Supporting Innovators

D2P PROVIDES MENTORING, TOOLS, FUNDING AND EDUCATION TO INNOVATORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON.

EDUCATION EXPANDS HORIZONS
Entrepreneurship is another pathway for campus innovators to apply their work, research, creativity and passion to impact lives locally and globally. D2P's non-credit programs foster a community of faculty, staff and students who see the Wisconsin Idea as an action plan. Programs are designed with a hands-on learning approach. Whether the end result is the formation of a startup or a fresh perspective on research, participants gain real experience in taking a concept from idea to reality.

A HEAD START FOR STARTUPS
D2P has helped launch or grow more than 75 startups since its inception in 2014. For example, while a PhD student at UW–Madison, Kevin Barnett and Professor George Huber worked with D2P to help launch Pyran, which is developing corn-based alternatives to petroleum-based chemicals used in paints and plastics. Learn more about Kevin’s story and meet other campus innovators launching companies, advancing technologies and developing solutions to social problems at D2P.wisc.edu/innovators.

FY21 INNOVATOR IMPACTS:

86 PARTICIPANTS IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS
$950K AWARDED TO 13 CAMPUS PI'S

Creativity and innovation are needed now more than ever. D2P continues to foster these values on campus and in the community, helping to ensure that UW-born, potentially world-changing innovations grow and thrive in the spirit of the Wisconsin Idea.

Steve Ackerman, Vice Chancellor for Research & Graduate Education

Illuminating Badger Innovation

CANVASSING THE CAMPUS TO BUILD A PIPELINE OF INNOVATORS
D2P's Innovation and Commercialization Specialists proactively reach out to share the value of an entrepreneurial mindset and offer help to develop technologies and creative ideas from all corners of the university.

IN FY21, WE CONNECTED WITH:

159 INNOVATORS
114 UNIQUE DEPARTMENTS, PROGRAMS, CENTERS AND INSTITUTES
20 SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND ADMIN UNITS

OUTREACH PROGRAMMING
D2P spearheaded the inaugural UW–Madison Innovate Week, featuring 15 campus and community organizations offering 22 entrepreneurial-focused events in October 2021.
Changing Lives

D2P’S EXPERIENCED AND SKILLED MENTORS WORK CLOSELY WITH CAMPUS INNOVATORS, EVERY STEP OF THE WAY, TO HELP THEM TURN THEIR IDEAS INTO REALITY.

GUIDED MENTORSHIP
D2P’s Innovation and Commercialization Specialists are skilled mentors that help guide campus innovators with lessons on how to listen, learn and pivot when necessary—and they stay with clients for the long haul, offering individualized coaching and guidance for project teams at all stages, from pre-incorporation through growth.

THE FRONT DOOR TO CAMPUS INNOVATION
Entrepreneurial resources at UW–Madison are numerous and decentralized. D2P launched the Innovate website and monthly Innovate Insider newsletter to make it easier to find and connect with resources. Innovate.wisc.edu features trainings, events, funding and other types of support provided by over 30 campus units, affiliates and community partners working to help campus innovators develop their creative ideas.

Thank you to the entire teaching team at D2P for such a well-structured, engaging course and specifically my mentor who offered great insights during our weekly meetings. I highly recommend applying to the program for anyone who has an idea that they think has potential to bring to market.

Nina Metviner, undergraduate, data science

“Through our interviews and training, we learned who appreciates the technology, the value of the technology and the gaps in the industry. We also learned the vocabulary for discussing products, which is different from discussing research.”

Melissa Skala, Professor, Biomedical Engineering

MENTEE ROLES

FY21 MENTOR IMPACTS

358 PEOPLE INDIVIDUALLY MENTORED

1,830 MENTOR HOURS

INNOVATE WEBSITE + NEWSLETTER IMPACTS:

13,075 WEBSITE USERS

16,295 WEBSITE PAGEVIEWS

1,462 E-NEWS SUBSCRIBERS
The Power of Partnership

BRINGING DIVERSE CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS TOGETHER TO WORK ON COMMON GOALS AROUND INNOVATION/ENTREPRENEURSHIP

BRIDGING CAMPUS & COMMUNITY
D2P implemented Start In UW–Madison, a new tool that expands the resource-finding capabilities of the Innovate website. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and UW System lead the overall Start In project at the state level and D2P co-leads management of the regional version with StartingBlock Madison.

FACILITATING SOLUTIONS
The Innovate Network is a collaborative member group that includes 19 university entities and campus affiliates working together to better support campus innovators. The group’s shared goals include building a stronger culture of entrepreneurship on campus and strengthening connections to the Madison entrepreneurial community. D2P facilitates quarterly meetings with the network to coordinate shared events, communications and tools that improve handoffs and collaboration between programs.

D2P serves as a strong bridge between the entrepreneurial ecosystems of UW–Madison and the greater Madison community. For startup communities to thrive, cooperation among supporting organizations is critical. D2P has been a leader in connecting entrepreneurs to resources both on- and off-campus.

Matt Younkle ’97
Co-founder & CEO
Pythonic Corporation

MISSION
Empower campus innovators to realize The Wisconsin Idea by transforming ideas into products and services that change the world.

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