GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Microbial Ecology Collaborative Startup Launchpad (MECSL) is supported through the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) and the University of Wyoming’s Office for Research and Economic Development. This Launchpad seeks to stimulate entrepreneurship in Wyoming and provide opportunity for Wyoming residents to acquire funding to launch businesses. The competition will identify two finalist teams to become eligible to apply to a $25,000 seed fund.

The Microbial Ecology Collaborative Startup Launchpad is administered jointly by the University of Wyoming (UW) programs, the Wyoming Technology Business Center (WTBC), and Wyoming EPSCoR, together referred to herein as “UW.” The WTBC provides full business life-cycle advising and coaching through experienced staff with backgrounds in varied fields including software, electronic hardware, capital equipment, industrial chemicals and processes, finance, and sales. All MECSL finalists will be required to participate in advising and coaching sessions with WTBC staff to prepare for the final Pitch Day event.

The Microbial Ecology Collaborative Startup Launchpad is for new, independent businesses in the seed, startup, or early growth stages that are related to microbial ecology or data science in an apparent, easily recognizable way. Generally excluded are the following: buy-outs, expansions of existing companies, real estate syndications, franchises, online retail, brick and mortar retail, licensing agreements for distribution in a different geographical area, and spin-outs from existing companies.

Eligibility Details:

The Microbial Ecology Collaborative Startup Launchpad is for Wyoming-resident-created and managed ventures including new ventures launched by licensing university technology. Wyoming residents are expected to have a primary role in developing the business and must intend to operate the business in Wyoming.

- Applications must be for seed, startup, or early stage companies.
- Submissions may be entered by individuals or teams (up to 5 members).
- Each team may only enter one idea.
- A single individual cannot be the sole qualifying individual for two teams.
- At least one member of the executive team must be a Wyoming resident.
- Final approval of eligibility is reserved for the judging committee.

Entry fees: The MECSL has no entry fee.
General Guidelines for Submitting a Concept:

All initial submissions to the MECSL shall be received online using the standard application found at: uwyo.edu/wtbc. No other supporting documentation outside of the requirements stated is required.

Submission Deadlines: All submission deadlines are final. Late applications cannot be accepted.

5-Slide Description Requirements: (Required for Semi-Finalists only)

Selection as a semi-finalist, and continued consideration for MECSL will require a 30-minute oral interview by the MECSL judging panel between the 9th and 13th of December, 2019. This interview can be done via video conference call or in person. As a supporting document for this discussion/interview, Semi-Finalists will be required to provide a 5-slide summary of their concept business to the judging panel and a background/context for that team.

All text should be the minimum to make appropriate points and have a font larger than 16pt in Arial, Calibri, or other simple font design. Although a specific slide content format is not mandated, it would be most useful to the judging panel if your 5-slide deck included the following:

1. A brief Problem Statement, and your proposed Solution.
2. A brief description, picture, flow chart, or drawing defining your product concept and its unique features and benefits,
3. A description of your target customer, a description of the overall market, and an estimate of both overall and target market size in dollars.
4. A brief description of existing competition and/or solution options (e.g., competing products and features).