



As stated by President Obama in his State of the Union Address, when we act together, in common purpose and common effort, there is nothing the United States of America cannot achieve. If we are going to tackle tough education challenges to once again be the best-educated country in the world, we need all hands on deck. That includes students themselves. Not only as responsible, engaged learners, but also as education problem-solvers, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

Toward this end, the U.S. Department of Education has launched a National Education Startup Challenge <http://nesc.challenge.gov/>.

**We're inviting students to develop an innovative solution to an education problem and design a blueprint for a new company or organization – a startup – to deliver that solution.**

Students from across the country have until May 1<sup>st</sup> to submit a business plan and a video pitch for a for-profit or non-profit startup that includes an innovative strategy, product or service designed to address one of these four topics:

1. **Middle Grades Matter**  
Helping middle school students transition to high school and stay on track to graduate.
2. **Skills, Skills, Skills**  
Providing students in rural, urban, and/or high-poverty communities with opportunities for internships or other work- and community-based learning experiences that help them develop skills for success in postsecondary education, 21<sup>st</sup> century careers, and civic life.
3. **Education Pays**  
Making it easier for students and families to find and select high-quality, affordable postsecondary programs – whether colleges, universities, or career training programs – that provide good value.
4. **Finishing Faster**  
Increasing the likelihood that postsecondary students complete their degrees, and decreasing the time it takes them to finish, such as by improving and speeding up remedial education.

The National Education Startup Challenge provides an opportunity to highlight the leadership abilities and entrepreneurial energies of today's youth. ***To learn more about this and other exciting competitions, visit the Challenge.gov website at <http://challenge.gov/>.***