

2016-17 Fairfax Area High School Student Shark Tank Technology Challenge

The Fairfax Area 50 + Technology Committee is issuing a challenge to all high school students in Fairfax County, Fairfax City, and the City of Falls Church to develop an innovative device or app that will have a positive impact in lives of older adults and adults with disabilities.

The Challenge:

Many older adults and adults with disabilities struggle to make sense of our technology-focused world— a world that is constantly changing. Technology projects aimed at older adults typically imply that the unskilled older adult must be mentored by a younger more tech-savvy person. This contest opportunity seeks innovators who will take up this challenge to make technology more user-friendly.

Students are encouraged to be innovative and creative. Potential projects may be either a mobile app, web service, robotic, assistive device or any combination. The project should seek to address a need in at least one of the categories listed below (but not limited to the suggestions listed in each category):

1. **Health and Wellness:** Promote "healthy aging/lifestyle," i.e., encourage physical activity, good nutrition, monitor health status, provide intellectual stimulation, chronic disease self-management, mobility.
2. **Safety:** Enhance physical safety, i.e., address fall risk concerns, communicate with caregivers/family/friends, food safety, monitor health risks.
3. **Community Engagement & Lifelong Learning:** Promote understanding, build relationships, facilitate communication in a range of community and family settings, encourage learning, decrease isolation; i.e., encourage community connections, family and friend participation, linkages to the world around, activity engagement, remote participation in group activities.
4. **Caregiving:** Support family caregivers in managing their caregiving role, i.e., monitoring older adult health status, medication management, nutritional status, and/or facilitate remote communication.

Some examples to start the thought process: An app that allows an older adult or person with disabilities to navigate outdoor sidewalks without tripping; A robot that retrieves dropped items or plays cards when operated remotely by a family member; An app that allows a family caregiver to determine what groceries are needed. Students are encouraged to talk to family members, caregivers, older adults and those with disabilities to explore real life possibilities.

Contest Details:

Finalists in each category will be selected to present their product to a "Shark Tank" panel. Panelists will consist of experts from George Mason University, Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Inova Fairfax Hospital Geriatrics Integrative Care Services, and the Center for Innovative Technology. The winner in each category will receive a cash prize and the project may be considered for potential development. All Finalists in each category will be given an opportunity to demonstrate their products in the spring of 2017.

The innovation will be judged on the following merits:

1. Maximizes independent use by the older adult and/or the person with disabilities, minimizes the need for coaching
2. Simplicity of design and use, nonthreatening and easy to understand and use.
3. Meets the objectives of the category.
4. Demonstrates an understanding of the challenges faced by older adults and/or people with disabilities using technology.
5. Demonstrates evidence of market demand.
6. Demonstrated positive impact on the lives of those with disabilities and/or older adults.

TIP: Finalists chosen to go into the "Shark Tank" should be prepared to not only demonstrate how the innovation meets each of the 6 merits listed above but also document what research was performed, pilot-testing done, and the impact on the audience for which the innovation is intended.

How to Enter:

Complete the online **Project Proposal form** by **Thursday, December 1, 2016**.

Submit Project:

The **Project Submission Form** must be returned to us by **Monday, February 6, 2017**.

Include in the submission:

1. Project Summary (approximately one page) – see the Submission form under "Submit Project" tab at <http://tinyurl.com/fxc-tech-challenge-info> for more details.
2. Video, 3–5 minutes in duration, describing project and how to use (using only original graphic and audio/video components).
3. Video, 3–5 minutes in duration, demonstrating successful use by the target audience (using only original graphic and audio/video components).
4. Actual software or link to software if possible.

Contact Information & Resources:

Information and Resources at <http://tinyurl.com/fxc-tech-challenge> will answer your questions and support you in the development of your project. If you are running into barriers preventing you from participating or completing your project, please contact us for assistance. We may be able to assist with equipment challenges, technical questions, access to older adults and caregivers and background information.

For additional information or questions, interested students and teachers may email the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at TechChallenge@FairfaxCounty.gov or call 703-324-3264, TTY 711.

Tips:

Some things to consider before submitting your project:

1. Does your project clearly address a need/problem within the category? Have you demonstrated the need and how your project meets it? Is your project realistic?
2. It is highly recommended that you test your ideas and finished project with your target audience. For assistance in locating prospective target audiences, please consult the **Tech Challenge Resources** page or contact us at TechChallenge@FairfaxCounty.gov or call 703-324-3264, TTY 711.
3. Have you consulted your target audience (older adults, adults with disabilities, and/or caregivers)? Can you demonstrate that it is user-friendly for your audience?
4. Have you clearly stated your project's purpose and function?
5. Does your project take an innovative approach to meet the need/solve the problem? Can you demonstrate how this project is innovative? Do you know what is out there already?
6. Have you prepared for being a finalist? Have you done your research? Have you tested your project?
7. **Only original works** by the student(s) can be used in **any and all submitted materials**. This includes all graphic and audio/video material used to prepare the project presentation.
8. *Optional*: Have you checked out filing a provisional patent application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office before submitting your innovation to this challenge?

The Tech Challenge is an initiative of the *Fairfax 50+ Community Action Plan* which was passed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 2014.

The Tech Challenge also supports the *Fairfax County's Economic Success Plan* that seeks to grow and diversify the economy through innovation, social equity and expanding science, technology, engineering and math education.

Go to the *Fairfax County's Older Adults Page*, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults, to find services, recreational activities and community engagement opportunities for older adults.