

Strage Innovation Award

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions: I was working last summer in a research laboratory on a product improvement. When I left to return to school the development process was still going on. Can I use this "idea" for my entry?

Answer: When working in laboratories or facilities other than at WPI, that company or organization's confidentiality requirements for its proprietary information must be carefully observed and, when making original contributions as an inventor or member of an inventing team to an idea, any WPI interest in accord with the WPI Intellectual Property Policy must be discussed with the IP office prior to any public or informal disclosure of the idea.

Questions: May I use someone else's idea?

Answer: If you contributed to developing the idea, you may be able to use it if you have abided by that person's or organization's confidentiality requirements.

Questions: What if I use WPI resources to develop my idea?

Answer: If you or your team developed the idea at WPI, while utilizing WPI resources, any WPI interest (based upon the WPI Intellectual Property Policy) must be discussed with the Intellectual Property Office prior to any public or informal disclosure of the idea. Not all ideas will require involvement by the IP office.

Questions: Once I began working on my submission, I found that the description on the one-page proposal form I submitted was no longer completely valid. Do I have to submit a new application?

Answer: A revised submission is not required but you might want to explain the evolution of the idea and your thinking behind making the alterations. However, if the idea is significantly different from the one-page proposal, a new, signed, SOSI is required.

Questions: Can I include photos, charts, and marketing data in my final submission?

Answer: As long as the total submission does not exceed 5 pages, you can include whatever you feel would be useful to the judges.

Questions: I have been working on a new idea with a high school friend for several years. My friend does not go to WPI. Can I submit the idea anyway?

Answer: As long as you can show that you were involved significantly in the generation of the initial concept or idea, your proposal will be considered.

Questions: My innovation is currently legally unacceptable because it is considered an infringement of certain privacy rights. However, industry leaders have ensured me that this law is outdated and will be changed in due course.

Answer: If the innovation is *currently* illegal or breaks an existing law it is unlikely to be acceptable in the competition.

Questions: I saw a homemade gadget while traveling in Thailand that I think would have application in the US. I would propose to redesign it for US use and develop a manufacturing process that would make it economically viable. Is this OK?

Answer: You must be able to show that you have added value to the idea in an innovative and creative way and not simply copied the idea from someone else.

Questions: What is an NDA?

Answer: A non-disclosure agreement is a contract between the inventor and another party that prohibits that party from disclosing information provided in confidence. (Allen, Kathleen R., 2003, *Bringing New Technology to Market*, p.114)

Questions: What is an ITC?

Answer: Solely developed for purpose of this competition, the one-page *Intent to Compete* form used to enter the Strage Innovation Award Competition. It contains names of the individual(s) concerned, their contact information, and a description of the idea.

Questions: What is a SOSI?

Answer: Solely developed for purpose of this competition, the *Statement of Originality and Source of an Idea* must be signed by all individuals involved in the competition. It serves two purposes: it identifies when, where, and how or why the idea originated, to the best of the inventor or inventors' ability; it fosters honesty and ethical respect for the original inventor(s) of the idea.

Questions: What is IP?

Answer: *Intellectual property* refers to creations of the mind—inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images, and designs used in commerce, according to the World Intellectual Property Organization, IP is divided into two categories: "Industrial property, which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs, and geographic indications of source; and Copyright, which includes literary and artistic works such as novels, poems and plays, films, musical works, artistic works such as drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures, and architectural designs. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, those of producers of phonograms in their recordings, and those of broadcasters in their radio and television programs."