

Program Eligibility and Application Requirements

1. Does prior participation in federal programs or innovation hubs affect eligibility?

No, they do not affect eligibility. Questions about previous grant or program participation are used for information gathering and performance measurement purposes. Teams that have participated in other innovation or accelerator programs may still apply.

2. What level of development is expected for an innovation?

Applicants should have moved beyond the idea stage and have evidence that the innovation is desirable and addresses a real need. Teams are encouraged to have tested their concept with users, gathered feedback (e.g., focus groups or surveys), and be able to demonstrate that the innovation is feasible and worth further development. A fully finished product is not required.

3. What types of innovations is the program seeking?

The program is interested in innovations that support adolescent sexual health and related outcomes. There is an interest in systems-level approaches and innovations that address broader factors influencing young people's health and well-being, but the program is open to a wide variety of innovation concepts.

4. Can established programs apply if they are developing a new component or expansion?

Yes. Existing programs may apply if they are proposing a new innovative component, expansion, or scaling strategy. Applicants should clearly describe the innovation, provide evidence of its potential value, and articulate the intended impact.

5. What makes a strong application?

Strong applications clearly demonstrate user need, evidence of testing or feedback, feasibility, engagement with end users, and a compelling vision for impact. Applicants should also explain what support they hope to receive through the accelerator.

6. How competitive is the program?

Approximately 20–30 applications per cohort, with around 15 teams advancing to the pitching stage. About five teams are ultimately selected.

Team Composition, Participation, and Program Structure

1. Who should be included on the innovation team?

Teams of three to five members are recommended, Having members with diverse perspectives, lived experience, and relevant expertise is encouraged. For example, teams developing technology-based innovations should include someone capable of overseeing product development or managing technical vendors.

2. Can an individual or solo founder apply?

Yes, but it is strongly encouraged that applicants identify additional team members, partners, volunteers, advisors, or collaborators who can participate in trainings and support implementation activities.

3. How much participation is expected during the program?

Selected teams are paired with a coach and will meet regularly throughout the program, participate in monthly cohort activities, and attend in-person trainings. Teams are expected to engage in testing, coaching, coursework, and cohort learning activities.

4. Can youth advisors or additional team members rotate participation?

Yes. Teams may involve additional staff or youth advisors beyond the primary innovation team. However, having key participants is encouraged, especially for coaching and cohort activities.

5. How are coaches assigned?

Coaches are assigned based on information provided in the application and the needs of each innovation team.

Funding, Budget, and Sustainability

1. What can program funds be used for?

Funds may be used to support activities directly related to accelerating and refining the innovation. Funding is intended to support the innovation-development process rather than ongoing program implementation or general organizational operations.

2. Do applicants need a detailed business or revenue model before applying?

No. Teams are not expected to arrive with a fully developed sustainability or revenue plan. The program provides guidance on sustainability, scale-up, commercialization, and long-term funding strategies. Sustainability may include revenue generation, licensing, partnerships, or other approaches that support the continuation of the innovation.

3. What is meant by commercialization and entrepreneurial skills?

The program helps teams think through issues such as cost structures, revenue models, market strategy, long-term sustainability, and how innovations can reach

intended users. Commercialization does not necessarily mean selling a product. It can also involve licensing, partnerships, or other pathways to scale and sustain an innovation.

Federal Requirements

- 1. How does the program address federal requirements and current policy considerations?**

The program is federally funded, so it must comply with applicable executive orders and federal requirements.

- 2. Should applicants be cautious about discussing work with diverse populations or specific topics?**

Applicants are encouraged to clearly describe the populations they serve and the needs their innovations address. However, because the program is federally funded, teams should be aware that some materials may be subject to federal review and medical accuracy requirements.

Other Innovation Hubs, Accelerators, and Incubators

- 1. Can organizations apply to Launch if they are also applying to or participating in another innovation hub or accelerator?**

Yes. Participating in multiple at the same time may be challenging, but the accelerators work closely and can discuss options with teams if they are accepted to both.

- 2. How is Launch different from Breakthrough?**

Launch has a stronger emphasis on commercialization, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and scaling innovations. Launch also operates over a longer period (approximately 12 months), while Breakthrough is a shorter program (9 months). Different staff would support participants in each program.