Penn State Sponsors Ed Tech Accelerator

The accelerator is about attracting the best new educational technology focused ideas to collaborate with Penn State, regardless of where they're developed.

BY SHAWN ANNARELLI, CENTRE DAILY TIMES (STATE COLLEGE, PA.) / DECEMBER 17, 2015

A crowdfunding platform at Penn State is helping researchers tackle projects like studying the DNA of the eastern cougar - a fitting project since the university's mascot is the fictional nittany lion that's modeled after a cougar.

BY NATHANIEL C. SHEETZ. LICENSED UNDER CC BY-SA 3.0 VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

(TNS) -- Ed-tech entrepreneurs will soon have a platform for launching their startups.
Penn State partnered with Philadelphia-based Dreamit to create an accelerator for educational technology.
The ed-tech accelerator is slated to begin in March and will assist startups geared toward helping educators at all levels. It is a partnership, according to Penn State vice provost for online education Craig Weidemann, that will grow the university’s footprint in education technology.

“Through this partnership, Penn State is seeking to both extend its leadership in the delivery of technology enhanced education and to leverage this leadership in support of the Invent
Penn State initiative to help grow the economies and communities Penn State operates within,” he said.

The accelerator isn’t just for Penn State faculty, staff and students, though Weidemann said that it would a “rich opportunity” for them.

He also noted programming at Happy Valley LaunchBox, Penn State Small Business Development Center and Ben Franklin TechCelerator that are additional university resources for the community and help for startups.

“This accelerator is about attracting the best new educational technology focused ideas to collaborate with Penn State regardless of where they are developed,” he said. “As such, this initiative will look to cultivate startup companies from all over the world as well as mine the rich opportunity that lies in working with Penn State faculty, staff, and students.”

The partnership calls for two accelerator programs to run in 2016, each over a 16-week period. The programs will accept up to 15 startups.

An individual or startup with an educational technology idea must fill out an application for the accelerator on dreamit.com (http://dreamit.com/apply-now/).

The application asks for a description of an ed tech problem and proposed product or service to solve it, what makes the solution unique, market opportunity, a proposed revenue model and core team members and their skills. If the application phase is passed, startups would be interviewed and possibly invited into the program.

Weidemann said Dreamit and Penn State would look for two components in the application process.

One is the impact that an idea would have on students. The other is if a startup has a team with the right skills to deliver on the idea.

Selected startups will not be required to relocate, instead having access to content and mentors using a digital portal. They will be required to spend one week at Penn State’s University Park campus and up to one week per month in a Dreamit hub in Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York City or Houston.

Weidemann explained the university’s choice to partner with Dreamit.

“Ultimately, our decision to work with Dreamit came down to two things,” he said. “Dreamit is a national leader in startup company acceleration. They are ranked consistently in the Top 10 of similar companies by Forbes. Dreamit has a significant footprint and its roots in Pennsylvania, specifically Philadelphia.”

There won’t be a physical facility for the accelerator.

Weidemann hopes startups, if they are launched outside of the region, will be attracted to the area for further collaboration with Penn State.

The university will have designated seats on the Dreamit advisory board, and Penn State students will be recruited for internships with Dreamit and the accelerator’s startup companies.

©2015 the Centre Daily Times (State Colleae. Pa. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency}
LATEST FROM HIGHER EDUCATION

**Zuckerberg is Ploughing Billions Into ‘Personalised Learning’ – Why?**

Zuckerberg has a clear definition of personalized learning in mind: It’s about teachers “working with students to customise instruction to meet the student’s individual needs and interests.”

**Silicon Valley Pioneer Vivek Ranadivé to Fund UC Innovations**

The UC system will seed the as-yet-unnamed fund with $250 million, while Ranadivé said he will contribute 5 percent of the fund.

**Online Learning Agreements Spread Quickly, but Challenges Remain**

State legislatures are making online education more portable as they strive for a single standard across state lines.

**Walking the Tightrope: Finding Balance Between Higher Education Efficiency and Effectiveness**

IT leaders in university systems tread carefully as they try to help technology run smoothly across...
IT leaders in university systems tread carefully as they try to help technology run smoothly across diverse campuses.


The U.S. Education Department outlines what it hopes to see over the next five years in its new 2016 National Education Technology Plan.


Through WSU Ventures, the university has sharply increased the number of invention disclosures by university faculty, staff and students in the last three years.


The nation’s leading search engine has quietly begun giving University of Illinois at Chicago researchers access to its data troves to develop analytical models for tracking infectious diseases in real time -- or close to it.

Is Yik Yak a Safe Space for Students to Vent or a Forum for Hate? ([http://www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Is-Yik-Yak-a-Safe-Space-for-Students-to-Vent-or-a-Forum-for-Hate.html](http://www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Is-Yik-Yak-a-Safe-Space-for-Students-to-Vent-or-a-Forum-for-Hate.html))

Some students see Yik Yak as a harmless distraction filled with campus in-jokes. Others say negativity and hate anonymously posted to the site overwhelm any feeling of community the app might promote.


More than $80,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded to the top teams.

Fame and Bullying on Yik Yak – and How to Deal With It ([http://www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Fame-and-Bullying-on-Yik-Yak--and-How-to-Deal-With-It.html](http://www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Fame-and-Bullying-on-Yik-Yak--and-How-to-Deal-With-It.html))

A new social media platform has taken universities by storm. But academics and students need guidance on how to use it.


A key federal education leader will soon say farewell to a team that has been instrumental in garnering legislative and White House support for education technology, as well as building up local leaders.
Feds Award Grant to STEM Video Game Startup
(https://www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Feds-Award-Grant-to-STEM-Video-Game-Startup.html)
Andamio Games and educators at the University of Minnesota will use the funds to design a series of
tablet-based lessons for high school and college biology.

Focus on College Affordability Obscures Real Problem: We’re Overeducated
(https://www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Focus-on-College-Affordability-Obscures-Real-Problem-Were-Overeducated.html)
The affordability of college has been at the forefront of the presidential campaign, but the real problem
is that we're too educated for the jobs available.

Who Actually Runs Public Universities?
To boost America's support for higher education, faculty members and administrations need to remember why we have it.

College students are often woefully underprepared for the workforce. Here are 3 strategies colleges can adopt to fix it.

7 Ways Smart Universities Use Data and Analytics (/smartereducation/7-Ways-Smart-
Universities Use Data and Analytics
Michigan State University: Smarter Fundraising
Waterbury Public Schools: How Data Analytics Can Help Boost Student Performance

FEATURED PAPERS

Making Smart Decisions in Evaluating and Selecting a Supplier of Converged Infrastructure

6 Tips for Building a Future-Ready Infrastructure

Simplicity, Efficiency, Versatility: The Key Ingredients For Your Servers

Reducing Infrastructure Complexity through Converged Systems