



For Immediate Release - DRAFT

(May 16, 2014)

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Call for Student Applications: University Innovation Fellows for NSF-Funded Epicenter

(May 16, 2014) — This week, the National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) opened the application process for its University Innovation Fellows program for U.S. college and university students.

The University Innovation Fellows, a national community of students in engineering and related fields, are leading a movement to ensure that all students gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to compete in the economy of the future. To accomplish this, the Fellows advocate for lasting institutional change and create opportunities for students to engage with entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity, design thinking and venture creation at their schools.

The program is run by Epicenter, which is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA).

Fellows have created student design and maker spaces, founded entrepreneurship clubs and organizations, worked with faculty to design courses, and hosted events and workshops. At present, there are 78 Fellows at 110 institutions.

“The University Innovation Fellows program empowers students to become agents of change on their campuses,” said Humera Fasihuddin, leader of the University Innovation Fellows program for Epicenter. “With a little bit of training, some guidance, and a great support network, Fellows are working alongside engineers, their interdisciplinary peers and faculty to prepare students to pursue their career aspirations with an entrepreneurial mindset that is so critical in today’s economy.”

John DesJardins, Associate Professor of Bioengineering at Clemson University, said about his school’s Fellow and bioengineering graduate student Breanne Przestrzelski: “As a result of her University Innovation Fellows experience, Bre has systematically begun to transform the entrepreneurial and innovation landscape of our bioengineering program, our college, our university and our community. At every level, Bre has challenged the engineering and business educators, administrators and leaders in our community to become active facilitators of student-driven engagement in entrepreneurship and technology innovation.”



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Elliot Roth, a University Innovation Fellow and engineering major at Virginia Commonwealth University, spoke to the benefit of having a network of like-minded peers across the country: “During the training, I learned what it takes to be a leader, to tell a compelling story, and to work alongside a community in making a sustainable impact. Possibly the most important thing about being a Fellow is the other amazing students in the program. By sharing our experiences, we collectively learned more as a group than any one of us ever could alone.”

The deadline for program applications is June 30, 2014. Students can request an application, and faculty can request an application to sponsor a student at dreamdesigndeliver.org/apply.

Application and program details:

- The application deadline for the Summer/Fall 2014 cohort is June 30, 2014.
- Ideally, applicants are undergraduate students in engineering or other STEM fields, but Epicenter is thrilled to consider undergraduate and graduate applicants from all disciplines who are passionate about technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Students can apply individually or in groups of up to five, called a Leadership Circle.
- Applicants are sponsored by a faculty or administrator who can provide a program fee, travel support and a letter of support.
- Following acceptance, students are required to take part in an online training and in-person events. Upon successful completion, students participate in a three-day immersive experience in Silicon Valley.

Learn more at dreamdesigndeliver.org.

About Epicenter:

The National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA). Epicenter’s mission is to empower U.S. undergraduate engineering students to bring their ideas to life for the benefit of our economy and society. To do this, Epicenter helps students combine their technical skills, their ability to develop innovative technologies that solve important problems, and an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset. Learn more and get involved at epicenter.stanford.edu.



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