

## U-Corp @ Impact Hub

Enhancing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Community Engagement for People with Disabilities

### U-Corp Lab

The U-Corp Lab (U-Corp) is a co-innovation platform that connects innovative organizations/companies with the vibrant DKU research and entrepreneurial community. The goal is to provide DKU students the opportunity to master industry-proven innovation research methodologies through productive practice and co-creation projects with companies. These co-innovation projects will provide students with exposure to real-world innovation practices, businesses, cultures, and mindsets; a chance to deep dive into an industry and develop domain knowledge in specific sectors; experience using a variety of industry-proven research methodologies and tools; practical innovation project experience working in teams on real business challenges.

### Impact Hub

Founded in London in 2005, Impact Hub has been promoting sustainability issues by supporting entrepreneurial communities and catalyzing innovative collaborations. Currently, there are more than 120 Hubs in 70 countries and regions around the world. Each Hub is established and operated by a local team to reach out to the local market and community, while linking with global innovation resources to amplify and extend global influence. As the first Hub in Mainland China, Impact Hub Shanghai is leading the construction of sustainable innovation ecosystem in China and the world through innovation consulting, entrepreneurial support, brand communication, investment services, and eco-research, etc. Impact Hub Shanghai has been officially certified as a Beneficial Corporation (B-Corp) in 2022.

Impact Hub is a global network that inspires, connects and empowers entrepreneurs and innovators who aim to create social, economic and environmental impact. It is a platform for collaboration and exchange of ideas, resources and solutions to pressing global challenges. Members have access to co-working space, mentorship, and programs tailored to drive sustainable and inclusive innovation. The organization supports impact-driven businesses through initiatives that promote gender equality, sustainable food systems, health solutions, and economic resilience. It also fosters cross-sector collaboration, engaging governments, NGOs, and the private sector to scale change. Impact Hub's programs have supported



thousands of entrepreneurs, focusing on women-led businesses and sustainability-focused startups.

To learn more about Impact Hub, please visit: <https://impacthub.net/>

## Project Intro

This project aims to explore the entrepreneurial ecosystem for people with disabilities (PWD) by conducting research and engaging in innovative, PWD-friendly community activities to enhance their participation in both economic and social spheres. The project will focus on overcoming barriers such as accessibility issues, resource gaps, and social stigma, investigating how to create an inclusive and supportive environment that enables PWD to thrive as entrepreneurs. Through rigorous research and practical involvement, the project seeks to propose sustainable solutions that promote PWD's independence and social integration.

The project will include a comprehensive review of relevant domestic and international literature, an analysis of successful case studies, and the planning of a local entrepreneurial ecosystem for PWD. Research methods will include surveys, interviews, and field observations to identify challenges and opportunities within the ecosystem. Based on this, the team will explore PWD-friendly innovation communities and activities, proposing supportive strategies for various initiatives to help build a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem for PWD.

This project not only strives to provide actionable solutions for promoting PWD entrepreneurship but also offers participating students a unique opportunity to integrate theory with practice. Students will gain valuable experience in interdisciplinary research, innovative thinking, and social responsibility, contributing to social change. The project outcomes will provide policymakers and relevant organizations with actionable recommendations and offer replicable models for other regions and communities.

### **Deliverables: Research & Practice Report**

### **Research Methods: Case Analysis, Qualitative Research**

## Student Team Composition

Number of students: 4-5

Students with relevant research experience will be given priority.

## Working Plan

1. 4-5 students will form a working group, which will work together to complete the project under the guidance of the tutor.
2. In addition to meeting with the company for the first time, students will have biweekly meetings with the U-Corp team to report on their work progress and receive mentoring feedback. (See below for details.)
3. Project arrangement: Students need to work about 6-10 hours per week, and the project duration is 22 weeks. See the following table for the specific schedule:

## Timetable

Date	Week	Working Content	Delivery Result
2.24-3.9 <i>*(3.3-3.6)Exam week will be skipped.</i>	WK 1-2	Conduct a project kick-off meeting to communicate with Impact Hub representatives to clarify project goals, scope, timeline, and team member roles.	Arrangement of division of responsibilities among team members and determined dates/times for internal meetings
3.10-3.23	WK 3-4	<p><b>Literature Research (Domestic Disability Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecology Research):</b></p> <p>Conduct in-depth research on the policy environment, access to capital, organization of activities and community building of entrepreneurship for people with disabilities at home and abroad. Analyze successful cases of entrepreneurship for people with disabilities at home and abroad, and summarize their success factors and innovations. Compare and contrast the differences between domestic and foreign countries to provide a reference framework for the project.</p> <p><b>Needs Research:</b> Draft interview questions for disabled entrepreneurs, aiming to investigate the needs, challenges and support expected by disabled entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial process.</p>	<p>Research Report on Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecology of Domestic and International Disabilities (Including analysis of policies, funding, activities, communities and in-depth interpretation of successful cases, with the research content focusing on the Chinese context, and the content of another 3-5 international regions analyzed as a comparative study. )</p>
3.24-4.6	WK 5-6	<p><b>Participation in DKU Disability Week Activities and Feedback Collection:</b></p> <p>Participate in the Disability Week activities organized by DKU, and initially conceptualize the content of the project's activity plan through presentations and exchanges. Through the activities, we collect suggestions from various parties (including entrepreneurs with disabilities, students, teachers, etc.).</p>	Interview Questions
4.7-4.20	WK 7-8		<p>Summary of Interview Data</p> <p>Data Analysis Report</p> <p>Activity Participation Summary</p>

		<p><b>Data Collection:</b> Collect and analyze interview data to further understand the needs and expectations of disabled entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Writing the English version of the report</p>	
4.21-5.4	WK 9-10	<p>Impact Hub Offline Event Participation: Participate in offline events organized by Impact Hub to meet face-to-face with disabled entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>Exchange Notes and Early Ideas for the Program of Activities</p> <p>Interview Data Analysis Report</p>
5.5-5.18 * (5.5-5.8 Exam Week Will be Skipped)	WK 11-12	<p><b>On-campus Practice Creative Program Design:</b> Organize teams to brainstorm and design 20-30 creative support activity programs around the theme of accessibility. Conduct preliminary screening and evaluation of the programs to determine their feasibility and innovativeness.</p>	<p>Creative Disability Entrepreneurship Support Activity Program Set (20-30 programs)</p> <p>Initial Screening Assessment Report</p>
5.19-6.1	WK 13-14	<p><b>Deep Dive and Action Plan Formulation:</b> Select 3-5 of the most promising creative solutions for deep dive and clarify their objectives, implementation steps and expected results. Formulate a detailed action plan, including timetable, responsible persons, resource requirements, etc.</p>	<p>Deep Dive Report (3-5 programs)</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>Activity Presentation Materials</p> <p>Feedback Collection Form</p> <p>Action Plan Amendment Report</p>
6.2-6.15	WK 15-16	<p><b>Practical Phase:</b> With the assistance of Impact Hub, entrepreneurs with disabilities are invited to participate in practical activities, such as mentorship programs, co-working space experiences, visits to accessible innovation centers, and so on. Record the process, effect and participant feedback of the practice activities to provide a basis for subsequent summarization and improvement.</p>	<p>Activity Implementation Records, Photos, Videos</p> <p>Participants' Feedback Form</p> <p>Practice Summary Report</p>
6.16-6.29	WK 17-18		
6.30-7.13	WK 19-20	<p><b>Write a Practice Report and Project Summary:</b> Based on the implementation process of the whole project and the data</p>	<p>Practical Report (Research Report and Action Practice Report)</p>

7.14-7.27	WK 21-22	collected, write a practice report to comprehensively summarize the project's results, experiences and lessons learned. Suggestions for improvement and future development directions are put forward to provide reference and lessons for similar projects.	Project Summary Report and Suggestions for Improvement
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**Important Dates:**

Orientation Meeting: 2.22

Regular meetings with the U-Corp: Bi-weekly meeting

Impact Hub team participation guidance Date: Bi-weekly meeting

Final Presentation: TBD