

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

edacity's geekStarter program provides support for education initiatives and projects involving teams of junior-high, high-school, and post-secondary students in Alberta. A number of resources are available for building entrepreneurial and cutting-edge Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills, and for preparing students for the new millennium. Support from edacity's geekStarter program includes learning resources, financial assistance, mentorship, workshops/events, and access to subject matter experts. The student-driven, hands-on projects and challenges supported by edacity's geekStarter program offer immersive and cross-disciplinary learning experiences that have an enduring impact on all the participants.

The purpose of edacity's geekStarter program is to prepare students in emerging STEM fields and exponential technologies, such as synthetic biology, nanotechnology, new information and computing technologies, and artificial intelligence. At the same time, edacity's geekStarter program aims to foster an entrepreneurial mindset in the young generation. In 2016, the program was transferred from Alberta Innovates to MindFuel, where it is part of the Edacity program.

Since its inception in 1990, MindFuel has inspired K-12 students to pursue higher education and careers in STEM fields through hands-on, digital and experiential learning opportunities. As one of MindFuel's programs, Edacity focuses on engaging students in innovation and entrepreneurialism in STEM.

The following guidelines have been provided for all program participants and funding recipients.

When accepting edacity's geekStarter support and funding, participants acknowledge that they have read and understood all of the program's guidelines and accept the conditions and subsequent responsibilities contained in this document.

Eligibility Requirements

1. The team's school / organization must be **located in Alberta**.
2. A **principal advisor** possessing sufficient resources to ensure a satisfactory result and responsible financial accounting must sponsor the initiative. edacity's geekStarter program must be able to transfer award funds to a **legal entity** such as a non-profit organization, school or university, where the principal advisor can provide responsible oversight of the initiative and of edacity's geekStarter-supplied funds.
3. The initiative must be **student-driven** and carried out by a **team of students** with the assistance of the principal advisor and mentors.
4. The initiative must involve **hands-on research activities in emerging STEM fields**, and must provide opportunities for **original project work and solving real-world problems self-chosen by the team**. The initiative should emphasize the **development of critical 21st century skills and entrepreneurial competencies** in students.
5. For teams competing in an established local, regional or international competition, proof of **successful registration in that competition** must be provided.

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

6. As edacity's geekStarter funding is a launching pad to kick-start projects, teams working on the same project or challenge will be funded for a **maximum of three funding cycles**.

Application Process

Interested parties may apply for edacity's geekStarter program support by completing the application form available on the program website (www.edacity.ca/geekStarter).

Applications are typically accepted twice a year, in the spring (April-May) and in the fall (September - October). Deadlines are posted on the program website, and interested teams can direct inquiries to geekStarter@mindfuel.ca or to the edacity's geekStarter program manager.

Review Procedure and Selection Criteria

edacity's geekStarter program invites a group of external reviewers to assist in evaluating the applications and in deciding how well they meet the program's eligibility requirements. The review process involves the rubric included with these guidelines on the program website. Final decisions on which initiatives to approve and how much funding to offer are based on the reviewers' evaluations, the total number of applicants, and the overall amount of funds and resources available. Both successful and unsuccessful applicants are typically notified of the result via email 1-1.5 months after the application deadline.

Period of Support and Termination

Start and end dates are indicated in the Agreement letter between MindFuel and the host organization. When edacity's geekStarter support recipients complete their agreement term or resign from the edacity's geekStarter program, or the initiative is terminated by the host organization during the period of support, funding will also terminate. The principal advisor and host organization must notify MindFuel immediately, return any unused funds and provide a final report.

Confidentiality

By accepting edacity's geekStarter program support, recipients are required to keep the terms and conditions in the agreement, including the value of the team grant, confidential – unless permission is given in writing by MindFuel.

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

Changes to Approved Applications

Recipients of edacity's geekStarter support must **inform MindFuel of any significant changes** to the original application throughout the term of the agreement. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in principal advisor, team roster, or any significant changes of the project itself.

Reporting and Communication

Projects that are approved for edacity's geekStarter support will be required to provide additional information before, during and at the conclusion of their term, including team lists, media waivers, project updates, individual student reporting, and responses to participant surveys.

A final report is required from each team at the end of their edacity's geekStarter program period of support. The due date of the report is indicated in the Agreement letter between MindFuel and the host organization. Please note: The final report includes specific outcomes and description of activities, financial reporting and sign off by an authorized financial authority. **Incomplete final reports may impact future funding decisions.**

Important deadlines and other information relevant to program participants will be communicated through edacity's geekStarter newsletter and the program website.

Unused Funds

Any funds remaining in the award's related account(s) as of the period of support end date must be returned to MindFuel. These funds are considered unused if the account has a credit balance after the end date.

Privacy

MindFuel reserves the right to publish and/or disseminate information regarding its supported initiatives (projects, events, competitions, etc.) including titles and non-proprietary details of the research, images, and names and photos of participants. All edacity's geekStarter team members, students and student advisors **must sign a media waiver** in order to participate in the program (parental or guardian consent must be given for students under the age of consent). MindFuel also reserves the right to contact edacity's geekStarter participants, their advisors and organizations to involve them in

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

MindFuel events.

MindFuel does not sell, trade, or rent personally identifiable information (PII) of program participants. For additional information on collection and use of personally identifiable information, visit our website at www.mindfuel.ca/privacy-policy.

Intellectual Property

MindFuel does not claim legal rights on Intellectual Property (IP) developed during edacity's geekStarter program period of support.

Publication of Results

Results of the supported research must be available in the public domain. Each principal advisor and the sponsoring institution are encouraged to structure the initiative in a way that permits the publication of non-proprietary research findings in a timely manner. Consideration for commercialization of research outcomes allows for a delay of up to one year in publication or public presentation to support filing for intellectual property protection or commercializing findings.

Acknowledging Support

All publications, presentations and public messages including, but not limited to, radio and television interviews, newspaper articles, and so forth arising from activities supported by edacity's geekStarter program must acknowledge the support of MindFuel as well as Anonymous Donor, RBC, NSERC, and Motorola Solutions Foundation - as specified at time of onboarding.

Resources offered by edacity's geekStarter program

1. WORKSHOPS/EVENTS

Workshops and events form the foundation of edacity's geekStarter program supported activity. They are designed to help teams acquire and develop skills and competencies relevant to their initiative and specific STEM areas and in accordance to the program's mandate.

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

Supported teams typically facilitate their own workshops, as needed, with edacity's geekStarter staff together with edacity's geekStarter mentors (where applicable) available for assistance and guidance. **In addition to their own workshops, teams participate in relevant multi-team events organized by edacity's geekStarter program.**

Workshop/event requirements:

- **Individual team workshops:** Although requirements for each initiative will vary, each team will typically hold at least two individual workshops during the period of support. Team workshops will be tailored to provide extra instruction in skills and competencies relevant to the team and their particular project.
- **Individual team workshops:** Principal advisors along with teams and mentors are responsible for determining the team's goals and objectives for each individual workshop. edacity's geekStarter staff and mentors will assist with workshop planning and delivery, including instructional resources, and travel arrangements for edacity's geekStarter mentors, as per team- and mentor-agreements.
- **Multi-team events/workshops:** Typically held over one or two days during weekends, these events often take place at the location of one of the teams, as co-determined with the edacity's geekStarter project manager and staff. The co-host team/organization assists with event planning and delivery, as needed.

2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Eligible expenses:

- Equipment, materials and supplies needed to carry out the proposal
- Team costs associated with workshops, events and activities relevant to the initiative
- Registration to relevant competitions and/or programs
- Team travel to edacity's geekStarter workshops and events
- Team travel to relevant competitions

Ineligible expenses:

- Hospitality and entertaining expenses
- Stipends and salaries

Applicants must specify all anticipated expenses as line items in their budget proposal, and indicate which ones will be covered with edacity's geekStarter grant. Applicants must set aside a portion of the team grant for costs associated with edacity's geekStarter workshops and events, including team travel to such events, as needed. When unsure about the eligibility of an expense or any other

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

financial matters, applicants must contact edacity's geekStarter program manager in advance of the application deadline.

Grant amounts will vary depending on evaluation results, total number of applicants, and the overall amounts available. Funding is provided to the team's school or organization for distribution through their financial system, paid as one lump sum. Line item reporting on expenditures is required at the close of the agreement term in the final report.

3. MENTORS

Mentors are a vital component of edacity's geekStarter program and add significant value to edacity's geekStarter projects and initiatives. edacity's geekStarter program strives to develop and maintain an active mentor community that can be engaged to provide guidance, enrich the experiential learning process, and facilitate knowledge transfer in STEM areas relevant to the initiatives receiving support. Individual mentors may be formally assigned to approved teams based on needs and availability. Out-of-town travel expenses incurred by formally assigned edacity's geekStarter mentors are reimbursed directly by edacity's geekStarter program according to the edacity's geekStarter mentorship agreement.

4. SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SMEs)

edacity's geekStarter program builds and maintains a network of local, national, and international SMEs in fields of expertise relevant to the participant initiatives and projects. Keen to promote the development of skills in cutting-edge STEM research, innovation, and entrepreneurialism, these individuals generously share their expertise with Alberta's youth. Typically, edacity's geekStarter program involves the SME's in the evaluation of applications, and invites them as speakers and judges at edacity's geekStarter workshops, events, and competitions. Teams are encouraged to access this network through edacity's geekStarter program in order to enrich students' learning experience and increase their success.

5. LEARNING RESOURCES

edacity's geekStarter program develops learning resources and gathers relevant education materials in collaboration with mentors and SMEs. These resources are available on the program's website (www.edacity.ca/geekStarter) and include a Design Thinking Toolkit and a Synthetic Biology Guidebook for iGEM High School Teams.

edacity's geekStarter Program Guidelines

Timeline (some dates are tentative and subject to change)

TIME	EVENT
Sept - Dec	Applications & Onboarding – Junior High & High School teams; Mentors signup
24 Nov 2018	Start Up Workshop (multi-team)
Dec/Jan	Individual team workshop # 1
2-3 Mar 2019	Synthetic Biology Workshop (multi-team)
13 Apr 2019	Robotics Workshop (multi-team)
Apr/May	Individual team workshop # 2
Apr - Aug	Applications & Onboarding - Collegiate teams
25 May 2019	High School Jamboree (multi-team)
26 May 2019	iGEM Workshop (multi-team)
21-22 Sept 2019	aGEM Competition & Workshop (multi-team)

Contact Us

Online

Email: geekstarter@mindfuel.ca
 Corporate site: www.mindfuel.ca
 Program site: www.edacity.ca/geekStarter

Brick & Mortar

MindFuel (located at University Research Park) 260, 3512 – 33 St NW
 Calgary, AB T2L 2A6

Edacity's geekStarter program is offered by MindFuel under their Edacity program with the generous support of Anonymous Donor, RBC, NSERC, and Motorola Solutions Foundation.