

Innovate Durham

Program Criteria & Expectations



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Applications Due: February 15, 2021

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I. Mission and Timeline

Mission Statement

Innovate Durham encourages a culture of innovation by creating partnerships with the business community to share ideas, collaboratively solve problems and improve operations.

Program Timeline

Applications open	January 14, 2021
Final date for submitting applications	February 15, 2021
Finalists Identified	April 2021
Notification of letters of award or rejection	April 2021
Pilot Period Starts	May 10, 2021
Midpoint Event	July 19, 2021
Pilot Period Ends	September 3, 2021
Demo day	September 30, 2021

II. Background

Innovate Durham is a program that turns the City of Durham (City), Durham County (County), and Durham Public Schools (DPS) into a lab to test, scale and innovate new ideas and technology. For 16-weeks startups and entrepreneurs partner with Durham’s Local Government entities to test out a product or service that helps the local government become more efficient and encourage a culture of innovation.

As a significant client and testing ground, the City, County, and DPS can give entrepreneurs a valuable use case for their products and services. This exposure can potentially help attract new investors and clients. Participants will get access to staff, data and facilities as well as mentoring and guidance from a champion. In return for providing a valuable testing ground and special access to resources for selected entrepreneurs, the City and County hope to learn about new technologies and approaches to improve the delivery of services or provide savings to Durham residents.

Program Goals

- **Test Latest Technology:** Keep the Local Government entities of Durham informed of new trends and technologies by opening the doors of government to startups and entrepreneurs.
- **Build Innovation Capacity:** Build capacity for innovation work by allowing departments

to partner with program participants to test new ideas and use new technology.

- **Support Local Businesses:** Provide opportunities for businesses to work with the City or County, giving them a use case to attract clients or investors.

III. Financial Compensation

Innovate Durham does not offer financial compensation for companies testing their products and services in the City of Durham, Durham County, or Durham Public Schools as part of this program.

IV. Benefits

The City of Durham, Durham County, and Durham Public Schools will be offering applicants selected into the 2021 Innovate Durham Program, or cohort, the following support:

- Access to government facilities and working spaces
- Access to the City or County network when appropriate
- Professional mentoring/coaching by City, County, an DPS staff

V. Submission Requirements

A. Application Deadline

Applications must be electronically submitted by 5:00 pm Eastern on February 15, 2021.

B. Format

Applications must be submitted electronically using the Innovate Durham application online.

(<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdVG41UfZX47uWkH-zsI-pgt5CR640Qi8TyMikZYouD2BofhA/viewform>)

C. Content

Each applicant is expected to describe the following:

- Background information of the company or team
- Challenge you plan to address during the pilot period
- Description of the idea, product or service
- Resources you will need to complete the pilot period
- Idea, product or service impact to the City or County and its residents

Additionally, if chosen as a finalist, applicants will be expected to come to City Hall and give a presentation to the review committee with more information on:

- The project plan
- How you will measure success at the end the pilot period

- Idea, product or service impact to the City or County and its residents

Please refer to the electronic application

(<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdVG41UfZX47uWkH-zsI-pgt5CR640Qi8TyMikZVouD2BofhA/viewform>)

VI. Contact and Questions

Information about program eligibility, requirement, process, application, and rules and regulations should be directed to Darin Johnson (darin.johnson@durhamnc.gov) for the City or Nathalie Floyd (nfloyd@dconc.gov) for the County. Questions regarding application process will be answered within one to two business days until the date of application deadline on February 15, 2021.

VII. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

A. Review Committee

The Innovate Durham Review Committee will be assembled with representatives from both the City, County, and Durham Public Schools. Including but not limited to the City Manager's Office, County Manager's Office, City Technology Solutions Department, County Information Services & Technology Department, Economic Development offices and other city departments or work units based on the applications received. The committee is under no obligation to recommend selection of any or all of the applicants. Applicants might be rejected if they do not meet the stated criteria or at the discretion of the review committee.

B. Criteria for Written Application

The review committee will recommend selection of the Innovate Durham 2021 cohort based on the following evaluation system:

Evaluation Criteria

Innovation based solution

- Solution addresses the challenge creatively and effectively
- Solution is compatible with or flexible to work with City and/or County information technology infrastructure and requirements

Skills, Experience, Background

- Professional qualifications and education of team members
- The existence of (or lack thereof) existing and working prototypes
- Recent relevant experience of team members

Impact

- The proposed solution has potential to benefit residents of Durham
- Proposed solution has potential to improve the quality or efficiency of City or County services and operations

Inclusion

- Located in North Carolina (Durham County preferred)
- Company offers a solution that would help the community recover from COVID-19

C. Minimum Criteria

- All sections of application must be filled out
- Applicants must commit to participate for the full length of program (May to September)
- Applicants must have a testable idea or a working product or service

The Innovate Durham management team will perform initial screening of all applications to determine whether they satisfy initial minimum criteria. Any application that does not meet the initial minimum criteria will not be eligible for selection.

Proposals will be evaluated to determine which government entity (either the City, County, or DPS) would be the best to partner with a particular applicant for contracting purposes. Each entity, the City of Durham, Durham County, and Durham Public Schools reserve the right to reject any or all proposals. The City, County, and DPS reserve the right to negotiate changes of any nature with any applicant, whether or not something is stated to be mandatory and whether or not it is said that a proposal will be rejected if certain information or documentation is not submitted with it. Where the City, County, or DPS asks or tells applicants to do stated things, the City, County, or DPS may reject a proposal because it does not comply with those requests, so the applicant is adding to its risk of rejection by non-compliance.

D. Trade Secret Information

As a general rule, all submissions to the City, County, and DPS are available to the public. Innovate Durham recognizes that applicants may want to disclose information that could be considered confidential or trade secret information as part of the application process. To the extent this can be avoided, applicants are advised to do so. Applicants shall review the attached policy which will be followed by the City, County, and DPS regarding the handling and disclosure of confidential information: <http://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16138>.

VIII. Selection & Planning Period

The review committee will recommend selection of the Innovate Durham 2021 cohort. In addition, the review committee will identify a department leader, with whom companies will be working during and throughout the pilot phase period.

After selection, the company and the City of Durham or Durham County will agree to a plan of implementation for the pilot period and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU will be between the selected company and the City, the County, or Durham Public Schools, but not all three. This plan of implementation will set clear expectations, a project timeline, progress check-ins and an overall communications plan. If after selection of a company, the City of Durham or Durham County cannot negotiate the applicant's participation, both the City and County reserve all rights to terminate participation.

IX. Pilot Period Company Expectations

A. Department Champion Meetings and Expectations

Each company will be working with a department leader, a "Champion." When the program period starts, participants will be expected to check in bi-weekly with their respective champion to discuss the progress of the project.

B. Office of Performance and Innovation

Companies are expected to do bi-weekly check-ins with the Office of Performance and Innovation in order to provide feedback, discuss milestones, and address any issues.

C. Project Milestones

Companies are expected to execute their plan of implementation for the duration of the 16-week pilot program. According to their plan of implementation and timeline, companies are expected to accomplish 2-3 milestones marks per month.

D. Midpoint Event

Halfway through the pilot period companies are expected to attend a midpoint event to share progress with the cohort and other partners. More details will be provided closer to the date of the event.

E. Demo Day

At the end of the pilot period companies are expected to present at the Innovate Durham Presentation Day and showcase their products/services, share their experiences, and progress reports to the public. More details will be provided closer to the date of the event.

F. Promotional Material

Companies will be highlighted via different public avenues of the City of Durham and Durham County. This includes but is not limited to press releases, social media accounts, website, and the TV channel. Companies are expected to collaborate and provide information for published public material.

G. Networking

Companies will have the opportunity to connect with partners, show their products/services, and connect with other local governments as appropriate.

H. Exit Interview

Participants will be expected to complete an exit interview with Innovate Durham program staff as well as City or County staff as appropriate. The intent of the meeting

will be to share lessons learned, areas of improvement, and a facilitated conversation about next steps for procurement.

X. Acknowledgement

Unless otherwise clearly stated in the application, applicants accept the criteria and expectations of the Innovate Durham program, including the description of services to be performed, upon submission of an application.