



INVENT FOR THE PLANET

The Sun Never Sets on Innovation

February 15-17, 2019

Howdy!¹

We would like to invite you to participate in a very unique event called Invent for the Planet. Invent for the Planet is a global Intensive Design Experience (IDE) that is based on the Aggies Invent program we have implemented at Texas A&M University. Aggies Invent is a 48 hour IDE that engages Freshman through PhD candidates over a weekend to solve a problem that has been proposed by an industry partner or agency. We call these Need Statements. Not only do they have to solve it, but they have to build a working prototype and “sell” it to a panel of judges as part of a competition. We use this to spark students into taking their projects further in our Engineering Entrepreneurship Program. We have had patents and startups come out of this program. Aggies Invent is structured around the engineering design process and is as much like an engineer’s first job as we can make it in 48 hours. It has the energy level of a hackathon, but in a structured engineering process that has a far richer educational outcome. We have implemented this three times per semester since the summer of 2014. You can see a video describing Aggies Invent [here](#).

Our students are called Aggies – therefore we call it Aggies Invent. When other universities implement we call it [U] Invent™ and they substitute their own name for the [U]. Last February, we decided to trial a [U] Invent™ held simultaneously around the world. We called it Invent for the Planet and for a weekend “The sun never set on Innovation”. 14 universities engaged with us. Each university hosted their own event locally where students formed teams and tackled a common set of Need Statements. These were sourced from USAID, international universities, and foundations. Microsoft provided a collaboration platform that allowed us to connect student teams working on the same Need statement around the world. Each university chose a local winner and then the winning team competed against the other teams globally. The event turned out better than we had hoped, therefore, we have decided to implement it again on February 15-17, 2019 and are targeting over 50 universities to be involved. We already have many more than that interested and excited about it. Please see this [video](#) which was the starting point and this [video](#) which described the results from the global winners.

Invent for the Planet will be held in multiple locations across the globe simultaneously. Each group will start at 4:00 pm local time on Friday, February 15th. New groups will join the race to innovation as time travels across the world. Student teams will work on provided design challenges in local teams and will be encouraged to connect with teams across the globe as they come online. During the weekend we will:

Engage a diverse group of students across the globe in an intensive design experience which leads students through an innovation, design, and problem solving experience

- Challenge students to develop unique solutions to impactful problems
- Connect universities into a network focused on providing intensive design experiences
- Collaborate on best practices, mechanics, and student outcomes with a network of universities

¹ Howdy is a traditional greeting used in Texas to convey warmth and friendship to everyone we meet!



Weekend Outcomes

- Have a number of promising ideas worthy of further development
- Support solutions to encourage entrepreneurship and commercialization
- Engage students in the full design process that includes global collaboration

Invent for the Planet will be a very unique experience for students:

- They will be engaged in a structured design process solving some of the most challenging problems in the world
- Teams will work locally, with local mentors, but collaborate with teams around the world
- We will provide access to advanced collaboration software platforms and support to aid distributed development
- Global attention and visibility for participation in the program

We will be able to provide you with

- Invent for the Planet Handbook
- Need Statements (A set of 15 design challenges that will be worked on by all involved)
- Facilitator Training
- Marketing Support
- Collaboration Tools and Support

What will we need from you? We request that each participating University provide:

- **Students** – Recruit and select students for participation
- **Facilities and Supplies** - The ideal facility is an open space where teams can work together and move around freely. It should foster brainstorming, have white boards or paper tablets, contain various prototyping material (we have suggestions), internet access, and able to be open during the event
- **Food and Support** - This allows students to remain focused on designing and building their solution
- **Mentors** – Industry Partners, Faculty, or Staff to help guide students through the process
- **Point of Contact** – Someone who will be responsible for hosting the event
- **Facilitator** – Could also be the POC, who will run the local part of the event. We will provide training
- **Sponsors or Partners** - We will show you how we recruit sponsors and partners.
- **Funds** – Needed to cover whatever costs involved.

If you're ready to join us in our campaign to invent for the planet, please fill in the Google Form contained in this [link](#).

We are excited about working with you and are ready to help in any manner you need. Let's solve some of the world's problems together.

Sincerely,

Rodney Boehm

Associate Professor of Practice, Director of Engineering Entrepreneurship
Texas A&M University College of Engineering