Wayfinder is a program for UCI-affiliated startups that is designed to accelerate venture development by providing teams with space, strategic guidance, and other valuable support resources. The program is managed by UCI Applied Innovation and run out of The Cove, the organization’s physical space in UCI Research Park.

Program Overview

VALUE OF PARTICIPATION
Teams in Wayfinder have access to guidance and mentorship from UCI Applied Innovation’s Experts-in-Residence Network, learning experiences through workshops and office hours, work space and meeting rooms, networking and exposure opportunities, and funding resources, including the Cove Fund. As a central part of UCI Applied Innovation’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, Wayfinder teams may experience additional tangential benefits and enrichment opportunities that result from their enhanced engagement with the community. There is no cost to the startup associated with participation in the program.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS
The scope of the program covers the following basic components. More details about the requirements and expectations surrounding participation in the program are distributed to the teams upon admission.

- **Pitch & Match Event:** initial pitch event to expose new teams entering the program to mentors and the Applied Innovation community
- **Workshops & Advising:** exclusive workshops on various entrepreneurship subject areas, guidance, expertise, feedback, and connections through meetings and office hours with mentors
- **Formal Reviews:** strategic guidance and quality feedback about startup progress from reviewers at the midpoint and end of each program cycle
- **Showcase Event:** final showcase event for teams completing their cycle to present their startup’s development to mentors, the Applied Innovation community, potential investors, and other interested parties

PROGRAM LENGTH
Four Wayfinder cycles run per calendar year. Each team is admitted for one cycle approximately six months long with the possibility of cycle renewal. While cycles exist to create a shared experience among teams and allow for calendar alignment, each individual team’s experience and respective progress targets are customized.
Application Process

ELIGIBILITY
To apply for the Wayfinder program, a team must meet one or more of the following criteria:

• be using UCI-owned intellectual property as a core part of the startup’s business idea
• have at least one active team member (co-founder or member of the management team) who is a current UCI faculty, student, staff, or alumnus (degree program or minimum completion of 16 units)

In some unique cases, exceptions may be made for non-UCI students whose university’s existing entrepreneurial offerings are for some reason insufficient.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA
Successful applicants to Wayfinder will exhibit the following characteristics:

• The startup team has a basic understanding of its current business model and is able to effectively communicate it
• The startup addresses a real problem or customer need and will offer a product/service that is unique or hard to duplicate
• The startup team can demonstrate that it has initiated the process of customer discovery by testing customer reactions to its business model hypotheses

Prior to approaching UCI Applied Innovation and applying to Wayfinder, it is expected that the startup team has engaged extensively with other entrepreneurial support resources available through UCI schools, centers, and programs. Additionally, teams will be evaluated for fit based on their progress goals for their startup, expectations for the program, and mentoring needs.

APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAM
Teams interested in applying to Wayfinder must submit an application online by the deadline corresponding to the program cycle to which they want to be admitted (see Program Dates & Application Deadlines). After the application deadline, submitted applications will be reviewed and select teams will be invited for an interview before a final admissions decision is made. Teams that are unsuccessful in the application process are still eligible to reapply to the program at a future date.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS
The application consists of addressing the following aspects of your startup:

- Entrepreneurship resources used at UCI prior to application
- Basic startup information
  • name
  • industry
  • description
  • logo
  • website*
  • pitch deck
- Detailed startup information
  • problem identification
  • value proposition
  • competitive advantage
  • evidence of market research/customer discovery
  • milestones completed
  • location
  • business entity selection*
  • funds raised and targeted
- Goals and needs
  • progress goals for the program cycle
  • overarching goals for team’s experience in the program
  • assistance/mentorship requests
- Commitment to active participation in the program
- Team members
  • contact information
  • role
  • UCI affiliation

*Not required for admission

Application Link
Apply to the program:
innovation.uci.edu/
wayfinder_application

Wayfinder has elevated our biomedical company to a more proficient level of operations. The facilities allow us to rapidly prototype, and the Experts-in-Residence have been instrumental in guiding us through the regulatory and commercialization paths.

— Hugo Salas
Founder/Chief Financial Officer,
Syntr Health Technologies
Cycle Dates & Application Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 Cycle</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
<th>Cycle Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td>Mar 2, 2018</td>
<td>Apr 2, 2018 – Sep 28, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>C8</td>
<td>Jun 1, 2018</td>
<td>Jul 9, 2018 – Dec 14, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Sep 7, 2018</td>
<td>Oct 1, 2018 – Mar 29, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>C10</td>
<td>Nov 30, 2018</td>
<td>Jan 7, 2019 – Jun 28, 2019</td>
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Learn more about the Wayfinder Incubator program at:
innovation.uci.edu/programs/wayfinder-incubator/

Have questions? Email us:
wayfinder@uci.edu