Next Generation Tech – Frequently Answered Questions

What is Next Generation Tech?
Next Generation Tech (NGT) is a 7-month experience for high school students in teams of 3-5. Students develop an idea, attend workshops with outstanding business and technology mentors from the Tampa Bay Area, and work to build a business model and working prototype.

Am I eligible to compete in Next Gen Tech this year?
To compete, you need to be enrolled in a Pinellas County High School for the 2019-2020 and find a team of 3-5. That's it! No business classes, no technical knowledge, and no experience needed.

I need an idea to apply! How do I find one?
Start with the problem. Look for a solution incorporating technology – software or hardware – and define your audience. Your first solution will change continuously as your business plan and product grow, so don't stress about getting it perfect now. No student should stop themselves from participating in NGT because they are worried about their idea; changing problems and solutions along the way is part of the startup process!

Why should I compete in Next Gen Tech?
Good question! NGT is a fluid program built to support your passions and help you develop your skillsets for taking this process to the real world. It's an experience to empower your drive to make the next-big-thing and offers opportunity to connect with fantastic mentors and make accomplishments along the way to build your resume. If you put in the work to make it all the way, $15,000 in grants is divided among the top three teams!

I have no experience in technology OR business. What do I do?
Next Gen Tech is a platform for students of ALL experience levels! All you need to do is be ready to learn and excited to make your idea come to life – we'll help you understand the process and build the experience needed to succeed. Some of our most successful teams have come from no experience in these fields! Make sure to check out our advice blog post from the 2018-2019 winning team, InSite, to get more inspiration on your application.

How much time does participating in Next Gen Tech take?
The amount of time you put into your project is up to you! All teams will attend the first 3 workshops in October, November, and December. In December, 10 teams will be selected as finalists based on submitted product pitches, and these teams will participate in 3 more workshops with more individualized mentorship, culminating in a final pitch to a panel of judges. Successful teams find themselves meeting with their teammates to continue progress on at least a weekly basis, with individual contribution based on how team responsibilities are assigned.

What advice do you have for completing the initial application?
Don't stress over it! The most important thing is that you have begun identifying problems that the market needs solved and you enter the program with an intellectual curiosity. Applications are to help us get to know you and your creative thoughts, not limit the pool of students that can benefit from working with NGT mentors. Make sure you fill it out to the best of your ability before the deadline, and your idea will grow with time and mentorship.