Guidance for Fairfax "Shark Tank" Judges

The following is intended to provide a framework within which to judge the student projects. Please feel free to ask your own questions. If you have not seen a Shark Tank episode, please consider watching one to familiarize yourself with the environment of the "tank" including tone, flow, discussion, questioning, etc. Thank you for agreeing to be a judge. It should be a very enjoyable experience for both you and the contestants.

The product/innovation will be judged on the following merits:

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

The product/innovation should seek to address a need in at least one of the following categories:

1. Health and Recreation: promote healthy aging, i.e., encourage physical activity, continued engagement in recreation and leisure activities, 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. Caregiving: Support family caregivers in managing their caregiving role

Suggested range of contestant questions:

1. Mission: What were you trying to accomplish?
    a. What need/problem was identified and how was it identified?
    b. What is the target audience – age, living environment?
    c. What benefit does this product/innovation offer?
2. Inspiration/Motivation
    a. Why was this need/problem chosen?
    b. What research was performed to identify issue/identify solution?
    c. What makes this product unique?
3. Marketability
    a. How do you know this product fulfills its mission?
    b. How was it tested?
    c. How many people tested it?
    d. What adaptations were made to the product based on the results of testing?
    e. What is the data to support the above?
4. Cost/feasibility
    a. How was the product built?
    b. What tools – equipment, software, expertise – are needed?
    c. What is/was the cost to produce?

Additional considerations:

1. Is this product worthy of further development? By whom?
2. What advice can be provided to the contestant in terms of further testing, development?