

# AYA Innovation Hub

powered by ASU Edson E+I

*Program Overview*

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# Program Overview

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**Program Length** This program consists of 12 individual 90 to 120-minute missions over a single academic year.

## Program Overview

Welcome to the AYA Innovation Hub powered by ASU Edson E+I, a collaborative space designed to foster entrepreneurship and support high school students at various stages of their entrepreneurial journey.

This collaborative initiative between Aspiring Youth Academy (AYA) and ASU is designed to empower youth by building confidence and fostering a spirit of innovation. The program offers hands-on workshops, mentorship opportunities, and interactive missions to teach foundational knowledge in entrepreneurship. Participants will explore business concepts, develop critical thinking skills, and gain the tools needed to launch their own ventures. By connecting with experienced professionals and university resources, students will be inspired to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams, contributing to community growth and economic development.

This program is not just for participants who want to start a for-profit business. Students who are interested in social entrepreneurship (non-profits and NGOs) should also be encouraged to participate.

As a facilitator, you play a crucial role in creating an inclusive, engaging, and transformative learning experience for participants. Your passion, expertise, and guidance will help shape the next generation of entrepreneurs and changemakers.

## Program Objectives

- **Youth Empowerment:** Equip young individuals with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to take control of their futures and pursue their goals.
- **Entrepreneurial Education:** This course will provide participants with a solid understanding of fundamental business concepts, including idea generation, business planning, and financial literacy.
- **Innovation Skills Development:** Cultivate creative thinking and problem-solving abilities to enable participants to develop innovative solutions to real-world challenges.
- **Confidence Building:** Strengthen participants' self-esteem and leadership qualities through mentorship, teamwork, and hands-on projects.
- **Community Engagement:** Foster a sense of responsibility and connection to the community by encouraging participants to develop projects or businesses that address local needs.
- **Mentorship and Networking:** Connect participants with experienced entrepreneurs, university faculty, and industry professionals to provide guidance, support, and networking opportunities.
- **Practical Experience:** Offer opportunities for participants to apply their knowledge through simulations, business plan competitions, or real-world projects.
- **Career Pathway Exploration:** Introduce participants to potential career paths in entrepreneurship and innovation, helping them to identify their strengths and interests.
- **Economic Development:** Contribute to local and regional economic growth by nurturing the next generation of entrepreneurs who will create jobs and drive innovation.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Ensure that the program is accessible to diverse participants, regardless of background, and provide tailored support to meet individual needs.

## Preparing for Success

- This curriculum is not intended to stand alone. Facilitators and participants are HIGHLY encouraged to participate in AYA events, teen leadership opportunities, mentoring opportunities, spring break camp, and related ASU events.
- All slide decks are prepared in advance. If facilitators want to edit these slide decks, MAKE A COPY to your drive and go for it.
- These lessons are not scripted. Facilitators are responsible for creating meaning for their participants.
- This should be FUN for participants. The hope is that it will be a relevant and meaningful addition to basic education.

## Technology/Materials in this Program

This program requires different materials for students and facilitators. Below, we have listed what is needed:

### Students:

- Access to learning management system
- Access to a computer or tablet
- Regular classroom supplies

### Facilitators:

- Program Participants will need and benefit from access to Canva. It is recommended that facilitators set up a class or free account on Canva before the start of the program.
- Prototyping is an activity that happens early in the program. It is recommended that facilitators acquire crafting supplies early in the year for this purpose. ASU Edson E+I recommends low-fidelity [prototyping materials](#)

## Missions and Deliverables

\*Our curriculum is split into two sections, *entrepreneurship missions* and *financial literacy missions*. The main curriculum is the entrepreneurship missions, of which there are 8. These 8 missions must be run in order. Facilitators then have the freedom to determine when they will run the financial literacy sessions. They can be run intermittently as a break from the main curriculum or perhaps as a group at the end of the initial 8 missions. This decision is at the discretion of our facilitators.

### Entrepreneurship Missions

#### 1. Hub Mission 1: What's the Problem?

**Description:** This mission is all about entrepreneurship and problem-solving. We'll explore the entrepreneurial process and learn how to identify and tackle problems and opportunities.

**Deliverables:** Participants will identify the problem they want to solve, write a problem or opportunity statement, and start working on their pitch deck.

#### 2. Hub Mission 2: Brainstorming in Action

**Description:** This mission explores the dynamic process of brainstorming, where ideas flow freely and innovation takes shape. Explore techniques to unlock your creative potential and transform challenges into opportunities.

**Deliverables:** Participants will ideate solutions to the challenge they have chosen to solve and identify the solution to proceed with. They will also update the solution portion of their pitch deck.

#### 3. Hub Mission 3: Unique Value Proposition

**Description:** This mission explores the concept of Unique Value Proposition (UVP). A UVP is what sets your product or service apart from the competition and communicates the unique benefits it offers to your target customers.

**Deliverables:** Participants will develop a UVP statement for their solution and add this to the pitch deck.

#### **4. Hub Mission 4: Business Model**

**Description:** This mission focuses on the key elements of a successful business model, including revenue streams, cost structures, and value propositions.

**Deliverables:** Participants will create a business model canvas (BMC) for their business and update their pitch deck to reflect this information.

#### **5. Hub Mission 5: Customer Acquisition**

**Description:** This mission explores strategies and tactics for acquiring customers and bringing your product or service to market.

**Deliverables:** Participants will narrow their customer base from “everyone” to a few unique customer personas, develop a marketing and social media plan, and update their pitch deck to reflect this information.

#### **6. Hub Mission 6: Competitive Advantage**

**Description:** This mission explores the concepts of competitive advantage and growth strategy, which are crucial for businesses to succeed in today's dynamic market environment.

**Deliverables:** Participants will identify what makes their business more likely to succeed and update their pitch deck to reflect this information.

#### **7. Hub Mission 7: Ecosystem Building**

**Description:** This mission explores the importance of building a robust ecosystem around your venture to drive growth and success.

**Deliverables:** Participants will identify how they will create a network of customers, suppliers, supporters, etc., and add that information to their pitch deck.

#### **8. Hub Mission 8: The Pitch + Ask**

**Description:** This mission explores the importance of building a robust ecosystem around your venture to drive growth and success.

**Deliverables:** Participants will finalize their pitch deck, write a script, and begin practicing their pitch. Schools/districts/organizations are encouraged to plan a “pitch event” as part of awards ceremonies, senior nights, or parent nights to allow students to pitch to a larger audience.

### **Financial Literacy Missions**

#### **1. FL Mission 1: Income + Expenses**

**Description:** This mission explores different sources of income, fixed and variable expenses, why you need a budget, and how to create one.

**Deliverables:** Participants will create a basic budget.

#### **2. FL Mission 2: Risk Management**

**Description:** Life comes with risks. This mission discusses the four options: acceptance, avoidance, reduction and transference and how insurance plays a role.

**Deliverables:** Participants will create a risk management plan for themselves and their business.

#### **3. FL Mission 3: Investing in Your Future**

**Description:** What is a 401k? What is a stock? Why is diversification important? This mission focuses on the basics of retirement planning, investing, and asset distribution after death.

**Deliverables:** Participants will identify ways to begin investing now and develop a plan for retirement.

#### **4. FL Mission 4: Adulting 101**

**Description:** This mission will focus on topics such as why loan officers are not your friends, why you must read contracts, how debt works, and why you don't have to live life in debt.

**Deliverables:** Participants will create their own list of warning signs (hurry up and sign, this deal is going away!) and important things to remember as they navigate life.

### ***The Mission and Why it Matters***

The AYA Innovation Hub powered by ASU Edson E+I aims to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset among its participants, providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to develop and maintain successful ventures. We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment that encourages open communication, personal growth, and engagement with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

#### ***Why the mission matters:***

Teaching entrepreneurship to youth goes beyond preparing them for financial success; it's about unlocking their potential to shape and transform the world around them. While it can help break cycles of poverty, its true magic lies in offering a dynamic alternative for students who don't thrive in traditional classrooms. Entrepreneurship ignites a passion for learning by replacing monotonous instruction with creativity, critical thinking, and hands-on experiences that connect directly to real life. It empowers students to see the value of their ideas and the tangible impact of their actions, making learning not just relevant but exhilarating. Introducing entrepreneurship early gives young minds the confidence to dream big and the tools to turn those dreams into reality, nurturing a generation of innovators who are ready to lead, inspire, and create a better future for themselves and others.

### ***Common Misconceptions***

**Here are a few misconceptions about entrepreneurship to consider when facilitating this curriculum:**

- 1. Entrepreneurship Requires a Lot of Money:** Many believe that starting a business demands substantial capital, but many successful ventures start with minimal resources and grow through strategic planning, innovation, and reinvestment.
- 2. Entrepreneurs Are Born, Not Made:** There's a misconception that entrepreneurship is an innate trait. In reality, many entrepreneurial skills—like problem-solving, leadership, and risk management—can be learned and developed over time.
- 3. Entrepreneurs Work Alone:** While the image of the lone entrepreneur is popular, most successful entrepreneurs build teams, seek mentorship, and collaborate with others to achieve their goals.
- 4. You Need a Perfect Idea:** Some believe only groundbreaking ideas lead to successful businesses. However, many successful ventures are based on improving existing products or services or finding new ways to meet market needs.
- 5. Failure Means the End:** There's a misconception that failure in business is a definitive end. In truth, many successful entrepreneurs experience failures and use those lessons to refine their ideas and approach.
- 6. Entrepreneurs Are Only Motivated by Money:** While financial success is a factor, many entrepreneurs are driven by passion, the desire to solve problems, or the goal of making a positive impact on society.
- 7. Success Happens Overnight:** The myth of the "overnight success" overlooks the years of hard work, persistence, and learning from failures that often precede entrepreneurial achievements.
- 8. Entrepreneurship Is Too Risky:** While there is risk involved, calculated risk-taking is a fundamental part of entrepreneurship, and many successful entrepreneurs carefully manage and mitigate these risks.
- 9. You Must Quit Your Day Job to Start a Business:** Many entrepreneurs start their businesses as side projects, gradually transitioning as their ventures grow and become more stable.
- 10. Entrepreneurs Have Full Control:** Entrepreneurship often involves navigating market forces, customer demands, and other external factors that limit the control entrepreneurs have over their ventures.

## Where and How to Run This Program

What makes this program unique is that it can be run in a range of different ways:

- Integrated into predesigned classes or courses
- As an independent class or course
- As an elective class or course
- As an independent after-school club
- As an addition to Career and Technical Student Organizations like DECA, FBLA, FFA, HOSA, or SkillsUSA
- As part of any youth development program.

This program is meant to be fun and appeal to a participant's desire to invent a product, own a business, or make change in the world. While this can be integrated into existing classes, these lessons should be more than just "classwork".

## Program Timeline

Link to [PDF TIMELINE](#)



# Program Timeline

The first 8 Hub Missions on this timeline represent the primary curriculum. These 8 Hub Missions will lead students through the entirety of their project from brainstorming, planning, designing and editing, to pitch development final preparations. The 4 Hub Missions on the bottom of this timeline (all maroon) are life skills lessons focusing on financial literacy. These "FL" lessons can be added into the timeline between the primary Hub Missions or at the end as a 4 part conclusion. This decision is at the discretion of the educator.

