

NEXT Innovation Scholars: Program Requirements + Expectations

NEXT Innovation Scholars is a prestigious program spearheaded by President Neville G. Pinto, demonstrating UC's commitment to innovation on a national stage. Participating students will be positioned at the center of UC's innovation ecosystem and considered "ambassadors of innovation" at the University of Cincinnati; the student face of our [Next Lives Here](#) strategic direction and innovation agenda. As such, expectations for sustained engagement, commitment, and demonstrated leadership are high.

The NEXT Innovation Scholars program is not a traditional scholarship; it's a transformational educational program that *includes* scholarships as a benefit. Students in NIS are expected to actively participate in program activities throughout the year, including the summer semester and while on full-time co-op. We'll work hard, but we'll work together as a diverse, inclusive community from a variety of majors and academic years, sharing unique educational experiences that are signature to NIS and will shape your undergraduate career.

Requirements for maintaining program participation and scholarships include:

- Maintaining at least a 3.3 cumulative grade point average.
- Maintaining full-time student status in the Fall and Spring semester. *(NOTE: Participating in a full-time co-op is considered full-time student status, provided the student is enrolled in an associated co-op course with UC)*
- Consistent, active participation in and on-time completion of all required NIS activities outlined in the tables below (events, projects, meetings, etc.) with professionalism and excellence.
- Consistent, active attendance at all NIS program meetings.
- Consistent, active attendance at and participation in team project meetings and working sessions.
- Consistent completion of all assigned project-related tasks, prep work, research, documentation and deliverables, etc. by or before stated deadlines. This includes work assigned by any member of program or project leadership teams, including NIS program staff and student leaders in defined leadership positions.
- Timely responses to all program-related communication (email, phone, chat, requests for RSVP's, form completion, etc.) from program leadership (staff and/or student leaders).
 - Messages regarding RSVP's, sign-ups, etc. will always include a clear due date. The expectation is that all students will respond as requested by or before the stated deadline.
 - In instances where a quick response or reaction is requested, a response within 24 hours is expected unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent this from being possible (severe illness, significant family emergency, etc.)
- Maintaining a respectful, collaborative attitude, tone, and approach to all interactions with NIS leadership and peers, including receiving feedback on opportunity areas.
- Maintaining a high level of professionalism when representing NIS both internally (at UC) and with parties outside of the University.
- Contributing to an inclusive, collaborative program environment and community by supporting peers, demonstrating a commitment to NIS priorities, and leading by example.
- Actively participating in optional NIS programming when possible (community engagements, networking events, external partner-led innovation sprints and programming, social events, etc.)

Outline of Mandatory Program Activities:

As a baseline, students in NIS should plan to devote an average of 4-6 hours per week each semester on program-related responsibilities throughout the academic year (similar to that of a 3 credit-hour class), with some seasonal peaks and valleys depending on the specific project(s) you're involved in. This may include program meetings, working on short-term and long-term projects, participating in mentoring and advising sessions, and representing NIS at events. Newly accepted students will participate in several specific onboarding and training activities as a cohort, designed to foster inclusion through shared experiences, and equip you with the tools, terminology, and mindsets that make NIS a signature innovation program. NIS students who pursue and are selected for project and program leadership roles should plan to devote at least 8-15 hours per week on NIS responsibilities associated with these roles. Specific expectations and requirements for these positions are documented in the NIS leadership development plan document.

It is understood that in some cases, full participation in required NIS events and some programming may not be possible due to co-op location, study abroad, medical emergencies, and other extenuating circumstances of major consequence. In these cases, students should proactively work with the NIS Leadership Team in advance to create a plan of action to meet program expectations and maintain scholarship funding and membership in NIS. NIS students who unenroll from the university or formally pause engagement with the program for other reasons will be required to meet with program leadership and develop an approved plan for readmittance. The maximum time a student may be permitted a pause in scholarship and participation in the program is limited to one academic year. Students are not guaranteed re-entry to the NIS program after re-enrolling or formally disengaging with the program. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may require a student to re-apply and/or meet specific criteria to be considered.

SUMMER SEMESTER

Minimum Requirements for NIS Students in Incoming Cohorts:

- Complete all NIS onboarding activities, forms, and processes
- Provide summer availability and register for INTR1050 course in Fall (or Spring for co-op students)
- Participate in all Scholar Storytelling Sessions (*3-4 per summer; virtual*)
- Participate in peer mentor sessions (*3 per summer; virtual or in-person*)
- Respond to all program-related communication and requests for engagement and/or information

Minimum Requirements for NIS Students in Existing Cohorts:

- Actively engage in all summer reading and upskilling discussions (*3-4 per summer; virtual*)
- Respond to all program-related communication and requests for engagement and/or information
- Contribute to any program-wide requests for input or representation, such as 1819 / CID initiatives, representing NIS at stakeholder meetings or events, etc. (*if requested*)
- Join optional NIS social events and/or workshops (*if available and located in the Cincinnati area*)

FALL SEMESTER

Minimum Requirements for All NIS Students:

- Attend bi-weekly program meetings (*in-person if on campus; virtual if on co-op or study abroad*)
- Participate in and successfully meet all requirements in at least 1 official NIS project-based learning engagement (*team-based projects, teaching or training projects, research projects, etc.*)
- Contribute to any program-wide campus projects, such as 1819 / CID and/or campus-wide innovation initiatives, NIS recruiting events, etc. (*various tasks and deliverables throughout the semester*)
- Support the onboarding of incoming NIS students in the new cohort

Additional Requirements Specific to Students in Incoming Cohort:

- Complete PD1050: Innovation Models and Mindsets course (*1 credit hour*)

SPRING SEMESTER

All Students:

- Attend bi-weekly program meetings (*in-person if on campus; virtual if on co-op or study abroad*)
- Participate in and successfully meet all requirements in at least 1 official NIS project-based learning engagement (*team-based projects, teaching or training projects, research projects, etc.*)
- Contribute to any program-wide campus projects, such as 1819 / CID and/or campus-wide innovation initiatives, NIS recruiting events, etc. (*various tasks and deliverables throughout the semester*)
- Assist with review and selection of new NIS cohort (*participate in recruitment and/or review events*)
- Attend and participate in year-end NIS showcase and insights event
- Assist with welcome of new cohort and graduation send-off for graduation seniors

Additional Requirements Specific to Students in Incoming Cohorts:

- Complete PD1050: Innovation Models and Mindsets course (*if not completed in Fall semester*)

Program Requirements and Continuation of Scholarship

Active program participation and successful fulfillment of all program requirements will be evaluated annually to ensure good standing, or more frequently if program leadership identifies areas of concern; failure to complete program requirements and/or expectations can result in termination of NIS scholarship awards and discharge from the program. A student's first year in the NEXT Innovation Scholars program is considered provisional and can be immediately discontinued at the end of the academic year if the student has not fulfilled any of the program requirements or remained in good academic standing.