



NSF I-Corps™

U.S. National Science Foundation Special Program I-Corps For Quantum+X

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U.S. National Science Foundation
Directorate for Technology, Innovation
and Partnerships

Joined by Special Guest:
Edmund Pendleton
Lead Instructor
Mid-Atlantic I-Corps Hub

Special National I-Corps Program

Program Highlights

- Aimed at researchers developing Quantum Technologies
- 5 Week Program from Kickoff to Closing
- Open to All working in the Quantum area
- Application deadline June 23, 2026

I-Corps for Quantum+X Program Aims

- Reduce the risk associated with translating technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace
- Evaluate the commercial potential of early-stage quantum technologies to help turn fundamental research into solutions for real-world problems

What is I-Corps?

7-week entrepreneurial training program to

GET YOU “OUT OF THE LAB”

to learn how to

**EVALUATE THE MARKET/COMMERCIAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR TECHNOLOGY**

You will travel (in-person and virtually)
to meet with

potential customers,
partners, and other stakeholders

I-Corps Program Basics

- Real-world, hands-on experiential learning through customer discovery
- Based on Steve Blank's Lean LaunchPad course at Stanford University
- A process to quickly assess commercial interest and feasibility

The **Customer Discovery Method**
developed by
Steve Blank
&
The **Business Model Canvas**
popularized by
Alex Osterwalder

I-Corps for Quantum+X Program Aims

- **Support translation and commercialization of Quantum Technologies**
 - Primarily technologies resulting from fundamental discoveries in science and engineering
- **Address skill and knowledge gaps associated with transforming basic research into commercial ventures**
 - Identify customer segments and their value proposition; i.e., potential customers that care and why

Most companies fail because they develop something *that does not have customers*

National I-Corps for Quantum+X Eligibility

- General Requirements:
 - Must have a quantum technology that is ready for commercial application exploration
 - Must be beyond the concept stage of development
 - I-Corps for Quantum+X (where X represents sectors like energy, finance, and biotechnology)
 - You may be a team applying with NSF lineage, applying from a university, or a team that is not affiliated with a university.

How to Apply...

- **Form a Team (minimum 3 team members):**
 - Entrepreneurial Lead (EL): Leads the team and committed to commercialization
 - Technical Lead (TL): Working on the research project with deep technical experience (typically is the I-Corps project PI*)
 - Industry Mentor (IM): Industry expert with business experience; independent from the technology development
 - You may include additional team members; e.g., Co-EL or Co-TL to your team
- **Submit an Executive Summary application through the National I-Corps portal:**

<https://nsgov.my.site.com/mywork/s/login/?ec=302&startURL=%2Fmywork%2Fs%2F>

***May serve as PI-of-Record (submits proposal but does not participate)**

Your team will need to commit to the following program requirements

- **Attend all I-Corps sessions and meetings**
 - **All team members must attend:**
 - Orientation – 3 hrs
 - Kickoff – 3 days
 - In-person Conference – 3 days + travel time
 - Weekly web sessions – 2 hrs/wk
 - Closing – 1.5 days
 - Office hours – Required Office Hours with the Instructors during the Kickoff and each week
- **Complete a minimum of 50 interviews**

If you are accepted...

- **You will be invited to submit a proposal to NSF and receive a \$50K award**
 - Award amount may be used for customer discovery travel and expenses, and stipends
 - **EL** - up to **\$15K**
 - **TL** - up to **\$10K**
 - **IM** - up to **\$3K**
 - **Customer Discovery** - recommend at least **\$10K**
 - **Participation Fee** - **\$10K** per team
 - **Indirect Costs (F&A)** - **\$5K (maximum allowed)**

Program Dates and Schedule

I-Corps for Quantum +X – All times are in Eastern Time

| | | |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Onboarding Session: | Sept 9 | 1:00 – 4:00 pm |
| Kickoff | Sept 15 – 17 | Sept 15 - 10:00 am – 3:30 pm; Sept 16, 17 – 10:00 am – 2:30 pm |
| Attend Conference In-person event | Sept 23 – 25 | Quantum World Congress 2026 University of Maryland |
| Weekly Sessions | Oct 1, 8 | 1:00 – 4:00 pm |
| Closing | Oct 15 – 16 | Oct 15 – 11:45 am – 4:30 pm; Oct 16 – 10:00 am – 3:00 pm |

I-Corps Program Resources

Executive Summary Application Submission Portal Link:

<https://nsgov.my.site.com/mywork/s/login/?ec=302&startURL=%2Fmywork%2Fs%2F>

I-Corps Teams Website: <https://nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/i-corps/about-teams>

I-Corps Teams Solicitation NSF 25-549:

<https://www.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/nsf-national-innovation-corps-teams-nsf-national-i-corps-tm/nsf25-549/solicitation>



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Thank You! Questions?

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