

Disseminating Innovations for the Common Good



What's your BIG IDEA?

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What's Your Big Idea?

- Bono, graduation speaker at the University of Pennsylvania, June 2004

- "So my question, I suppose, is: What's the big idea? What's your big idea? What are you willing to spend your moral capital, your intellectual capital, your cash, your sweat equity in pursuing?

- There's a truly great Irish poet - his name is Brendan Kennelly - and he has this epic poem called the "Book of Judas," and there's a line in that poem that never leaves my mind. It says: "If you want to serve the age, betray it." What does that mean to betray the age? Well to me, betraying the age means exposing its conceits, its foibles, its phony moral certitudes. It means telling the secrets of the age and facing harsher truths.

- Every age has its massive moral blind spots. We might not see them, but our children will. Slavery was one of them. Segregation, there was another one.

- May 17, 2004. What are the ideas right now worth betraying? What are the lies we tell ourselves now? What are the blind spots of our age? It might be something simple.

- It might be something as simple as our deep down refusal to believe that every human life has equal worth. Could that be it? Could that be it? Each of you will probably have your own answer, but for me, that is it.

- And for me, the proving ground has been Africa. Africa makes a mockery of what we say, at least what I say, about equality and questions our pieties and our commitments because there's no way to look at what's happening over there and its effect on all of us and conclude that we actually consider Africans as our equals before God. There is no chance."

So... what is “Disseminating Innovations for the Common Good?” all about?



- Focuses on disseminating innovations among underserved communities, especially in developing countries.
- Students work in teams to complete a term project based on their own dream project a.k.a. their “Big Idea.”
- Structured around MIT and external competitions; e.g. MIT Ideas Competition, MIT\$100K, Deshpande IdeaStream Innovation Showcase, Ignite Clean Energy Competition, National Collegiate Inventors & Innovators Alliance, World Bank Development Marketplace Competition, others, as appropriate to student projects.
- Includes an online forum discussion, hands-on learning, student-led case studies, and a final proposal or social-business plan for implementing an innovation.
- Emphasis on theory, practice, tools and skills related to building partnerships and piloting, financing, implementing and scaling-up an innovation for the common good.
- The “practice” component is taught via case studies and guest lecturers.
- No trips are formally associated with the class, but some students elect to pursue a summer implementation of the dissemination of their innovation.

So... What is your Big IDEA?

And... Introduction – “Clean Water for 1 Billion People”
Susan Murcott’s “Big Idea.”



Introductions

- Take out a sheet of paper
- Each person prepares a 60-second written pitch

- **Category 1: Recruit your Innovation Dream Team**

- Your name:
- Team name:
- Project Summary (50 words maximum)
- Recruiting Needs:

- **Category 2: Get Yourself Hired**

- Your name:
- Reason a team should hire you? (50 words maximum)
- Types of projects sought:

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