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**INDEPENDENT INNOVATORS NETWORK SCHOLARSHIP**

**APPLICATIONS OPEN NOW!**

**ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP**

Michigan Colleges Alliance (MCA) is pleased to announce the fourth round of its student entrepreneurship scholarship challenge – the ***Independent Innovators Network*** scholarship.  This program awards **scholarships** **up to $7,500** based on the strength of student applications outlining a business or social entrepreneurship concept.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE**

* All full-time undergraduate and graduate students in any major/program at [MCA member colleges and universities](https://michigancolleges.org/michigan-colleges-and-universities/) with scholarship need. Scholarship must be used at a MCA member college or university in an upcoming semester.
* **Students must have a faculty mentor** who provides guidance and reviews their plans prior to submission. Faculty sponsor stipends of $500 will be provided for successful proposals.

**OTHER FEATURES *(new this year!)***

**TIMELINE**

March 1, 2019 – Student applications due to MCA office

March 15, 2019 – Campus/student notifications of scholarship winners

April 12-13, 2019 – Design Thinking workshop in Lansing for winning student-faculty teams (invitees to be announced, please hold the date)

* In partnership with the Ford Motor Company Fund and the Henry Ford Learning Institute, winning student-faculty teams will be eligible to participate in an **overnight Design Thinking workshop** **to help sharpen and refine their ideas for potential marketplace application.**
* Concepts with demonstrated promise following this session will receive more advanced coaching sessions next summer, as well as possible access to venture funding.
* Coaching Session in Lansing, MI: April 12-13, 2019 – please save the date

**HOW TO APPLY**

**Step 1:** Identify your business or social entrepreneurship concept

**Step 2:** Ask a faculty member to be your mentor for the scholarship application. Discuss your idea!

**Step 3:** Download and complete a first draft of the “executive summary” application form outlining
 your new business venture idea or actionable social entrepreneurship concept. Download
 the application form here: [www.wearetheindependents.com/innovators](http://www.wearetheindependents.com/innovators)

**Step 4:** Review your application with your faculty mentor

**Step 5:** Submit your application: [www.wearetheindependents.com/innovators](http://www.wearetheindependents.com/innovators)

Concepts will be reviewed according to several criteria, as defined by the IIN Steering Committee:

* **Comprehensiveness and clarity:** Is the concept well thought out and clearly presented? (10 points)
* **Relevance:** Does the concept address a real need or problem to be solved? (25 points)
* **Viability:** How feasible is the concept? Does it acknowledge challenges or obstacles? (25 points)
* **Innovation:** Does the concept address the business or social need in a unique, differentiated way? (40 points)



This form is for your application draft.
 **To submit your application, visit**

[**www.wearetheindependents.com/innovators**](http://www.wearetheindependents.com/innovators)

**and copy your answers into the form.**

**INDEPENDENT
INNOVATORS NETWORK**

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| First Name |  | Last Name |
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| Email |  | Phone Number |
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| College or University |  | Class (Freshman, Sophomore…) |
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| Major |
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| Faculty Mentor Name |  | Faculty Mentor Title |
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| Concept Title |

**PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE CHARACTER LIMITS. The online form will cut off text that exceeds the limits.**

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| What is the "elevator pitch" for your concept, a summary of the main idea that you could articulate in an elevator ride? **MAX. 600 CHARACTERS, including spaces.** |
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| What unmet need in the market or society does your concept address? **MAX. 900 CHARACTERS, including spaces.** |
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| Describe the steps needed to convert this concept into an actual enterprise. **MAX. 900 CHARACTERS, including spaces.** |
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| What might be some key constraints in launching your concept? **MAX. 900 CHARACTERS, including spaces.** |
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| Identify current products, businesses or alternative strategies that compete with your idea. What advantages does your concept offer among alternative approaches?  **MAX. 900 CHARACTERS, including spaces.** |
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