Solving problems with technology

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Nicholas Pashos, who ultimately won the experienced researcher category during the 2016 Novel Tech Challenge, presents his product to a panel of judges. (Photo by Ryan Rivet)

The 2016-17 Novel Tech Challenge at Tulane University is about to begin, and students who think they might have the next big idea are encouraged to take part.

Challenge activities begin with a pitch-off and networking reception Tuesday (Sept. 20) from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at City Diner on the ground floor of the Lavin-Bernick Center. Participants will be given the opportunity to pitch their ideas and network with other students, faculty, and alumni to form teams to enter the 2017 Novel Tech Challenge. The audience will select one presenter to receive a cash prize, and refreshments will be provided. Students can sign-up for the pitch-off by submitting a

60-second video [here](#).

In its third year, the challenge encourages "undergraduate and graduate students to think and create solutions to society's problems in an applied technological way." Semifinalists will be given $1,000, access to the MakerSpace, and faculty and alumni mentors to help them test and prototype their technology.

The challenge aims to help students "commercialize their ideas for new technologies, to allow students to start off with ideas for a technology-driven solution and end up with a prototype," said Greg Stein of the Office of Technology Transfer & Intellectual Property Development, which runs the program along with the School of Science and Engineering.

At the end of the competition in April, $10,000 and $5,000 awards are given for the novice division and experienced division, respectively. Last year's experienced team, BioAesthetics, won first-place for an acellular, tissue-engineered nipple-areola complex that allows the patient's own cells to regenerate a new nipple and areola in the event of loss due to trauma or disease. The novice team, BiopSci, won for its automated skin biopsy punch model that makes the biopsy process faster and more accurate. Both teams will be at the pitch-off to answer questions.

The deadline to apply for the challenge is Friday (Oct. 7). For more information, visit the [challenge website.](#)