Innovating for Scale and Impact: Practical Applications

Course Dates

Jan 7-Mar 31, 2026

This course provides an experience-based exposure to the process of starting an entrepreneurial venture. The process, toolkit and “entrepreneurial mindset” can also be applied to innovation in larger organizations. This course has previously run in 2024 and 2025 and has received very positive evaluations and feedback from participating students from around the world: Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and North America.  
   
Familiarity with the business model canvas and lean start-up methodology is helpful. This is not an intro class in start-up methodologies, and we will move quickly. There will be explicit and regular use of AI in the innovation process to train students in combining speed and quality in their innovation work.

Optional, additional background readings will be provided for students who are motivated to join the course but need to fill knowledge gaps.  
Students are encouraged to focus on tackling significant societal challenges (for example: human health, planetary health, food and energy security) where major changes are required for impactful change.

Project criteria: the default focus is on a start-up, but for a team that is interested to work on an innovation for an existing company or organization there can be flexibility, subject to Instructor approval. The entrepreneurial mindset and start-up methodology for innovation is broadly applicable to corporate innovation, with a few adjustments. Team based (min 4, max 6); projects cannot be done on an individual basis. Students will be encouraged to form around shared interests based on activities in class 1.  The expectation is that students will undertake applied work on their project, each week, between classes.  The majority of assignments are team based.

Completing the course will leave students equipped with an understanding of the entrepreneurial mindset, and an innovation process that they can adapt to start-up or existing organization innovation challenges.

The course instructor, Paul Cubbon, comes from an industry background in global corporate innovation, and has developed and taught many courses in innovation and entrepreneurship in the context of disruptive change. In addition to teaching, Paul works closely with many STEM researchers in the early stages of commercialization, bridging invention to nascent company. This includes seven years, founding and leading the Vancouver chapter of Creative Destruction Lab (CDL.) Paul is a multiple award-winning teacher, including being recognized as a 3M Canada National Teaching Fellow. Paul’s approach focuses on the applied, experiential and a “learning by doing” outlook.

Class Dates and Times (all times, Pacific – PT, 08.00-11.00

The course is delivered online but is synchronous – students are expected to attend and participate in all classes. This course can NOT be taken in asynchronous mode.

* Jan 7:     class 1
* Jan 14: class 2
* Jan 21: class 3
* Jan 28: class 4
* Feb 4:    class 5
* Feb 11: class 6
  + Feb 18: NO CLASS – UBC Reading Week
* Feb 25: class 7
* Mar 4:   class 8
  + Mar 11: NO CLASS – GNAM in person courses
* Mar 18: class 9
* Mar 25: class 10
* Apr 1:    class 11