

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?