised by a Selection Committee for each Prize
- Both Selection Committees contain **one faculty representative** from each undergraduate School, along with a **former Prize recipient**

*Pictured: Kriya Patel, 2016 PEP cohort (for Coming Home to Continued Care)*



# Five questions to keep in mind as you think through an idea

- How will you measure **impact**?
- How will you ensure **sustainability**?
- What makes your project **unique**?
- If selected as a winner, what might a typical “**day in the life**” look like for you?
- Why are you the **right person** (and/or team) to execute this project?



*Pictured: William Fry, 2017 PIP cohort (for SolutionLoft)*



**The deadline for ALL application materials is 11:59 p.m. Friday, February 3, 2023. No exceptions!**



*Pictured: Alexa Salas, Camilo Toro and Yaneli Arizmendi, 2017 PEP cohort (for Lanzando Líderes)*



**Be sure to fill out your pre-application form  
well in advance of the final deadline.**



*Pictured: Ian McCurry and Marcus Henderson, 2017 PEP cohort (for Homeless Health and Nursing)*



**Tax and/or legal questions? Seek out an independent accounting and/or legal resource.**



*Pictured: Antoinette Zoumanigui and Selamawit Bekele, 2017 PEP cohort (for Project Y.V.E.T.A.)*



# How do I get started?

Identify a problem

Develop a practical solution

Choose between PEP and PIP  
(no double applications!)

Identify a team (if applicable)

Work through how best to  
operationalize your solution



# Where can I obtain support?

In addition to CURF, consider seeking out:

Netter Center (PEP)

Civic House (PEP)

Fox Leadership (PEP)

Wharton Social Impact (PEP and PIP)

Wharton Entrepreneurship (PIP)

Weiss Tech House (PIP)

Penn Center for Innovation (PIP; co-administer of Prize)

Your Professors

Past Prize Recipients



# What should I be doing as the semester progresses?



September-  
October

- Develop and refine your idea
- Form your team (if applicable)
- Decide between PEP and PIP



October-  
November

- Secure a mentor
- Secure partners, as/if needed
- Attend a session with a past recipient



December-  
January

- Plan out budget
- Secure recommenders
- Work through and submit your application



# When will I find out if I'm a winner?



February 3,  
2023

- Application deadline



By end of  
February

- Semifinalists notified; interviews/business pitches will follow in weeks ahead



By first week  
of April

- President selects and informs recipients



How many students apply each year?



How many students apply each year?

Approximately 30-40 applications for PEP;  
approximately 15-20 applications for PIP.



Is there a location-based preference  
(i.e. local, national, global)?



Is there a location-based preference  
(i.e. local, national, global)?

No.



Is there an inherent preference for  
established ventures over new ideas?



Is there an inherent preference for  
established ventures over new ideas?

No, but preparation and planning are key.



Additional questions?  
They're probably already answered.

Read CURF's website thoroughly: [curf.upenn.edu/prizes](http://curf.upenn.edu/prizes)

Visit PEP and PIP websites for recipient profiles and contact info:  
[pennpep.upenn.edu](http://pennpep.upenn.edu) and [pennpip.upenn.edu](http://pennpip.upenn.edu)

Attend another Prize-specific information session with a past recipient

Attend PCI office hours

Attend a session with the Penn Tax Office



Couldn't find an answer? Reach out to us.

PEP questions: Email Dr. Wallace Genser ([genser@upenn.edu](mailto:genser@upenn.edu))  
in CURF to schedule an appointment

PIP questions: Email Seth Zweifler in the  
President's Office at [zweifler@upenn.edu](mailto:zweifler@upenn.edu)