

LEAN AND BROKE

WHAT WE LEARNED PARTNERING ON A NATIONAL
CHALLENGE WITH NO MONEY AND NO TIME



MAY







JUNE



NIOSH

OSHA[®]

U.S. Department of Labor
MSHA
Mine Safety & Health Administration







JULY



Hear and now.

Submit your invention. Improve lives.



AUGUST

NEWEST CHALLENGES

Hear and Now – Noise Safety Challenge

 Department of Labor



Challenge Details

Discussions **11**

Solutions **5**

Rules

Submit Solution

Challenge Followers **17**

About the Challenge

Design new technology to reduce workplace hearing loss.

Posted By: [Department of Labor](#)

Category: [Ideas](#)

Partners: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Skill: [Ideas](#)

Interest: [Public Safety](#)

Partnership With: [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)

Submission Dates: **12 a.m. ET, Aug 01, 2016 - 4 p.m. ET, Sep 30, 2016**

Judging Dates: **Sep 30, 2016 - Oct 07, 2016**

Winners Announced: **Oct 07, 2016**

Twenty-two million workers are exposed to potentially damaging noise at work each year. Last year, U.S. businesses paid more than \$1.5 million in penalties for not protecting workers. While it's impossible to put a number on the human toll of hearing loss, an estimated \$242 million is spent annually on workers' compensation for hearing loss disability.

[Follow this challenge](#)

Prizes



Finalist

We will select the 10 best ideas and invite to pitch their selected ideas to an investor/judge panel at the Noise Safety Challenge. Winning ideas will be considered by NIOSH Research to Practice (r2p) and interact with US Patent Office representatives. NIOSH r2p's mission is to increase the use, adoption, and adaptation of technologies in practice to prevent occupational fatalities, injuries, and illnesses. NIOSH partners



SEPTEMBER

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Hear and Now: The Noise Safety Challenge

Posted on September 12, 2016 by Garrett Burnett, MS, MBA



The Burden of Noise

The idea of being hurt on the job tends to produce images of harrowing trauma, broken bones, and blood. Yet every year for more than a quarter of a century, hearing loss has quietly been among the most prevalent occupational health concerns in the United States. Approximately 22 million U.S. workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels at work. In addition to diminishing workers' quality of life, occupational hearing loss carries a high economic price to society.

An Opportunity to Innovate

Occupational hearing loss is a problem that can be solved. OSHA and NIOSH are inviting businesses, inventors, and entrepreneurs to tackle the problem. Together we have announced Hear and Now: The Noise Safety Challenge. We are encouraging innovation and creative ideas that will make it possible to

1. Eliminate a noise source
2. Substitute a loud machine or tool for a quieter one (as typified in the [NIOSH Buy Quiet](#) initiative)
3. Isolate a noise source
4. Change work processes to minimize the noise a worker is exposed to
5. Create more effective protective equipment

Check the [Hear and Now](#) web page for more information, or submit an idea through [Challenge.gov](#).

Important Dates

- September 30, 2016: Deadline to submit ideas through [Challenges.gov](#).
- October 7, 2016: Top 10 ideas selected and announced.
- October 27, 2016: The Noise Safety Challenge Final will be held in Washington, D.C.



OCTOBER







AFTERWARD

PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

- “We’re not a giant company, so an award from OSHA and NIOSH is meaningful.”
- “Being selected was a huge boost to our credibility.”
- “The press releases provided leads, including paying clients.”
- “Since the challenge, we’ve sold out of product.”

PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

- “For early-stage companies, the validation is huge.”
- “It was really great meeting these other companies. We’ve stayed in touch with each other.”
- “Recognition is a big feather for us.”

PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

- “We got a lot of calls afterwards.”
- “The government gave us this third-party validation.”
- “To get that many ‘government players’ into one room would have taken us a year and cost about \$100,000.”

SUGGESTED INCENTIVES

- Help navigating the government procurement system.
- Lists of companies that are champions of hearing protection and companies we know that are seeking noise safety solutions.
- Lists of companies that have noise-related pain points (OSHA citations, workplace incidents, etc.).
- More access to NIOSH/OSHA labs, tools, and researchers.