

# Catalyst Program

For BU Questrom MBA's

## Purpose of Program?

Catalyst is a joint Office of Technology Transfer (OTD)& Innovate@BU Program designed to assist BU PIs explore the market viability of their ideas. The driver for this Program is the desire to successfully commercialize technologies developed within BU. This program will help the Principal Investigators understand the right target market for the technology and to gain a deeper understanding of how the technology needs to be commercialized and marketed.

## How it works

The program utilizes Questrom MBA's to undertake "customer discovery". These students are trained and then supervised by an ICorps certified instructor. ([iCorps](#) is an NSF program that aims to improve the commercialization rate of technologies developed in Universities) Working with the PI's they will interview potential customers and other stakeholders to identify the initial application and market for the technology.

This program will deepen the understanding of what is of value to customers, mitigating the risk of building the wrong product for the wrong market.

## Schedule and process overview:

- PI composes a one-page summary of the technology and its potential applications
- Student team is assigned
- Students undergo an introductory training on the Lean Launch process
- PI gives a short presentation to student team
- Students engage in interviews over a six-week period
- Mid-Program video check-in meeting with the Instructor (PI invited to attend)
- Final presentation to invited panel\*, including the PI
  - One hour meeting: 30 min presentation, 30 min Q&A

## Output from the Program

The students will prepare a final presentation at the end of the Program. In that presentation, they'll answer questions such as:

- Does a particular market segment NEED the proposed solution?
- Who is the customer?
- Who are the stakeholders that can influence the decision?
- What features of the product are important to the customers?
- What is the correct value proposition for those customers?

All customer interviews will be transcribed and available to PI.

## Benefit to MBA Students

MBA Students will learn how to successfully use customer interviews as a tool to understand customer demand and customer intent. Students will be able to enhance their CV and LinkedIn profile with this information. These new skills both enhance their employability and future job performance