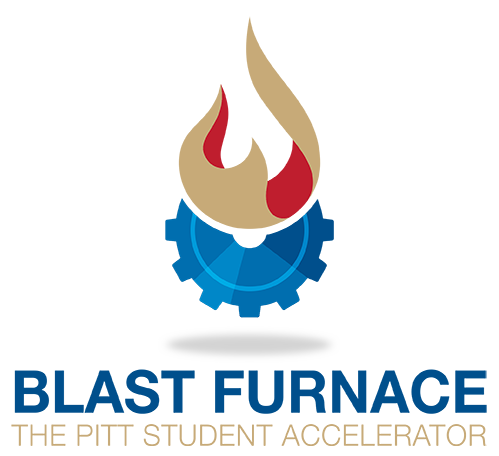
**The Blast Furnace**

**Sixth Cohort**

[](http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/bfinfo)

Along with the  


**Monday Peer Participation Class &**

**Wednesday Entrepreneurial Speaker Series**

**Basic Agenda:**

Monday (9 sessions):

(Soft Drinks Provided; Teams prep before session)

***Starts at 5PM until 7PM***

Brief presentation by Teaching Team followed by

Individual team updates / exercises / Q&A

Wednesday (8 sessions):

(Pizza/Sandwiches/Soft Drinks Provided)

***Start time 5PM***

Speakers between 5 and 6:30PM

Social/Network 6:30PM

**Website** **for All Info**: http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/bfinfo



**Blast Furnace Location**

All Monday events are in the Blast Furnace Workspace are at G50 Gardner Steel Conference Center

<http://www.tour.pitt.edu/tour/gardner-steel-conference-center?viewmap>

Enter on O’Hara Street, under blue awning, door closest to Soldiers & Sailors Memorial

**Address**: 4042 O’Hara Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15213

Wednesday Entrepreneurial Speaker Series Sessions are in Barco Law Building, Room 111 (The session Nov 2 will be in Barco, Room 107)

**Blast Furnace Overview**

The Blast Furnace is organized around a series of workshops designed to move an innovation closer to commercialization. Blast Furnace teams will interact with potential customers, partners, and competitors as they apply workshop learning and validate business hypotheses to determine the commercial readiness of their idea.

The Blast Furnace provides teams with access to EIR’s (Entrepreneur in Residence) who are experienced at starting and running businesses. They are the teaching team and comprise a wide breadth of backgrounds.

The culmination of all the hard work the teams devote to the Blast Furnace is a Demo Day where each team presents a pitch to judges for cash prizes.

**Blast Furnace Cohort 5 Schedule – October, November, June 2017**

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| Week 1 | Monday October 2 – Class  **Creating Customer Value**   * Introductions and program overview * Value proposition and customer benefits | Wednesday October 4 – Speaker Series  **Creating Customer-Driven Offerings**   * Proper customer discovery (CD) * Examples of failed CD |
| Week 2 | SPECIAL DAY TUESDAY October 10 – Class  **The Business Plan**   * Business Model Canvas (BMC) overview * Relating BMC to product and customers | Wednesday October 11 – Speaker Series  **A Framework for Building Your Company**   * Who wants what you have to sell? * How/what do customers buy today? |
| **Saturday October 14 - Mentor Mixer 8:30-11am – William Pitt Union Kurtzman Room** | | |
| Week 3 | Monday October 16 – Class  **Your Market and Who Is Trying to Steal It?**   * Qualifying the market * Identifying competition | Wednesday October 18  **Innovation Showcase  Come! Register:** [**http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/showcase\_science\_2017\_register**](http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/showcase_science_2017_register) |
| Week 4 | Monday October 23 – Class  **Your Market and Who Is Trying to Steal It?**   * Qualifying the market * Identifying competition | Wednesday October 25 – Speaker Series  **You Have More Competitors than You Know**   * How do customer solve problems today? * How could customers solve problems today? |
| Week 5 | Monday October 30 – Class  **Interviewing Basics**   * Gathering potential customer data | Wed. Nov. 1 & Thur. Nov. 2 – Speaker Series NOVEMBER 2 Meet in Room 107 in Barco Building!  **Business Fundamentals – Part 1 (Wednesday)**   * VC funding – how does it work? * Accounting for startups * What is involved in leading a startup?   **Business Fundamentals – Part 2 (Thursday)**   * Legal issues for newly created companies * Insurance  issues in startups |
| Week 6 | Monday November 6 – Class  **Idea Refinement**   * Does your idea speak to the customer * **Design Team Logo (jpeg or png format) & 3-4 sentence summary of your business for the Blast Furnace Website** * Past Examples here: [pittblastfurance.com](file:///C:\Users\kew92\Downloads\pittblastfurnace.com) | Wednesday November 8 – Speaker Series  **Next Steps for Your Startup – Life After BF**   * Local groups to assist your startup * Moving your idea toward commercialization |
| Week 7 | Monday November 13 – Class  **Product Refinement**   * Does the product solve the problem | Wednesday November 15 – Speaker Series  **Design, Build and Market Your Product**   * Product design/prototyping/development * How to market your product/service * **Fill out form on:** [**http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/bfinfo**](http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/bfinfo) * **Produce a one-page PDF marketing document to showcase your business** |
| SKIP | **NO BLAST FURNACE SESSIONS NOVEMBER 20 and 22** | |
| Week 8 | Monday November 27 – Class  **Storytelling**   * Effective business communication | Wednesday November 29 – Speaker Series  **Building a Powerful Narrative**   * Impactful storyline structure * What must your audience remember? |
| Week 9 | Monday December 4 – Class  **Demo Day Prep**  (If you are nervous, practice your pitch in the Lower Lounge on off hours by yourself in the WPU! It helps!) | Thursday December 7  **DEMO DAY -** 5PM William Pitt Union, Lower Lounge  $ Cash prizes to 1, 2, & 3rd place! |

**Blast Furnace Structure**

The Blast Furnace is a 9-week non-credit program focused on teaching students 3 core entrepreneurial skills:

* Critical assessment of idea viability;
* Identifying key drivers of value for users; and
* Validating a product by interviewing potential customers.

Blast Furnace sessions occur twice a week – Monday’s (5-7pm) and Wednesdays (5-7pm).

* Monday sessions are facilitated by Pitt EIR’s who have decades of experience running companies. These sessions focus on the practical aspects of developing your team’s business.
* Wednesday sessions are topical with guest speakers who have unique entrepreneurship experiences to share. Collectively these speakers have over a century of running successful businesses totaling over a billion dollars.

**The Blast Furnace is a peer participation program –learn by doing and giving feedback to others. The peer feedback is so vital you are expected to attend all Mon and Wed sessions.**

**On-Line Tools**: Teams are expected to join the Blast Furnace Slack team. This is the primary way the teaching team will distribute additional information, take questions between sessions and support the teams.

**Blast Furnace Central Website:** [**http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/bfinfo**](http://go.innovation.pitt.edu/bfinfo)

**EIR Mentoring**: Teams are expected to engage with EIRs & mentors who have been selected specifically to work with the Blast Furnace. They are available by appointment, by email, virtual meeting and via Slack.

**Blast Furnace Cohort 6 Videos and Readings**

Participants are expected to watch the highly engaging Steve Blank “How to Build a Startup” videos at [www.udacity.com](http://www.udacity.com) (IC 100). For those people who want to get the maximum out of the Blast Furnace, we also recommend readings from:

* [The Startup Owner’s Manual](https://www.amazon.com/Startup-Owners-Manual-Step-Step/dp/0984999302) by Steve Blank and Bob Dorf
* [Business Model Generation](https://www.amazon.com/Business-Model-Generation-Visionaries-Challengers/dp/0470876417/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1486754638&sr=1-1&keywords=%E2%80%A2%09Business+Model+Generation) by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Required Videos (Steve Blank at [udacity.com](https://www.udacity.com/)) | Recommended Readings (optional) |
| Week 1 | 🞎 *Lecture 0; Before You Get Started (10:28)*  🞎 *Lecture 1; What We Now Know (20:34)*  🞎 *Lecture 1.5A: Business Models (12:17)*  🞎 *Lecture 1.5B: Business Models (31:34)* | Startup Owner’s Manual  🞎 pages 1 - 50  Business Model Generation  🞎 pages 14 - 49 |
| Week 2 | 🞎 *Lecture 2: Value Proposition (31:34)*  🞎 *Lecture 3: Customer Segments (43:28)*  🞎 *Lecture 5: Customer Relationships (34:32)* | Startup Owner’s Manual  🞎 Pages 85 - 97 🞎 Pages 112 - 125  🞎 Pages 203 - 221 🞎 Pages 260 - 266  🞎 Pages 180 - 188 🞎 Pages 260 - 269  🞎 Pages 438 - 456  Business Model Generation  🞎 Pages 146 - 150 🞎 Pages 161 - 168  🞎 Pages 200 - 211 |
| Week 3 | 🞎 *Lecture 6: Revenue Model (33:22)* | Startup Owner’s Manual  🞎 Pages 176 - 179 🞎 Pages 257 - 270  🞎 Pages 429 - 459 |
| Week 5 | 🞎 *Lecture 7: Partners (33:22)*  🞎 *Lecture 8: Resources, Activities, Costs (28:23)* | Startup Owner’s Manual  🞎 Pages 169 - 175 🞎 Pages 180 - 188 |
| Week 6 | 🞎 *Lecture 4: Channels (19:06)* | Business Model Generation  🞎 Pages 126 - 168 🞎 Pages 296 - 351 |