

Tech Surge Specialty Award

Tech Surge is a special tack of the UCI New Venture Competition (NVC) through which you can compete for an additional \$25,000+ in prize money and automatic entry into the [Wayfinder incubator program](#) by using UCI intellectual property as a core part of your business idea. This is an excellent opportunity to try to commercialize real inventions generated from UCI's world-renown research while gaining access to the vast resources at [UCI Applied Innovation](#), special workshops, and hands-on mentoring!

FAQs

Entering the Competition

1. Am I eligible for the Tech Surge Awards?

To be eligible for the Tech Surge Specialty Award track, a team must meet all of the NVC requirements AND be using UCI intellectual property (IP) as a core element of the business it is entering into the competition.

The NVC requirements are that 1) the idea cannot have been conceived prior to March 2016; 2) the startup cannot have received over \$10,000 in funding; 3) the team must have a minimum of 4 members and a maximum of 6 and contain at least 2 current UCI students.

2. How do I enter the Tech Surge Track of the NVC?

- 1.) Identify the UCI IP you are interested in using for your business idea by either reviewing the [Tech Surge IP list](#) on the website or by browsing the library of [Available Technologies](#) published by the Invention Transfer Group (ITG) at UCI Applied Innovation.
- 2.) Email Hayley Young (hayleyy@uci.edu) and Steven Huyn (shuyn@uci.edu) at UCI Applied Innovation to discuss the IP and associated participation in the Tech Surge track.

In order to allow yourself adequate time to access, review, and analyze the UCI IP you wish to use in your business idea, you are encouraged to reach out to Hayley and Steve as soon as possible and well ahead of the NVC Concept Paper submission deadline.

- 3.) When submitting your Concept Paper to the NVC, select the option for "Tech Surge Specialty Award."

3. What are the prizes for the Tech Surge Awards?

Prizes for the Tech Surge Awards are as follows:

Place*	Overall Prize	Cash	Grant Funds	Potential Bonus Award	In-Kind Award
1 st Place	\$10,000	\$2,500	\$7,500	\$5,000	Automatic Entry to Wayfinder (C8)
2 nd Place	\$7,500	\$2,000	\$5,500	\$3,750	

3rd Place	\$5,000	\$1,500	\$3,500	\$2,500	
4th Place	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,250	

*Note that UCI Applied Innovation reserves the right to reduce the number of prizes distributed if the number of competitors is too small to warrant them.

Prizes for the Tech Surge track are distributed via a two-stage allocation process. The unrestricted cash prizes will be distributed at the close of the NVC. Winners are then invited to join the Wayfinder incubator program for the C8 cohort (July 9 – December 14, 2018). If teams apply and elect to participate in Wayfinder, they will work with staff from UCI Applied Innovation to set specific milestones that will determine the disbursement of the restricted grant funds.

4. Why should my team participate in the Tech Surge Track?

Teams in the Tech Surge track have the opportunity to try to commercialize real inventions generated from UCI's world-renown research while competing for an additional \$25,000 in prize money. Tech Surge teams also receive hand-picked mentors from the Experts-in-Residence Network, special workshops, and access to the vast resources and staff at UCI Applied Innovation.

Participation and Involvement

5. Can my team win a Tech Surge Award without advancing to the pitch phase of the NVC?

Yes. Teams that do not advance to the pitch phase in the main NVC are still eligible to participate in the Tech Surge track.

6. Is there any additional work outside of the NVC required to participate in the Tech Surge Track?

Yes. Teams participating in the Tech Surge Track will be delivering final presentations separate from the main NVC. Additionally, special enrichment opportunities such as workshops will be made available to Tech Surge teams, for which attendance is encouraged.

7. Where can I find the list of Tech Surge workshops?

The workshop list and other important dates and deadlines will be distributed to Tech Surge participants after their concept papers have been submitted to the NVC.

8. I am interested in participating, but I need help finding teammates and/or a technology. How can I do so?

You may utilize this [Tech Surge Team Formation](#) Google sheet to help find teammates and/or a technology. Add in your relevant information, monitor it for new entries, and reach out directly to those who you are interested in contacting.

Additionally, make sure to attend the Tech Surge Mixer on Wednesday, January 17th from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at the Cove. Come learn about the UC intellectual property that is available to use to qualify for the Tech Surge Specialty Award track of the NVC. Spark ideas, network, and meet potential teammates! **Register here:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tech-surge-mixer-11018-tickets-40044266479>

9. What is the potential Bonus Award?

Tech Surge teams that complete to-be-determined qualifying milestones by the end of the competition will be eligible to earn a 50% increase of their Tech Surge track prize money. The purpose of this bonus award

opportunity is to help bridge the commercialization pathway by encouraging teams to complete relevant milestones—activities along the lines of customer discovery interviews and grant proposal submissions—that will accelerate their progress post competition. To win the bonus award funds, eligible teams must place first through fourth in the Tech Surge track and then complete the Wayfinder C8 program cycle. Following completion of the incubator program cycle, the team will submit a request for a review with a committee from UCI Applied Innovation to determine the distribution of the bonus award funds.

IP Considerations

10. May more than one team select the same UCI IP to enter into the Tech Surge Track?

Yes. Multiple teams may use the same IP as part of the respective businesses that they are entering into the NVC. However, it is expected that the business ideas will differ and thus they will be judged without respect to each other.

11. If my team would like to use UCI IP that is not listed on the Tech Surge IP list, what should we do?

If you would like to use UCI IP that is not listed on the Tech Surge IP list, contact Steve Huyn (shuyn@uci.edu) at UCI Applied Innovation. On a case-by-case basis, you may be granted permission to use your desired UCI IP.

12. Will my team have the opportunity to interact with the UCI inventor whose IP my team is using for the competition?

Maybe. The UCI inventor's involvement with a Tech Surge team is at his or her discretion, and is not promised by way of you selecting his or her IP to use as part of your business idea. A Principal Inventor's (PI) willingness to help support a Tech Surge team was considered when curating the list of Tech Surge IP, and thus the PI may be open to answering questions about the technology or commercialization ideas related to his or her inventions. However, it is important that you **DO NOT contact a UCI inventor prior to getting approval from the Invention Transfer Group (ITG) at UCI Applied Innovation; doing so will result in your disqualification from the Tech Surge Track.** Please direct any questions you may have about this process to Steve Huyn (shuyn@uci.edu).

13. Can a UCI inventor participate on my team?

Yes. A UCI inventor may participate on your team, but is not required to do so. If you intend for the inventor to contribute to your project or present during any of your pitches, then he or she **MUST** be listed as an official team member on your materials submitted to the NVC. Per the above guidelines, **DO NOT contact a UCI inventor prior to getting approval from the ITG; doing so will result in your disqualification from the Tech Surge Track.** Please direct any questions you may have about this process to Steve Huyn (shuyn@uci.edu).

14. Will my team be automatically granted a license or other rights to use of the UCI IP that we use in Tech Surge?

No. Using the selected UCI IP in the NVC does not confer or ensure any rights to the IP; however, it may serve as the basis for license discussions. Teams that would like to secure rights to UCI IP will need to negotiate a license with ITG. For any teams that are interested in securing UCI IP, it is highly recommended that they engage in discussions with Applied Innovation as early as possible.

15. Will my team or team members receive rights such as equity and/or employment in companies that participate in Tech Surge?

No. Teams or team members will not be automatically granted rights such as equity or employment or other consideration in companies that participate in Tech Surge. Teams or team members also will not be granted

automatic rights such as equity or employment or other consideration in companies that form after Tech Surge.

Judging

16. What are the criteria used to judge the winners of the Tech Surge Specialty Awards?

Teams will be evaluated based on a to-be-determined judging panel's criteria of the business' viability. The focus will be on business' "fundability" (as demonstrated in the team's submitted pitch deck and accompanying oral presentation), meaning that the immediate next steps of its commercialization pathway are clearly defined and realistically achievable with the aid of SBIR grants or external sources such as angel and venture capital investments.

17. Who are the judges for the Tech Surge Awards?

The judging panel for the Tech Surge Awards will consist of staff members, Experts-in-Residence, board members, and investors from the UCI Applied Innovation community.

18. Will Tech Surge Track mentors and judges sign confidentiality agreements?

No. The Tech Surge mentors and judges will not sign confidentiality agreements. Teams should only be presenting non-confidential information. In addition, most of the UCI IP used in Tech Surge have pending patent applications or granted patents, so the UCI IP is generally protected.

Post Competition

19. What is Wayfinder?

Wayfinder is an incubator program for early-stage UCI-affiliated startups. It is run by UCI Applied Innovation and operates out of The Cove, its physical space in UCI Research Park. Teams in Wayfinder have access to co-working space, investors and startup resources, workshops and learning opportunities, and networking and exposure within the local Orange County entrepreneurship ecosystem. More information about Wayfinder can be found here: <http://innovation.uci.edu/programs/wayfinder-incubator/>.

20. If my team wins a Tech Surge Award and elects to continue on to Wayfinder, do all of the original team members need to participate?

Not all original team members are required to participate on the team that continues onto Wayfinder, but there must be at least one original member. New members can be added at this point. The restricted grant funds will be disbursed to the new team per the milestones established with UCI Applied Innovation at the beginning of the summer. You will signal your intent to join Wayfinder and include the participating team members when you submit an online application to the program by the June 1st deadline. The application link can be found here: http://innovation.uci.edu/wayfinder_application.