THE PRESIDENT’S CHALLENGE

Join the Western community in solving real-world problems.

OPEN TO ALL WESTERN STUDENTS (INCLUDING AFFILIATES)
“In Western’s strategic plan, Towards Western at 150, we challenged our community to act boldly in the face of grand challenges and to find innovative solutions. The President’s Challenge is a call to action for students to bring their brightest ideas to the table.”

Alan Shepard
President & Vice-Chancellor
Western University
Welcome to The President’s Challenge. You are greatly needed now.

One of the simplest descriptions of entrepreneurship is “problem-solving.”

Entrepreneurship is all about identifying problems and seeking unique solutions. In that sense, the President’s Challenge is an invitation to students from across Western to be more entrepreneurial.

But the President’s Challenge is much more than that.

We look across our community and see a generation of students eager to make an impact, with a passion to right wrongs and to serve those who are most vulnerable.

The President’s Challenge is an opportunity to bring bright ideas to the table and create change for thousands of people across Canada.

During the past several years, nearly every Canadian family has experienced the challenges overwhelming our health care system. That’s why relieving the pressure on Canadian hospitals is the focus for this inaugural competition.

To accomplish this, we want all of Western to join forces. We want to see students from different disciplines come together to create innovative solutions that only collaboration can bring.

Whether you are in business, music, engineering, arts, or another field, your perspective is important!

Thank you for being part of The President's Challenge.

Alan Shepard  
President & Vice-Chancellor  
Western University

Eric A. Morse  
Executive Director  
Morrissette Institute for Entrepreneurship  
Western University
The President’s Challenge:
Shaping the future of health care.

The President’s Challenge welcomes innovative minds to share solutions that address the most pressing challenges facing our health care system. As we embark on this exciting journey, we encourage you to form teams of two to four members, pooling your diverse skills and perspectives to craft ground-breaking solutions that could reshape the landscape of health care. Imagine the impact your ideas could have on a global scale.

The competition gains added significance in light of recent revelations by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario. Their findings underscore the critical need for effective systems and processes to oversee emergency care delivery, ensuring timeliness and meeting all patient needs. As aspiring change-makers, your ideas could be the missing piece to transform our health care system and alleviate the burden on hospitals.

Join the President’s Challenge and be a driving force in shaping the future of health care!

Together, let’s make a difference that resonates not only within our community but across borders. Your solution could be the key to keeping Canadians out of the hospital, creating a blueprint for a healthier, more resilient society.

How it works:
A platform for innovation

Open to all Western students (including affiliates) the President’s Challenge invites interdisciplinary teams to develop innovative solutions to the critical issues facing our society. This competition is carefully designed to enhance your academic, oral presentation, and entrepreneurial skills, all while fostering a spirit of action on global issues.

By presenting your ideas to a panel of academic and community leaders, you are not just competing; you are actively contributing to positive change.
Strains in the system and long wait times at emergency departments resulted in delayed or missed diagnoses, leading to patients making return visits in poorer health.

24h
Average wait time for patients requiring an inpatient bed.

200
temporary emergency department closures in the past year.

40%
of adults considered their last hospital visit to be preventable.

104
out of 274
Strains in the system and long wait times at emergency departments resulted in delayed or missed diagnoses, leading to patients making return visits in poorer health.

5.3%
Patients left Ontario hospitals before being seen by a physician.

All statistics courtesy of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (December 2023) Value-for-Money Audit: Emergency Departments.
**Expert Panel**

**Dan Carbin**  
Principal and Co-Founder, Santis Health

Dan, co-founder of Santis since 2012, leverages extensive experience in senior advisory roles within the Ontario government to provide strategic counsel to boards and executives in the Canadian health care sector. His clientele spans Fortune 500 companies, national health care associations, public sector organizations, and health charities. While at Queen’s Park, Dan played a pivotal role in advancing key health care initiatives, such as the Wait Time Strategy and the establishment of Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). With an MSc. from the London School of Economics and a BA Hons from McGill University, Dan’s commitment to improving the health care system extends to his role as past Chair of the Board at St. Jude Community Homes. He resides in Toronto with his wife and four vibrant daughters.

**Connie Clerici, QS ’08**  
Founder & Executive Chair of the Board, Closing the Gap Healthcare Group

Connie Clerici, founder and CEO of a thriving health care corporation, brings extensive executive experience to our student competition panel. Leading a team of over 2000 healthcare professionals, she champions innovation while fostering a sustainable, publicly funded health care system for Canadians. Connie, a lifelong learner with leadership and business training from institutions like Ivey Business School and Rotman, serves on boards and advises at the Ivey Business School, Stillbrook Retirement Residences, Medical Confidence, Cloud DX, and Trans Research Labs. An Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Toronto, her impactful contributions have earned her prestigious awards, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and recognition in Canada’s Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Hall of Fame.

**Dr. Michael Peddle**  
MD FRCP(C)/DRCPSC  
Associate Medical Officer at Ornge, Medical Director for the LHSC Emergency Management Program

Dr. Michael Peddle, a Memorial University of Newfoundland medical school graduate, holds an FRCP in Emergency Medicine from Western University and is a Diplomate of the Royal College Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. With over 15 years at London Health Sciences Centre, he specializes in Prehospital and Transport Medicine, excelling in land and air transport systems. Dr. Mike serves as the Associate Medical Officer at Ornge, working clinically as a Transport Medicine Physician. His expertise extends to emergency preparedness, response, and leadership roles, including being the Medical Director for the LHSC Emergency Management Program and a physician with the Provincial Emergency Medical Assistance Team (EMAT).

**Dr. Chris S. Simpson**  
BSc, MD, FRCP(C), FACC, FHRS, FCCS, FCAHS  
Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Executive, Ontario Health

Dr. Chris Simpson, born in Moncton, 1967, is a distinguished medical professional with a remarkable career. An accomplished cardiologist, educator, and health policy advocate, he is currently the Executive Vice President (Medical) and Chief Medical Officer at Ontario Health. Dr. Simpson has pioneered initiatives in cardiac care, founding the Heart Rhythm Program at Kingston General Hospital. His vast contributions extend to leadership roles at Queen’s University, the Wait Time Alliance, and the Canadian Medical Association, where he served as President. An avid researcher and educator, Dr. Simpson has authored over 350 papers. Beyond medicine, he passionately supports community organizations and is a proud parent of three daughters and a son.

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**Information session January 23, 2024  
Thames Hall Atrium from 2:00 - 4:00 pm**
Competition Details
Prizes, How to Apply & Important Dates

Prizes:
Organized by the Western Morrissette Institute for Entrepreneurship Powered by Ivey Business School, the competition includes a healthy prize with the winning team receiving $10,000 in cash! The following are the prizes for the President’s Challenge:

- Cash prizes: $10,000, $5,000, and $2,500 for first, second, and third-placed teams, respectively. The fourth and fifth-placed teams will receive $1,000.
- The opportunity for the top 3 teams to work with faculty and researchers at Western/Ivey to publish a white paper or engage in further research on their proposal
- The opportunity for the top 3 teams to participate in the Western Accelerator
- Top 5 teams who participate in the Toronto Showcase will be covered for travel and accommodations.

The President’s Challenge is open to all Western students (including affiliates).

How to apply:
To apply for the President’s Challenge, all student teams must complete our Intent-to-Compete form. Teams chosen for the President’s Challenge will need to provide a completed proposal for the final part of the competition. Specific criteria for the proposal and presentations will be updated shortly. For more details on eligibility, please read the Competition Rules.

Important dates & deadlines:
Panel, Reception, and Info Session: January 23, 2024, Great Hall, Somerville House from 2:00 - 4:00 pm
Intent to Compete Deadline: January 28, 2024 at 11:59 pm

Workshop Series:
- Workshop One: February 5, 2024 from 1:30 - 3:00 pm
- Workshop Two: February 13, from 1:30 - 3:00 pm
- Workshop Three: February 26, from 1:30 - 3:00 pm

Proposals Due: March 1, 2024, by 12:00 pm
Western Semi-Finals: March 12, 2024
President’s Challenge Final and Showcase in Toronto: April 5, 2024

Are you up for the challenge?
Learn from the best. Learn at your pace. Learn for free.

Designed for aspiring entrepreneurs – or those beyond the start. This course will guide participants from early ideation to opportunity development, with insights on how to nurture and grow a new business. Entrepreneurship is a journey, and through this program, we will be with you every step of the way.

➤ Learn more at TheFoundersJourney.ca