



DifferenceMaker

EXPLORE PROBLEMS • CREATE SOLUTIONS • MAKE A DIFFERENCE

DifferenceMaker \$25K Idea Challenge

The UMass Lowell Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship is hosting the first annual *DifferenceMaker* Idea Challenge. The goal of the Idea Challenge is to engage UMass Lowell students in creative and innovative problem solving around major issues that affect our region and our future.

In this first Challenge, student teams will be asked to develop real solutions to real problems. Students are asked to present a concept proposal for a needed service, product or business that addresses a real world challenge, such as Climate Change, Access to Health Care, Support for the Arts, Cyber Security, Regional Unemployment (Additional Categories TBA). \$25,000 in prizes will be awarded to UMass Lowell student teams that present the best ideas and strategies for addressing these timely social and business challenges.

If you have innovative ideas regarding how to solve these types of problems, or want to work with others to try to figure this out, please consider forming a student team and entering the Challenge. All student teams will receive guidance and coaching in refining their concept and final presentation.

Eligibility to Compete

- Applicants must be UMass Lowell students (graduate or undergraduate) or have graduated from UMass Lowell within the past year.
- UMass Lowell students or recent alumni must take a leadership role in developing, presenting and implementing the concept and proposed solution.
- Students are encouraged to form interdisciplinary teams, meaning students from different majors should work together in developing and implementing the solution. If you haven't yet connected with team members from other majors, we will help facilitate this.

Challenge Detail and Deadlines

Challenge Kick-off Events - January 28, January 29

- Come learn more about the DifferenceMaker Challenge. Kick-off events on North and South campus will explain the Challenge, highlight current student DifferenceMaker projects, and allow you to share your idea with other UMass Lowell students..

Applications – Due by 5 p.m. Friday, Feb 15, 2013

- Applications must be submitted via the DM website by 5 p.m. Friday, Feb 15th 2013. Application forms are available at <http://www.uml.edu/differencemaker>.
- Finalists will be chosen for the pool of applicants and notified by Feb 20, 2013.

Idea Concept Development January through March 2013

- All student teams will be introduced to the *Problem-Opportunity-Solution-Resources* approach to problem solving. A series of workshops are scheduled to help teams examine their selected problem, explore the opportunity, develop possible solutions and identify needed resources.

Idea Plan submission – Due by 5 p.m. April 12, 2013

- Each team must submit their proposed solution in an Executive Summary format, along with a concise Powerpoint Pitch Deck. This is an absolute deadline. Team submitting plans past the deadline will not be included in the competition.

IdeaChallenge Event – April 17, 2013

- Each team also will present a “3” minute pitch describing their problem and proposed solution before a panel of alumni judges. Each presentation will be followed by a brief Q&A session with the judges. The judges will convene to make final prize award decisions later this evening.

Prizes:

A total of \$25,000 prize will be awarded.

For full contest details, please visit:

<http://www.uml.edu/differencemaker>