

February 01, 2017 | By Grace Sevilla

IGNITE @ UC San Diego Aims to Accelerate Innovation

Free event open to cross-border community and students



Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

The University of California San Diego has become a critical catalyst and economic driver for the region’s innovation ecosystem. As the pioneering presence on the Torrey Pines Mesa, the campus has been a major force in stimulating breakthroughs and propelling new technologies to market.

Now a campuswide initiative is seeking to expand the innovation pipeline across the

border. The inaugural IGNITE @ UC San Diego conference will connect young innovators with seasoned entrepreneurs. Co-hosted by UC San Diego’s Office of Innovation and Commercialization and the student-led Entrepreneur Challenge, the daylong event is set for Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2017 at the Price Center on campus. Students and community members across the Baja California region are invited to attend the conference free of charge.

“UC San Diego has an excellent track record as a major partner with life science and technology industries in developing new products, processes and services that are making a positive impact in the world,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “IGNITE @ UC San Diego moves us forward by opening the doors to binational collaboration among young talent and experienced entrepreneurs.”

As one of the top 15 research universities in the world, UC San Diego receives \$1 billion in annual research funding. Faculty, students and alumni have launched or created technology for more than 650 companies and developed ideas leading to the second highest number of U.S. patents of any UC campus.

The conference includes three pitch competitions allowing individuals and teams to “sell” their ideas to successful entrepreneurs and investors. One contest, The Pitch @ Ignite, will invite friendly competition among students from the Cali-Baja region as they present to investors from the Tech Coast Angels for a \$5,000 prize. Other events include a Startup Crawl, presented in collaboration with the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, to take attendees inside some of downtown San Diego’s most vibrant new ventures.



Ignite 2017 badge

“UC San Diego is the university of the future. IGNITE @ UC San Diego will spur the regional economy by bringing the campus and regional communities together to spark new ideas, share expertise and generate new opportunities for collaboration,” said Sandra K. Brown, Vice Chancellor for Research, who also oversees the Office of Innovation and Commercialization.

Newly elected San Diego City Councilmember Barbara Bry, also a successful serial entrepreneur, will lead a forum exploring San Diego’s innovation economy. She will be joined by John Cabeca, director of the West Coast US Patent and Trademark Office, and other enterprise leaders. The lineup of speakers features a number of breakout entrepreneurs, including keynote speaker Scot Chisholm, CEO and co-founder of Classy, a fundraising platform for organizations focused on social good.

In addition to a Startup Fair with more than 30 company demonstrations, networking and mentoring opportunities, attendees can select from dozens of breakout sessions including:

- Show Me the Money! How Do You Fund a Startup?
- Did I Do That? Founders Share Their ‘Oh Crap’ Moments and How They Recovered
- What the Heck is IP? Hot Seat Q&A with Licensing Officers
- More conference information is available on the [IGNITE events page](#).

Mike Krenn, president of San Diego Venture Group, emphasized the value of academic-business alliances in accelerating economic growth. “Universities are key partners in fueling economic growth,” he said. “UC San Diego is looking to the future. An event like IGNITE can help drive early-stage collaboration and long-term innovation.”

Nurturing young innovators is a campus priority with numerous resources supporting the development of fledgling concepts into solid business models. Financial support for IGNITE @ UC San Diego comes from the Office of Innovation and Commercialization, the Jacobs School of Engineering, the Rady School of Management and 22 other departments across UC San Diego. And, the event would not be possible without Series B sponsor and co-host the Entrepreneur Challenge and Series A sponsors Musick Davison and Ideator.

MEDIA CONTACT

Grace Sevilla, 858-246-1602 grsevilla@ucsd.edu

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