



State of Innovation Challenge

STEM Education Innovation Alliance Meeting
March 17, 2021

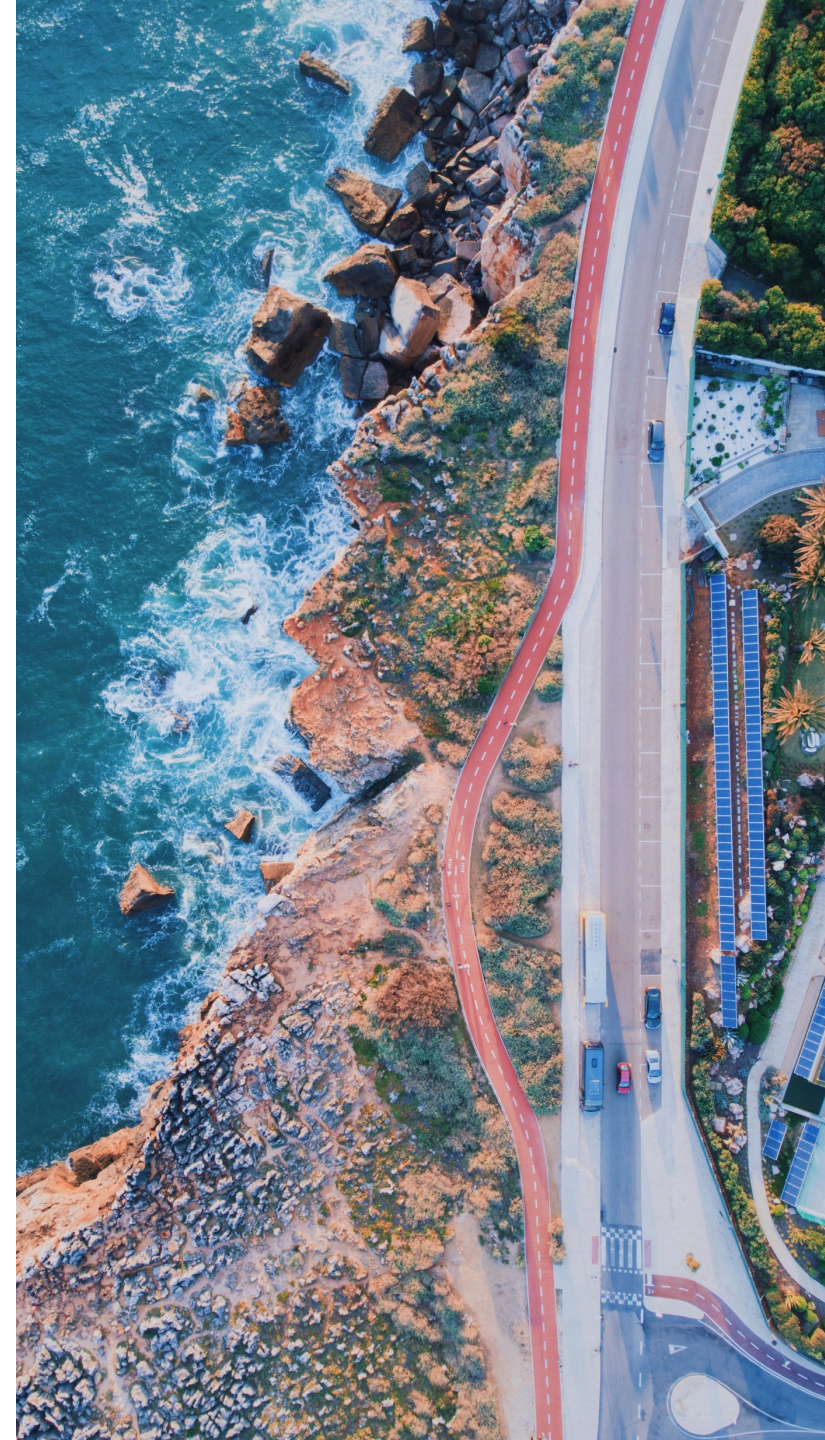
Objectives

Recall Challenge objectives and design

Overview of reach and impact of Challenge

Walkthrough of student project responses

Discuss lessons learned and next steps for Challenge





State of Innovation Challenge
Project Objectives

The Goal: Create Career Connected Learning that's relevant to challenges facing youth, teachers, industry in 2020/21

The last 12 months had problems

Outside the classroom...

- Global pandemic reshaping our lives, our economy
- Unprecedented social and political movements rising
- Ongoing threats from climate change

...and inside the classroom

- Teachers struggling to keep students engaged in virtual learning
- Students struggling to see the “why” in normal learning in a very abnormal year
- Dropoff in WAFSA/FAFSA, postsecondary enrollment
- Limited pathways for industry to engage students directly – no worksite tours, conferences, in-person internships, etc.

We asked youth for the solutions

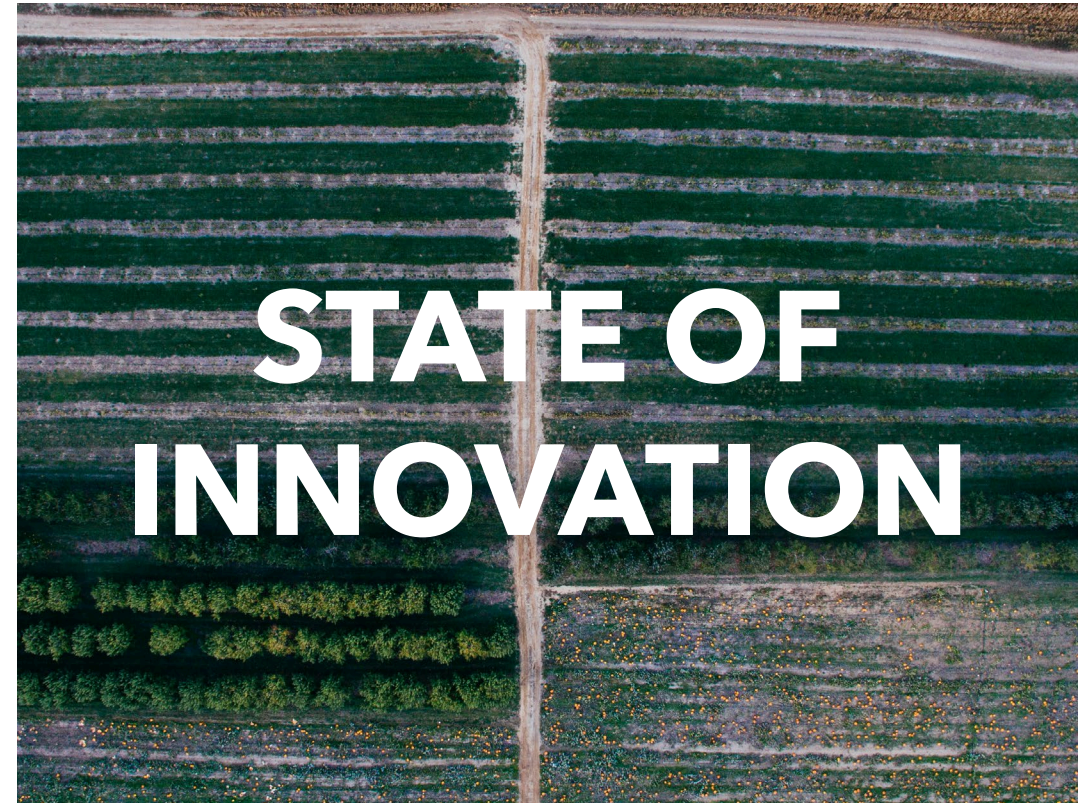


www.innovationwa.org

The Challenge created youth voice-centered, adult-facilitated, industry-aligned learning opportunities

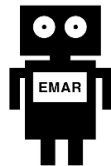
Virtual career-connected problem-solving challenge that aimed to:

- **Empower youth voice** in solving some of Washington's biggest problems. Encourage hypothesis-driven thinking and human-centered design
- **Support teachers and youth program leaders** adapting to virtual learning by creating scalable, flexible, project-based learning tools. Designed with teacher input, applicable to any learning environment, with built-in supports
- **Engage industry and postsecondary partners** by connecting them directly to the virtual classroom and helping them engage students



www.innovationwa.org

40+ industry, community, education and employer partners shaped and contributed to the Challenge





State of Innovation Challenge
Reach & Impact

Since launching on Nov. 30, the Challenge has had...

- **6,839** website visitors
- **708** views of the Challenge case videos
- **412** direct downloads of Getting Started and instructional guides
- **400** mailing list subscribers
- **369** industry engagement views on Youtube
- Featured on Advance CTE and promoted by Governor, Superintendent



State of Innovation Challenge invites Washington youth to design solutions to the state's big issues

January 14, 2021

[Story](#)

Gov. Jay Inslee, Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal, the STEM Education and Innovation Alliance, Career Connect Washington and community partners including 4-H Washington, announce the launch of the State of Innovation Challenge—a virtual, career-connected problem solving challenge that invites Washington youth to design and share their own solutions to some of the biggest issues Washington's employers and communities are facing in 2020 and 2021.

Communicating CTE: Washington's Statewide Initiative for Secondary Career Exploration Empowers Educators and Learners

March 3rd, 2021

The third post in the Communicating Career Technical Education (CTE) series will focus on creative initiatives for career exploration for secondary learners by highlighting [Washington's State of Innovation Challenge](#). This is particularly timely as states continue to grapple with the difficulties of supporting long-term career exploration experiences in an environment of sustained uncertainty and student disconnect in virtual learning environments.

Background

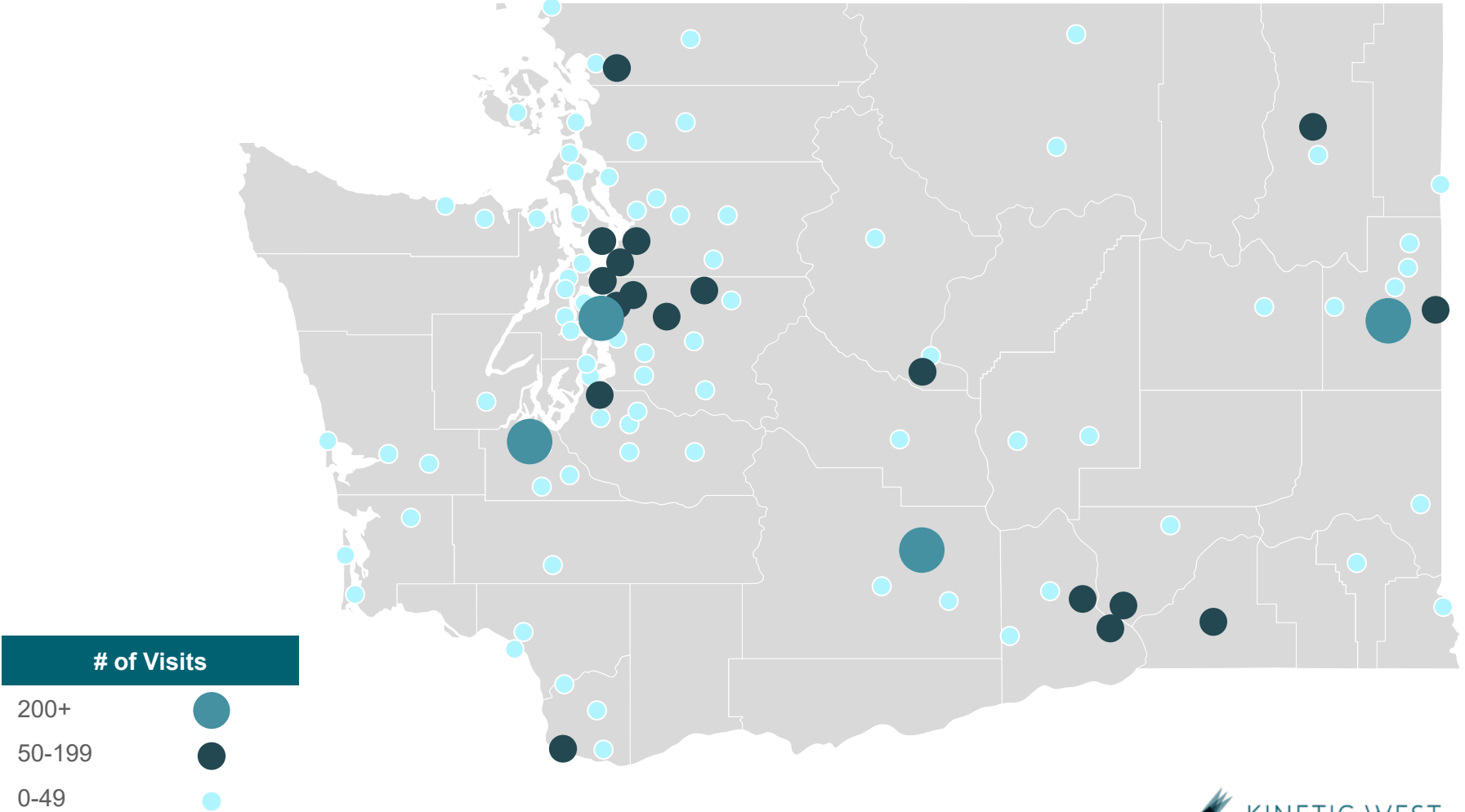
The State of Innovation Challenge, [launched](#) in November 2020 and open through March 2021, is a statewide initiative led by the Washington's STEM Education and Innovation Alliance in partnership with the Office of Governor Jay Inslee, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Career Connect Washington. The initiative invites learners to offer solutions to policy issues related to hunger, mental health and community resilience that have emerged from the COVID-19 (coronavirus) global pandemic while also exploring pathways to careers and postsecondary education.



Interest in the Challenge stretched across the state

Top cities by web traffic:

- Seattle
- Spokane
- Yakima
- Olympia
- Tacoma
- Pasco
- Bothell
- Vancouver
- Kennewick
- Everett



The Challenge asked Washington youth for their ideas for solving some of the state's big problems...



“The Food Chain”

Addressing food insecurity in Washington



“Responding to COVID-19”

Supporting mental health and fighting the misinformation pandemic



“Our Communities after COVID-19”

Building toward a more sustainable, resilient future

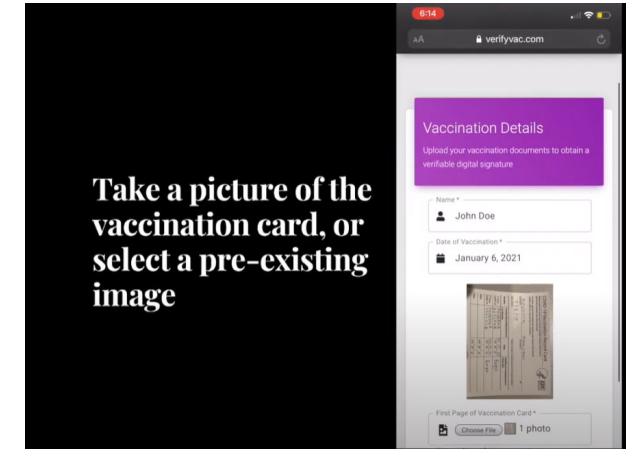
...and over 160 young people responded to the Challenge

The Challenge received **87 project submissions** from **162 students statewide**

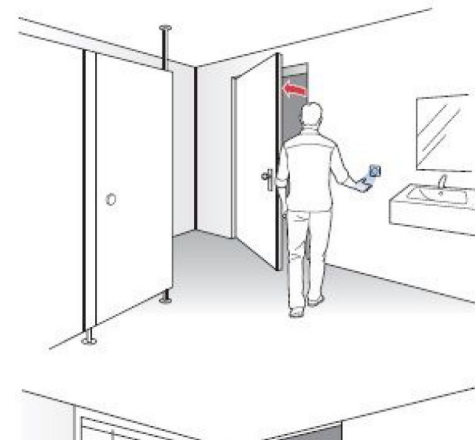
Projects included podcast episodes, business plans, fully functioning apps, videos, models, reports, Flipgrid videos, and more

Submissions came from:

- Schools in Bothell, Colville, Darrington, Olympia, Puyallup, Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma, Tumwater, Walla Walla, and Yakima
- 4-H, homeschool co-op, Open Doors, and virtual schools
- Independent submissions – students who created projects on their own or with their families



H.A.N.D.S.





State of Innovation Challenge
**Lessons Learned
and Next Steps**

Lessons Learned

Project-based model creates deeper, sustained engagement in topics

- Active engagement in problem solving, partnering with industry, community research
- Greater engagement in the project work vs. industry sessions, students wanted to “do” more than “explore”

“One stop shop” with instructional guides, other resources was key to Challenge design

- Instructional guides saw significantly more use than the “lesson bank,” suggesting teachers may be focused on easy access supplemental materials vs. lesson collaboration

Industry engagement video library available for future use

- Along with CareerConnect@Home library, over 40 Washington based careers available to explore, ranging from computer science to engineering to high-tech manufacturing



Next Steps

Recognizing participants

- Every participant will receive a letter from Governor Inslee recognizing their hard work and participation
- Challenge closing event, April 15, 3-3:30 PM, featuring the winning students and Superintendent Reykdal

Potential for future partnerships

- Strong interest from educators in continuing the Challenge next school year
- If you're interested in replicating the Challenge or have a suggestion for a partner to take it on for next year, email julia.reed@kineticwest.com



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE

March 5, 2021

Dear Azeem:

Thank you for participating in the State of Innovation Challenge. In 2020, our state faced complex and daunting challenges. Washingtonians navigated a global pandemic, along with the pre-existing crises of climate change and racial injustice.

Through all of this, our communities – and especially young people like you – kept learning, growing, and taking care of each other. We've made it through a lot, but these challenges continue into 2021 and creative solutions are key to moving forward.

That's where you come in. From ensuring access to healthy foods, to responding to COVID-19 and supporting our communities after the pandemic, each case in the State of Innovation Challenge offers an opportunity for you – our state's future leaders – to engage with topics important to the wellbeing of Washingtonians.

Your participation in the State of Innovation Challenges, and problem-based learning opportunities like it, build the critical skills of developing creative solutions that reflect the needs of our communities and acknowledge the complexities of the problems we are trying to solve.

Washington has always been a state of innovation – we invented the jet plane, the bone marrow transplant, the Windows computer, and much more. By taking part in this Challenge, you are stepping into your role as a leader of the next generation of thinkers, doers, dreamers, and innovators.

I encourage you to keep going; learn everything you can about these issues, and apply what you learn to improve and expand on your innovations. Talk about your innovation with elected officials and community leaders in your local area, including the Governor's Office! We need your voice and your ideas to make our state a better place for everyone.

Thank you for participating in this important work. We are proud of you and of all of our young innovators, and we can't wait to see how you will leave your mark on Washington.

Please join us on April 15 at 3:30 PM for the closing event!