Innovate Durham: Turning Local Government into a Lab

Eric Marsh, Durham County, NC
Ben Kittelson, City of Durham, NC
Who are we...

Ben Kittleson
Sr. Budget & Management Analyst
City of Durham (NC)

Eric Marsh
Strategic Initiative Analyst
Durham County (NC)
City of Table...

1. Find something that everyone has in common
2. Use that commonality to come up with a name
Overview

- About Innovate Durham
- Background on Durham
- Implementing the Program at the City & County
- How does it work?
- Policy challenges
- Barriers we addressed
- Lessons learned
- Your turn...
2,632 miles = 39 hours by car = 2 days and 22 hours by bus = 243 hours on bike = 866 hours walk
Encourage a Culture of Innovation
What is Innovate Durham?

A 12-week partnership program that turns the City of Durham and Durham County into a lab to test ideas, products or services.
Test the Latest Technology
Build Innovation Capacity
Support Local Businesses
Activity #1
What about in your community?
More on Innovate Durham

● Program could be a win-win
  ○ Expose staff to new technology and ideas
  ○ Allow startups to do user research and learn about local government
Once upon a time...

- Employee idea campaign
- No funding*
- Find startups
- Match with City staff
Innovate Durham Year One

- 34 applications
- 4 startups chosen
- 4 pilot projects completed
2017 Cohort

talented

RIVERS

LUCID

DREAM

dropark

Your parking solution
Year One Lessons

- Include Durham County
- Cohort approach
- Create Staff Buy-in
- Diversity of participants
Incorporating Durham County

- Presented to County Leadership
- Sell Sell Sell
Policy Challenges

- Goal to address problems or issues in departments
- Applicants "bid" to solve that challenge
Activity #2
Challenges for Your Organization
Grassroots Marketing
When you successfully engage the community, they tell the story for you.

What's up with Innovate Durham, @benkittelson56 and @TheMarshMethod are going to give us the lowdown @ncopenpass #civiccampnc
June 15 – July 23
Application Period

Aug – Nov
Pilot Period

July 23 – Aug 20
Selection Period

December
Demo Day
TONIGHT is our next meetup. First we'll hear from #InnovateDurham and then we'll break into project groups. Coders and non-coders welcome. Our projects need design, messaging, UI, etc. #GetInvolved
The Results

- Located in Durham City or County: 4 (57.1%) of Cohort; 27 (69.2%) of Applicants.
- Minority owned or led: 4 (57.1%) of Cohort; 20 (51.3%) of Applicants.
- Woman owned or led: 3 (42.9%) of Cohort; 13 (33.3%) of Applicants.
- Students: 2 (28.6%) of Cohort; 6 (15.4%) of Applicants.
Cohort Selection

- Two-day period
- Committee of City/County Employees
- Five-minute pitches
- Departments came to help select
- We made NO promises
Project Plan

Companies had two approaches:

- Product Testing
- User Research
Pilot Period

● Memorandum of Understanding
● Kick-off Event
● Bi-weekly Check-ins
● Mid-point Group Event
● Tracked Progress
● Deliverable at End
Pilot Period

Aug. 20
Kickoff
Orientation with cohort and City/County staff. Public invited for reception afterwards.

Oct. 1
Mid-point
Updates given from each project and presentations about local government purchasing and budgeting processes.

Nov. 20
Pilot Period End
End of 12 week partnership, startups could ask for extension if needed.

Dec. 6
Demo Day
Public invited to evening celebration. Startups present on their company and project.
You're invited

INNOVATE DURHAM

DEMO DAY

FREE TO ATTEND

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018 | 6:00 PM
HAYTI HERITAGE CENTER

804 OLD FAYETTEVILLE ST, DURHAM, NC 27701

CLICK TO RSVP

#InnovateDurham
#DemoDay2018
Great turnout for the second #InnovateDurham cohort pitch night. Improving citizen services by opening civic data to entrepreneurs.
Takeaways

- Innovate Durham is about bringing new ideas into our organizations
- Money isn’t everything...impact is
- You can take advantage of the resources in your backyard
- Cohort required coaching on Local Government Culture
- Continuous improvement is key