

MMMProgram

Business Innovation Lab



MMM students are leaders, thinkers and doers at the intersection of business, design innovation, and technology.

Dual Degree

Earning both an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management and an MS in Design Innovation from the Segal Design Institute, MMM students leverage business and design skills to develop end-to-end solutions grounded in desirability, feasibility, and viability.

MMM develops whole-brain innovators with a holistic approach that strikes a balance between the analytical and intuitive. The interdisciplinary nature of MMM uniquely positions its graduates for key roles across industries, where they can identify opportunities, create value, and drive impact through innovation of products, services, and experiences.

Design Innovation

Design Innovation is creating new value using design-centric tools and frameworks, such as empathy and deep human understanding, visualization, prototyping, and ideation.

This process of creative thinking and doing is a strategic complement to the analytical approach traditionally taught in business management.

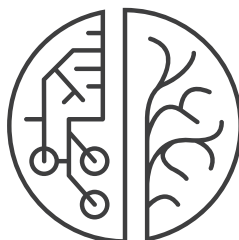
Design Innovation:

- Uncovers the real problem behind the perceived problem
- Develops meaningful, transformative solutions
- Unlocks competitive advantage

A Whole-Brain Perspective

MBA

Analytical Thinking
Operational Planning
Strategic Leadership



MSDI

Design Research
Problem Framing
Concept Development

Business Innovation Lab is an opportunity for companies to collaborate with MMM students on real projects delivering real solutions.

Business Innovation Lab is the capstone educational experience of the MMM Program and a unique opportunity for companies to innovate in collaboration with MMM students and Northwestern faculty. Students will apply best-in-class methodologies as they tackle your business problem. The result is an outstanding educational experience for the students and high-caliber, economical problem-solving support for the company.



"I've been a project champion on six projects at two different Global Fortune 500 companies, and I am always impressed with the quality, professionalism, and creativity of the students and the strategic selection of my project faculty advisors. As long as I have been diligent in preparing good projects for the students, they have exceeded my expectations."

- Chad Kartchner, Honeywell Aerospace

Recent Business Innovation Lab Projects



Students designed innovative solutions to increase recycling in McDonald's by making it as simple, easy, and enjoyable as the restaurant experience.



Students used ethnographic research and analysis to explore new potential market segments for Maserati, as they look to expand their current customer profile.



Students looked for insights into why Chicago's African-American and Hispanic residents are visiting the Field Museum less frequently than the national average and developed strategies for the museum to engage these groups.



Students looked for insights into why Millennials are eating less pasta and developed a unique innovation plan for Barilla to bring pasta to the next level of "sexy, better for you, and convenient".



Students created a suite of innovative products and services focused on nurturing the relationships of Hallmark customers in "refirement" (vs. retirement) - people with a positive outlook about getting older and redefining life after 50.



Students researched customer behaviors related to changing their flights and used their insights to design methods for United to better predict change fee revenue and pilot a new change fee structure.



Our partner organizations provide a challenging project and resources for the student team.

Interesting Project

MMM Business Innovation Lab projects should live at the intersection of business, design innovation, and technology. Our students seek a challenging project in areas of current study and interest.

The most successful and most engaging projects often come from the following areas:

- Operations Innovation
- Clean Technology Innovation
- Human-Centered Design Research
- New Product Development
- Digital Innovation
- Marketing Strategy
- Experience Design
- Growth Strategy
- Service Innovation
- Automotive Innovation

Project Champion

To produce substantial results, the student team needs easy access to a person inside the company with the ability to champion the project along, the capacity to provide pertinent data and feedback, and the authority to make things happen.

A project is much more engaging for students and likely to have an impact within the company when there is sufficient interest at a high level within the company's infrastructure. We encourage partner companies to schedule the final presentation with an audience of executive leadership or other senior managers.

Timeline

Business Innovation Lab typically takes place over a 10-week period in Fall quarter (from September to December) or Winter quarter (January to March). Project proposals should be submitted no later than August 1 for Fall quarter projects and no later than October 1 for Winter quarter projects.

At the beginning of the project, a kickoff meeting will be held with the partner organization, student team, and faculty advisor. The kickoff meeting is typically held on-site at the company, but may also be held on campus or via web conference.

Project champions will then participate in regularly scheduled check-ins (typically web conference or call) throughout the 10-week period. Final presentations will take place in the final week of the project and should involve a senior audience from the company. Final presentations may be held at the company site, on campus, or via web conference.

Financial Support

Our project sponsorship ask is \$25,000 per project. Your sponsorship will support faculty and administrative costs as well as project expenses, which typically include research, travel, and supplies.

Confidentiality

It is important for educational purposes that our students may exchange some information about their Business Innovation Lab experiences. We don't require that the entire project content be shared, in fact many Business Innovation Lab sponsors request a non-disclosure agreement between the student team and company, but a key deliverable for the students will be an executive summary of the project that is acceptable for sharing in a learning environment.

If you would like to share and promote your participation externally, you are welcome to do so. We are always happy to promote projects and partnerships at a level that works best for the partner organization.

Additional Information

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Or Visit

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Business Innovation Lab Proposal Form

Thank you for your interest in sponsoring a MMM Business Innovation Lab project. The information you provide in this proposal form will be used by students to select project preferences and will assist us in matching faculty and student teams with partner companies.

Completed proposals for Fall quarter projects should be submitted no later than August 1. Completed proposals for Winter quarter projects should be submitted no later than October 1. Please submit your proposal form in electronic format to: susan.goren@northwestern.edu. If you have any questions about the proposal process, please feel free to contact Susan Goren, Associate Director of the MMM Program via email, or at 847-467-3741.

Information

Company Name	
Industry	
Business Address	
Country	
Website	

Contact Details

Name of Primary Contact	
Position/Title	
Phone Number	
Email Address	

Organizational Background

Briefly describe your organization's business, your major product or service, and the markets you currently serve.

Project Description

Describe the business challenge or opportunity that you are looking for the student team to help you solve.

What key deliverables should the team deliver at the end of the project?

Who will be the Project Champion from your company and what is their title? This person will answer questions and be the main individual that the student team will connect with on a weekly basis for the project. Who are the other members of the senior management team that you expect to be involved in this project and what are their titles?

Project Logistics

What special skills or industry experience would be most valuable to have on the student team?

Where will the on-site visit take place? Please list all the cities/offices where the students might be expected to visit.

Does the organization agree to provide financial sponsorship?

Any additional comments, resources, attachments or questions?