



ENTREPRENEURSHIP LABORATORY (E-LAB) FIELD COURSE

OVERVIEW

E-Lab is a project-based course, in which teams of students work on customer discovery projects for local (typically high-tech) start-up firms. E-Lab host firms have people, outside funding and working technology (although not always a first application for it). Some have products and revenues; others do not.

Students spend a lot of time meeting and talking with their host company, potential customers, and industry/technology experts. The emphasis is on identifying attractive target market(s), understanding customers' problems, defining customer value propositions, specifying market and product requirements and developing market entry ("go to market") strategies. Class sessions combine the use of cases, lectures, guests and panel discussions. The focus is on learning practical tools and skills required to complete these activities successfully.

TIMELINE & EXPECTATIONS

Planning for the Entrepreneurship Laboratory (E-Lab) begins in the fall, and the course will run from Jan 24 – April 25.

PHASE 1: Project Submission & Selection

TIMELINE	HOST COMPANY	STUDENTS
September - January	Companies submit E-Lab project proposals. Projects screened by faculty/staff.	Registration for E-Lab course (ongoing).
December - January	Companies notified if their project will be included in the E-Lab portfolio.	Registration for E-Lab course (finalized).

PHASE 2: Matching Student Teams & Host Companies

TIMELINE	HOST COMPANY	STUDENTS
January	Host companies receive info about students.	Students receive info about projects; students submit top project choices.
January 24	First Class: Companies pitch projects in class. (3:30 - 6:00pm)	First Class: Course overview; project descriptions; team formation begins.
January 29		Deadline for teams to be finalized; deadline for teams to rank project choices.
January 30 - 31	Team/company matches are finalized; companies are notified of their E-Lab team.	Team/company matches are finalized; teams arrange first meeting with host company.
February 5	Project plans signed by host company CEO.	Project plans agreed with host company CEO.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP LABORATORY (E-LAB) FIELD COURSE****PHASE 3: Project Work**

TIMELINE	HOST COMPANY	STUDENTS
February	Meet with student team.	Project work.
March	Team Presentation #1: Preliminary Customer Value Proposition (CVP).	
March - April	Meet with student team.	Project work. Spring Break.
April	Team Presentation #2: Insights from Customer Interviews/Surveys.	
April - May	Meet with student team.	Project work.
April 25	Team Presentation #3: Draft Final Report to Faculty; Final Report to Host Company.	
April 25 - May 2	Provide feedback to team on report. Provide feedback to faculty on team.	

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PROJECT?

The best projects include: (1) highly engaged partners who have clear expectations on student deliverables, (2) challenging but achievable project scopes, (3) access to top management, and (4) a designated project manager at the host company who works with the student team.

EVALUATIONS

Host companies will evaluate their student teams (using a pre-established rubric); students will evaluate host firms and each other; and faculty will evaluate both students and host firms. Any and all feedback from host firms is valued highly and greatly appreciated.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Harvard Business School recognizes the importance of confidentiality, and therefore has created a non-disclosure agreement for all students to sign prior to any engagement with host firms. By receiving this non-disclosure agreement in early October, host companies have ample time to gain approval before project descriptions are presented to students in January.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions, please contact:

Susanna Lynch, Manager
Harvard Business School
+1-617-384-5688
sulynch@hbs.edu

