NSF I-Corps Hub
Northeast Region

2023 IMPACT
I-Corps helps researchers transition discoveries into benefits for society

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Innovation Corps (I-Corps) Northeast Hub is part of a nationwide NSF-funded network of universities formed to:

- **Build skills and opportunities** across communities and at universities in the Northeast.

- **Broaden participation** for researchers from all backgrounds, including those historically underrepresented in entrepreneurship.

- **Accelerate economic impact** and deliver benefits across sectors such as healthcare, the environment and technology.

I-Corps exemplifies our commitment to build pathways for bold and innovative university research to transform lives and benefit humanity.”

*Rodney Priestley*  
Co-Director and Principal Investigator, I-Corps NE Hub  
Dean of the Graduate School, Princeton University

The I-Corps Northeast Hub is sponsored by National Science Foundation grant 2048602. Princeton University is the principal institution and members are Delaware State University, Drexel University, Lehigh University, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Rowan University, Rutgers University, Temple University, University of Connecticut, University of Delaware, and Yale University.
Our programs

PROPELUS

548 individuals trained
185 teams trained

Our flagship four-week program teaches research teams to explore how a discovery can help potential customers and meet industry needs as a startup or venture.

NOVUS

271 individuals trained

This half-day program followed by self-paced coursework introduces researchers to I-Corps methodology.

I-Corps Northeast Hub alumnus Garrett Williams presented his I-Corps experience at a Rowan University Novus event.

Want to learn more about participating in a program? Visit ICorpsNE.org
Interested in becoming an I-Corps instructor or mentor? Visit ICorpsNE.org

TRAINING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL WORK FORCE

819 Individuals trained in regional programs

185 Teams trained in regional programs

26 Teams accepted to the national I-Corps program

64 Mentors and instructors engaged

"One of the greatest strengths at our Hub is our skilled and passionate teaching team. They are serial entrepreneurs and subject matter experts in a wide variety of industries. Our instructors and mentors create a sense of belonging as they represent the diversity of the region we live in. They are truly dedicated to helping innovators succeed."

Lori Dars
Regional Instructor Trainer and Diversity and Inclusion Lead, I-Corps NE Hub
Associate Director of Economic Development and Innovation, Rutgers University

Interested in becoming an I-Corps instructor or mentor?
Visit ICorpsNE.org
We partnered with entrepreneurship groups and industry experts throughout the region to share knowledge and build connections.

**INNOVATING TOGETHER**
Online sessions with entrepreneurship organizations throughout the region.

- **284 attendees**

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP ESSENTIALS**
Virtual workshops highlighting important topics surrounding early stage ventures.

- **352 attendees**

**QUARTERLY ASSEMBLY**
Virtual event to build community and connect I-Corps alumni with follow-on opportunities and mentors.

- **70 attendees**

*Find upcoming events at ICorpsNE.org*
COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE INNOVATION

Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA)
“We're always going to make sure that everyone is represented, that we are inclusive, and that DEIA is impactful in our hub. And we're not just talking about it, we're illustrating it in everything that we do.”

Julius Korley
Co-Director and Co-Principal Investigator, I-Corps NE Hub
Associate Vice President of the Office of Economic Innovation and Partnerships, University of Delaware

59% Of teams trained had at least one woman

30 Regional teams came from state-recognized minority-serving institutions (MSIs)

48% Of the teaching team (mentors and instructors) was made up of women
The I-Corps Fellowship Program creates pathways for students, especially those from underrepresented groups, to participate in innovation and entrepreneurship activities at the I-Corps Northeast Hub. This program is open to all eligible participants, regardless of identity.

PARTICIPANTS: 10

“Completing the program kickstarted my career in entrepreneurship. The mentorship and inclusive environment helped me establish a robust network and created lasting connections with individuals dedicated to innovative technologies and committed to solving real-world problems with lasting solutions.”

Leonard Robinson
I-Corps Fellow, Co-Entrepreneurial Lead
Graduate student, Yale University

“The support, mentorship, and knowledge gained greatly accelerated the innovation journey and equipped founders with the know-how to navigate the path of bringing their research from the lab to the market.”

Michael W. Craig
I-Corps Fellow, Entrepreneurial Lead, Mentor
Postdoctoral Researcher and Computing Innovation Fellow, Rutgers University
OUTCOMES & IMPACT

66 Patents granted or licensed to I-Corps alumni

24 Startups formed by I-Corps teams

$1.3 million Awarded through national I-Corps program

StegAI prevents misuse of digital content

A technology from Rutgers University I-Corps team StegAI places watermarks into online content so users can more easily protect and authenticate content. The AI-driven technology aims to prevent misuse of digital content by placing attributions so that photos, videos and other content can be traced back to the original source. The team licensed their technology with Rutgers University last year, and appointed Joseph DeGol, former Microsoft principal researcher, as their chief technology officer.

“We participated in the I-Corps program and received feedback regarding the real-use cases of the technology. We learned from talking to companies like Meta, Getty and Adobe, and then putting two and two together about how we could solve those problems.”

Eric Wengrowski, Rutgers University graduate student and StegAI co-founder

StegAI founders Kristin Dana and Eric Wengrowski.

Photo courtesy of researchers.
PureLi aims to reduce emissions and secure lithium supply for use in electronics

Princeton researchers developed a sustainable way to extract lithium, a mineral in high demand due to its use in batteries for electric vehicles and other electronics, from brine water. The researchers participated in I-Corps in 2022 and launched their startup PureLi, through which they aim to contribute to securing the nation’s supply of critical minerals and advancing toward net zero emissions.

Current methods of extracting lithium are expensive and require vast amounts of land and time. PureLi is addressing these challenges with a cost-effective and sustainable system that uses twister fibers that collect brine and cause the water to evaporate, leaving behind only the crystallized minerals, including lithium. The team has successfully completed its seed funding round and is assembling a dynamic team in the HAX incubator located in Newark, NJ.

ToxiSense competes in final round of National Inventors Hall of Fame competition

A team of undergraduate researchers developed ToxiSense, a cost-effective and sustainable way to test drinking water and medicines for harmful endotoxins as well as to screen patients for bloodborne bacterial infections. Their technology speeds up the diagnosis of infections and replaces an expensive and environmentally harmful testing protocol that uses horseshoe crabs, which are critical to their native ecosystems.

The researchers genetically engineered a plant to luminesce when placed in contact with the endotoxin. After winning numerous funding awards at pitch competitions, the team competed as finalists in the National Inventors Hall of Fame Collegiate Inventors competition last year.
The first Northeast I-Corps Hub annual meeting brought together researchers, seasoned entrepreneurs and innovation enthusiasts to participate in workshops and panels, hear from experts about important topics in entrepreneurship, engage in poster sessions, build connections to grow their networks, and support the Northeast regional innovation ecosystem.

Kirsten Hund Blair, co-founder and CEO of Lambent Data and an I-Corps alumna, presented her company’s healthcare patient engagement software during the annual meeting poster session.

“The I-Corps teaching, mentoring and administrative staff has been excellent. Everyone here is really welcoming, and it all gives such a great sense of community.”

Kirsten Hund Blair
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