College Mentors Needed for the 2018 NASA OPTIMUS PRIME Spinoff Promotion and Research Challenge (OPSPARC)

The NASA OPTIMUS PRIME Spinoff Promotion and Research Challenge (OPSPARC) is a national engineering design challenge for students in grades 3-6, 7-8, and 9-12. For this challenge, students:

- Choose a NASA Spinoff technology;
- Discover how the Spinoff improves their world;
- Use a design process to create their own NASA Spinoff; and
- Share ideas with NASA through text, images, and videos within a Glogster Multimedia Digital Poster, a Glog.

The challenge runs from November (2017) through April (2018). Winners are announced in May and invited to NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in June.

Marketing/Business and Engineering/Computer Science Mentors are Needed

Students in the Glog + InWorld Presentation Track will use James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) technology for their Spinoff ideas. Research and ideas will be displayed in a Glog, but work doesn’t stop there. College mentors (engineering/computer science paired with a marketing/business major) will select TWENTY TEAMS to help students create 3D virtual models and a marketing plan for their Spinoff ideas. Teams work with their mentors InWorld within NIA Universe, a 3D multi-user virtual world setting.

Why would college students want to join OPSPARC as mentors?

College mentors will have opportunities to build their leadership and professional mentoring skills as they interact with the student teams and NASA JWST and Technology Transfer researchers and engineers. The winning team will be invited to NASA Goddard Space Flight Center for workshops, behind the scenes tours, and a “live” presentation to NASA researchers.
Next Steps and Important Dates for College Mentors

If you have any questions, please contact NIA’s OPSPARC POC: Sharon Bowers, Sharon.bowers@nianet.org, 757-619-2892.

Some helpful links:

- NASA OPSPARC Website: https://nasaopsparc.com/
- Want to know more quickly? Watch this short video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YSHZjDIQPk&feature=youtu.be
- Ready to apply to become a mentor? Here’s the online application: https://goo.gl/forms/RTDTAIBleS6hr62m2

Important Dates:

- **Prior to Winter Break**: Applications completed and mentors selected
- **January 24**: Mentor Meet and Greet: Engineering/Computer Science mentors meet the Business mentors to select partners and receive InWorld OPSPARC Mentor Guides
- **In early February**: Mentor Open House, delivery of virtual Team Worlds and introduction to Tech Squad specialists
- **February 20**: JWST glogs due
- **February 24 – 26**: Mentors select student teams
- **February 27 – April 8**: Teams build InWorld
- **April 12**: Finalists selected (top 6 teams)
- **April 24 and 25**: Each team will present “live” to NASA engineers in a thirty-minute synchronous design review
- **End of May**: Winning teams announced
- **June 13 – 14**: Celebration for winning teams at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center