

“We taught students that the same design thinking and innovation skills that drive commercial innovation can also be leveraged for social impact.”

Project | **1819 Student Engagement**
Industry | **Cincinnati Innovation District**

How might we drive greater awareness and engagement with the innovation ecosystem and resources of the Cincinnati Innovation District for students from all colleges and disciplines? Our team of NEXT

Innovation Scholars conducted field research and user interviews to better understand student perceptions of the Cincinnati Innovation District with the goal of fostering a more inclusive and vibrant innovation ecosystem to cater to students with diverse interests and skillsets.

Strategies + Skills

need finding
qualitative analysis
stakeholder interviewing
abductive reasoning
research skills

Challenge + Approach

The 1819 Engagement project aimed to better understand student perceptions of the Cincinnati Innovation District (CID), uncover barriers to undergraduate student engagement, identify unmet student needs, and lay the groundwork for specific opportunities to improve student engagement within the 1819 building. The team conducted stakeholder interviews to inform their research goals, talking to 28 students from a wide range of majors to gauge their thoughts about 1819. They then performed a qualitative analysis of the interviews and identified five key opportunity areas for the CID to better engage the UC student population with programming and events.

Scope + Team Stats

- 6 students from 5 different majors
- 6 hours of on-site field observations
- 28 interviews from 9 different colleges
- 17 actionable insights across 5 categories

Impact

The research done on this project produced findings across five categories: Perceptions of Innovation, the Awareness Gap, Incentives to Innovate, the Programming Gap, and Diverse Thought. These findings were presented to the 1819 leadership team along with actionable solutions that led to investment in a marketing team to improve 1819's online presence as well as the implementation the 1819 Welcome Desk that provides more information about the building and connects students with its facilities. NIS continues to partner with the 1819 leadership team to further and support the university's vision of innovation.