

**The Carolina Collective Open Call:  
Crowdsourcing Ideas for a Safe  
Semester During COVID-19**

**Suzanne Day**

TechEngage Presentation  
February 18th, 2021



# Presentation Overview

1. Background & rationale
2. Open call design
3. Results: submission quality, participants, thematic analysis
4. Implementation & next steps
5. Conclusion & discussion



Residence Move-In Day, August 3, 2020  
Photo by Johnny Andrews

# Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing involves having a group attempt to solve a problem, then sharing the solutions with the public<sup>1</sup>



Examples:

- Wikipedia
- LEGO Ideas Platform
- OBSSR Scientific Priorities at the NIH

<sup>1</sup>Tucker et al., *PeerJ*, 2019

# Benefits of Crowdsourcing

- ‘Bottom-up’ approach to problem-solving (vs. top-down)
- Community engagement
- Crowd wisdom → innovative solutions



The Pit, Pre-COVID-19; Photo by Dan Sears

# Crowdsourcing Social Innovation During COVID-19

- Digital engagement (ex. #WeVsVirus digital hackathon)
- Locally-driven solutions, reflecting local concerns
- Rapid responses to emergency situation



Image: WeVsVirus Hackathon

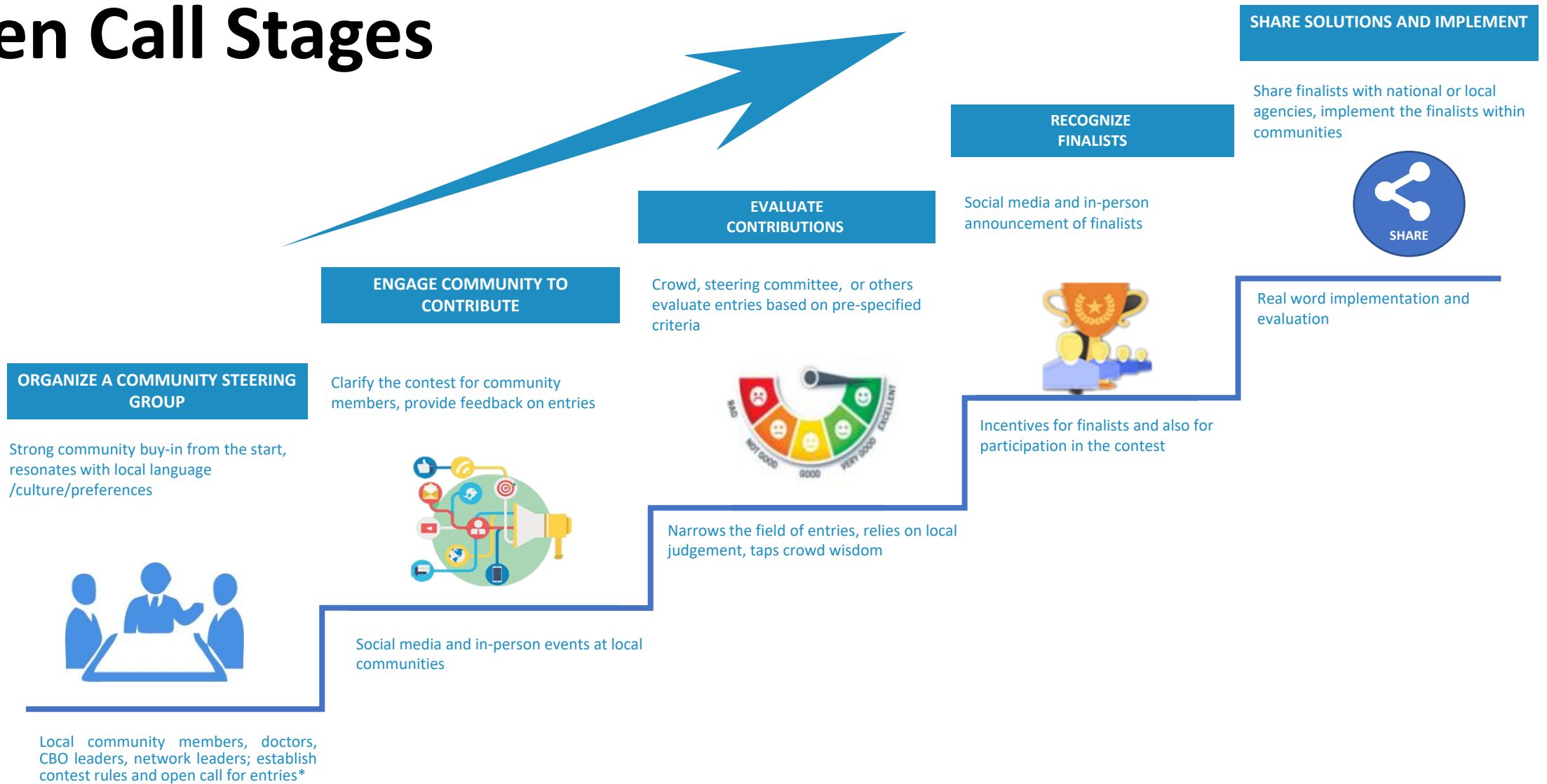
# Open Call Purpose

To solicit exceptional ideas from the UNC community to inform a safe Fall 2020 semester, and advocate for their implementation.



The screenshot shows the top portion of a website. The header is a solid blue bar. On the left, there is a logo for 'THE WELL' featuring a white icon of a classical building with a dome and columns, followed by the text 'THE WELL' in white, with 'THE' in a smaller font above 'WELL'. On the right side of the header, there is a smaller version of the building icon, followed by the text 'THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL' in white. Below the header is a white navigation bar with the following items: 'HOME', 'NEWS' with a downward arrow, 'ADMINISTRATION' with a downward arrow, 'PRIORITIES' with a downward arrow, 'EMPLOYEE RESOURCES' with a downward arrow, 'CALENDARS' with a downward arrow, and 'SEARCH'. The main content area has a white background. The headline reads 'Roadmap for Fall 2020 details announced' in a large, black, serif font. Below the headline, there is a sub-headline in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font: 'Changes include an early start and end to the semester and the phased reopening of labs and workspaces.' At the bottom of the main content area, there is a date: 'The Well, Thursday, May 21st, 2020'.

# Open Call Stages



*\*Entries can be short texts (concepts), images, or videos. They can describe patient perspectives, novel pilots, programs, or local policies.*

# Structure of the Carolina Collective


- Independent group of students, staff, faculty, alumni
- Three teams: Organizing Committee, Steering Committee, Judging Team
- Volunteers who responded to invite/call-for-participants





First Carolina Collective logo, designed by Claire Amon  
(undergraduate OC member)



# Open Call Submission Categories

 **Public health campaign** – How might we make the (virtual and physical) campus safe while continuing the things you are passionate about?

 **Inclusive digital dialogue** – How might we create a more effective bidirectional digital dialogue within and between our university groups?

 **Collective action** - How might we draw on our collective strengths to translate voices into action?

 **Re-thinking safety** – What are ways of creating and maintaining safety that are respectful and anti-racist?

# Promoting the Open Call

- Social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram) and email listservs
- Live events: info sessions, livestream
- \$20,000 in prizes
- Submissions open: June 16<sup>th</sup> – July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Congratulations**  
to our winners and runner-ups  
visit our website to see the results

Carolina Collective  
**Judges are now at work!**

Stay tuned to learn about the exceptional ideas our Carolina family came up with!

www.carolinacollective.web.unc.edu

**Carolina Collective Open Call**

How can we ensure a safer and more equitable Carolina Community in the COVID-19 Era? Raise your voice, and submit your idea!

**1 MORE DAY!**

Deadline is July 16, 11:50 PM ET. \$20,000 available in prizes.

Visit our website for more: [carolinacollective.web.unc.edu](http://carolinacollective.web.unc.edu)

**Now accepting submissions for our open call!**

**Carolina Collective is awarding \$20,000 in prizes!**

*raise your voice!*

HOW CAN WE KEEP THE CAROLINA COMMUNITY SAFE IN THE FALL?

Submit your creative ideas to Carolina Collective Open Call.  
Visit [carolinacollective.web.unc.edu](http://carolinacollective.web.unc.edu)

Carolina Collective invites you!

**INFECTIOUS DISEASES EXPERT™ - LIVESTREAM**

Hear two experts from the UNC School of Medicine talk about COVID-19 at Carolina, starting the fall semester, and answers to your questions.

Dr. Mike Cohen, Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Health  
Dr. Joseph Tucker, Associate Professor, UNC School of Medicine

Send questions to [carolinacollective2020@gmail.com](mailto:carolinacollective2020@gmail.com)

Live on our Facebook Page: [@carolinacollective2020](https://www.facebook.com/carolinacollective2020)

Time: 9:30 - 10:30 am ET  
Monday, July 13, 2020

Carolina Collective is organizing an open call for creative ideas from the Carolina Community to inform the fall semester at UNC and how we live and learn in the COVID-19 era.

Visit [carolinacollective.web.unc.edu](http://carolinacollective.web.unc.edu)

HOW CAN WE ENSURE A SAFER AND MORE EQUITABLE CAROLINA IN THE COVID-19 ERA?

**\$20,000 IN PRIZES!**

**SUBMIT YOUR IDEA TO CAROLINA COLLECTIVE OPEN CALL**

**TELL US YOUR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE FALL SEMESTER!**

Visit [carolinacollective.web.unc.edu](http://carolinacollective.web.unc.edu)

**Do you have creative ideas to inform UNC re-opening?**

Submit your idea to Carolina Collective Open Call!

Visit [carolinacollective.web.unc.edu](http://carolinacollective.web.unc.edu)

Submissions open through July 16, 2020

0:00 / 50:28

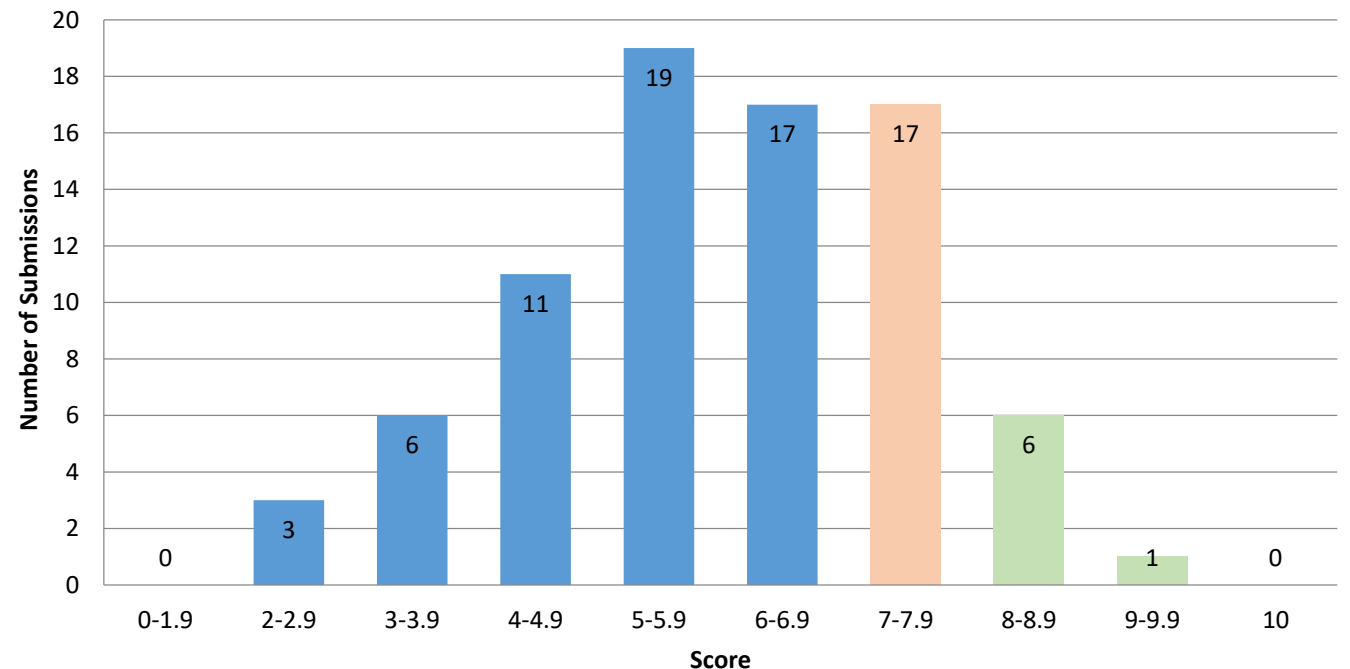
# Evaluating Submissions

- Screen for eligibility (3 reviewers)
- Five independent judges per submission
- Judging criteria: potential impact on safety & well-being of the university community; innovation; feasibility; inclusivity in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, disability.



# Results: Total Submissions & Finalists

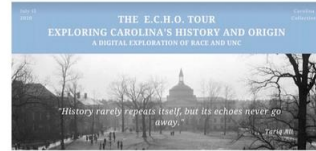
- 82 submissions total; 80 eligible for evaluation
- 47 individual submissions; 35 team submissions: 110 participants total
- 7 finalists (score of 8+/10), 17 runners-up (score of 7-7.9/10)
- Finalist prizes: \$2500 each; participatory & special prizes



# Celebrating Finalists/Runners-Up



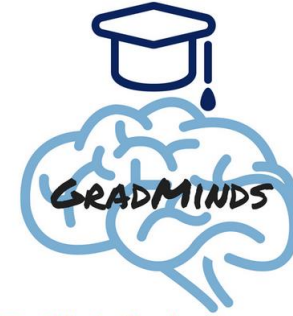
## Finalists



[E.C.H.O. Tour: Exploring Carolina's History and Origin](#)



[Equitable Sourcing of Unconventional Student Parking](#)



[GradMinds: Sharing Resources and Experiences in a Collaborative Environment](#)



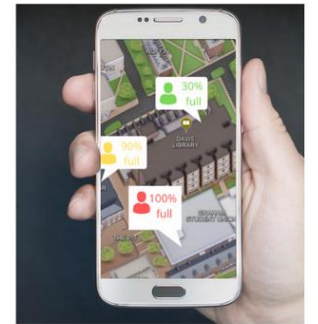
[UNC Immersive Learning Collective](#)



[NOVID: An App to Connect—and Distance—our Campus Communities in the COVID-19 Era](#)

## REAL HEEL MENTORS

[Real Heel Mentors](#)

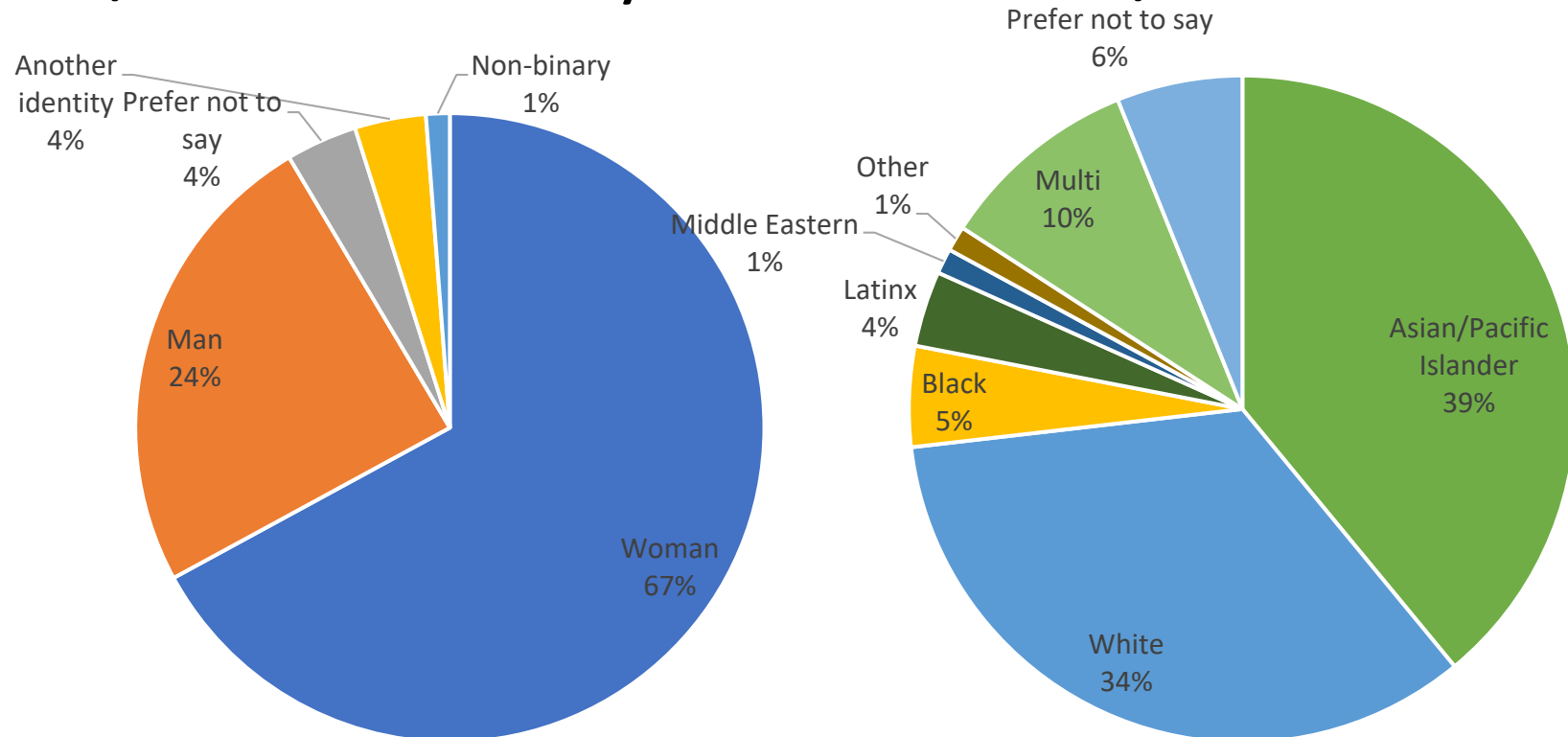


[SWYPE: Non-Invasive Contact Tracing for the UNC Community](#)

# Demographics of Submitting Participants

Of 82 submissions:

- 68% by current UNC students; 18% by staff, 4% faculty; 9% other
- 82% by people under age 30 years
- 67% women; 60% as racial/ethnic minority or multi-racial/ethnic
- 5% by persons with a disability



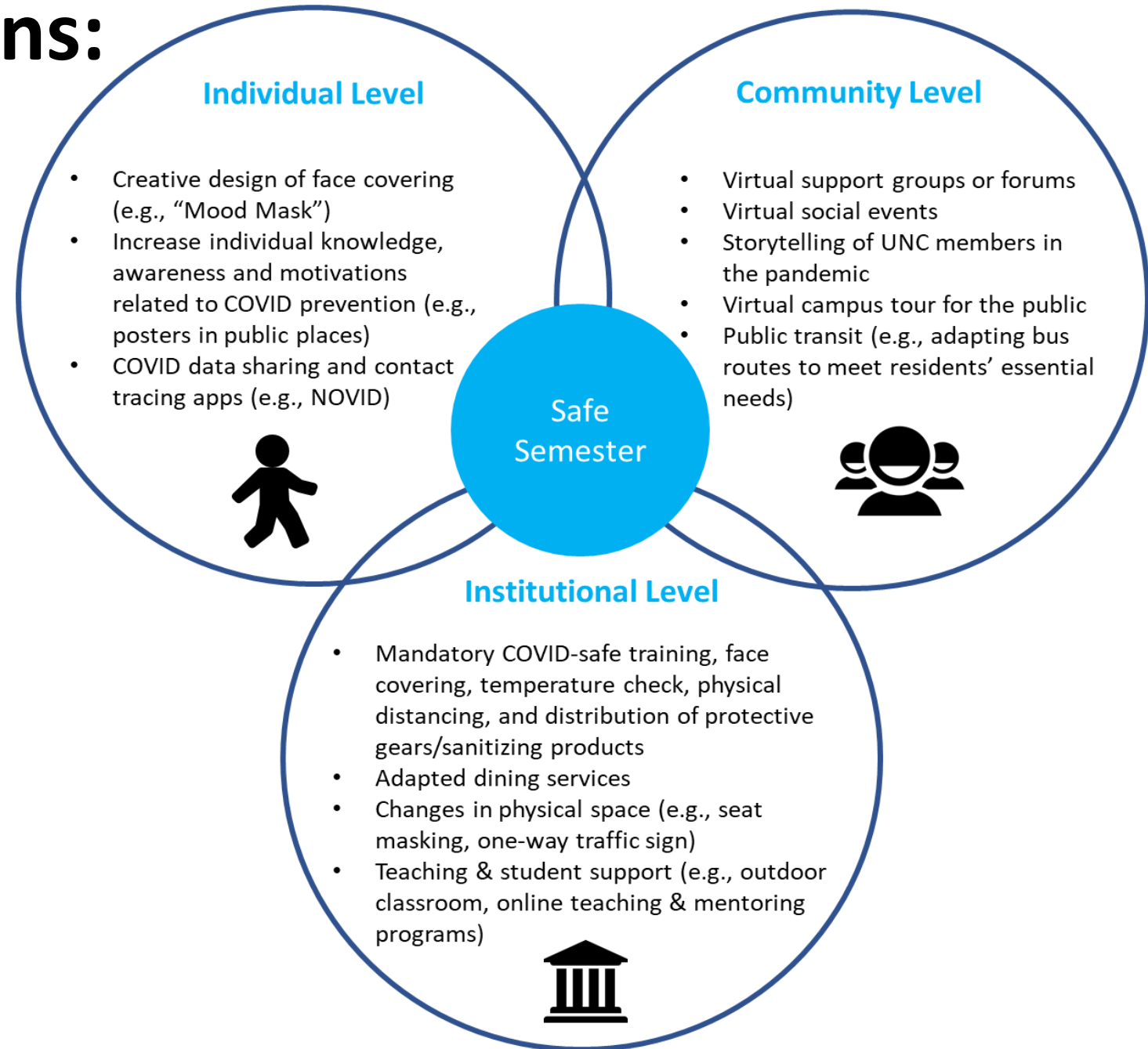
# Analysis of Submissions: Challenges & Goals

Challenges Identified	Submission Goals	Examples of Proposed Solutions
<b>Risk of COVID infection</b>	To contain the spread of COVID	Disseminating protective/sanitation gear, contact tracing, temperature checks.
<b>Limits of remote learning</b>	To optimize the remote learning experiences	Expanding access to remote learning resources, providing virtual mentorship or career development training, utilizing VR.
<b>Deteriorating mental health</b>	To provide mental health support	Virtual social events, online support groups, safe spaces for visiting.
<b>Negative impact of racism and inequities</b>	To address health equity during the pandemic	Equalizing access to protective gear, addressing food insecurity, work safety and pay increase for low-income workers.
<b>Reduced operation of public transit</b>	To ensure equal access to safe transportation	Increasing affordable on-campus parking, bus seat sign-up system, direct bus routes between student dorms and stores.

# Analysis of Submissions: Intervention Level

Of 82 submissions:

- 55% Institutional level
- 39% Community level
- 17% Individual level





# Supporting Finalists Towards Implementation

- Outreach & resources from Innovate Carolina
- Presentation of finalist/runners-up ideas to UNC leadership and Comms

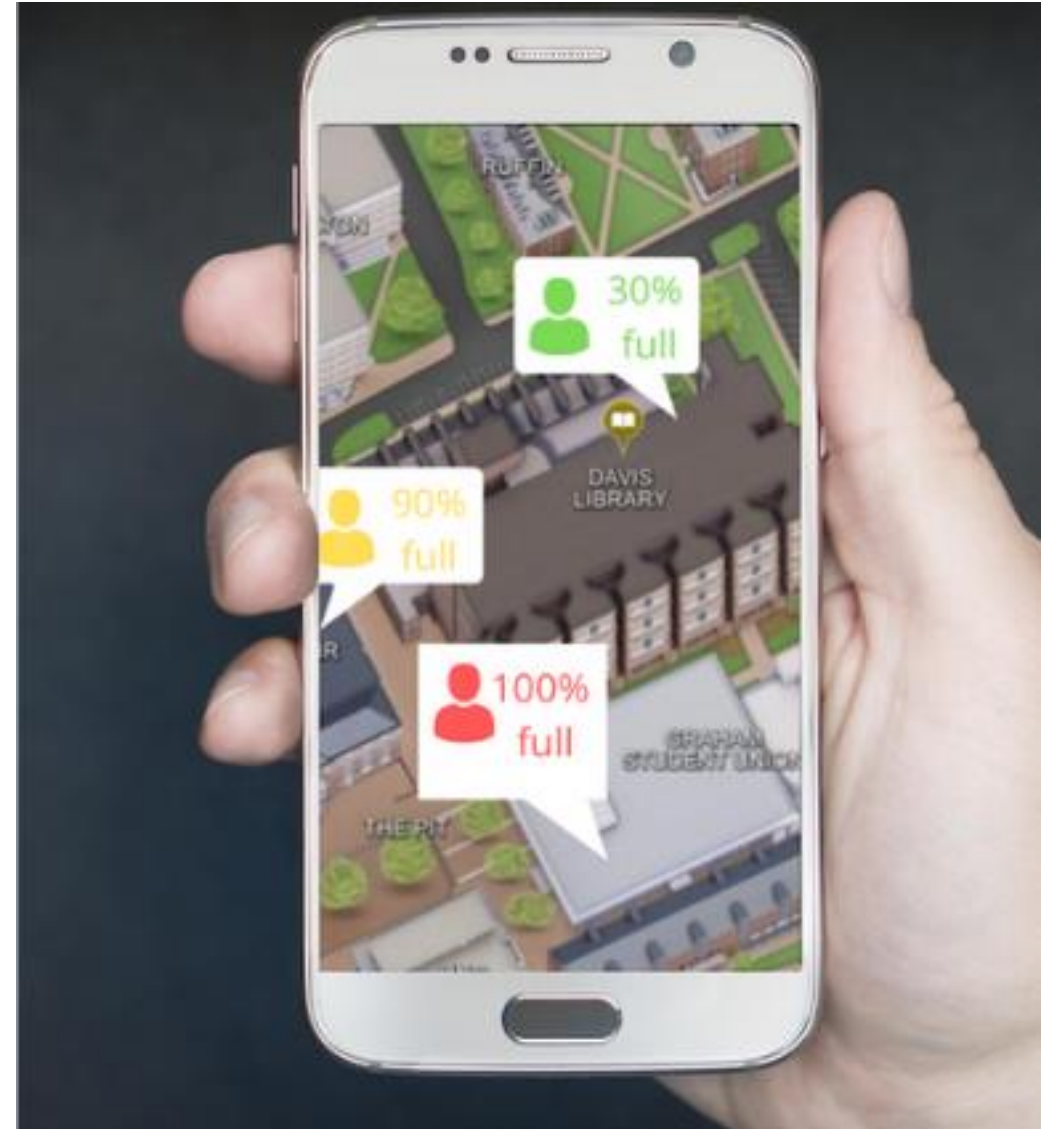


Image: Marley Davis-Martin & Helen Johnson (finalists), SWYPE app

# Next Steps ...

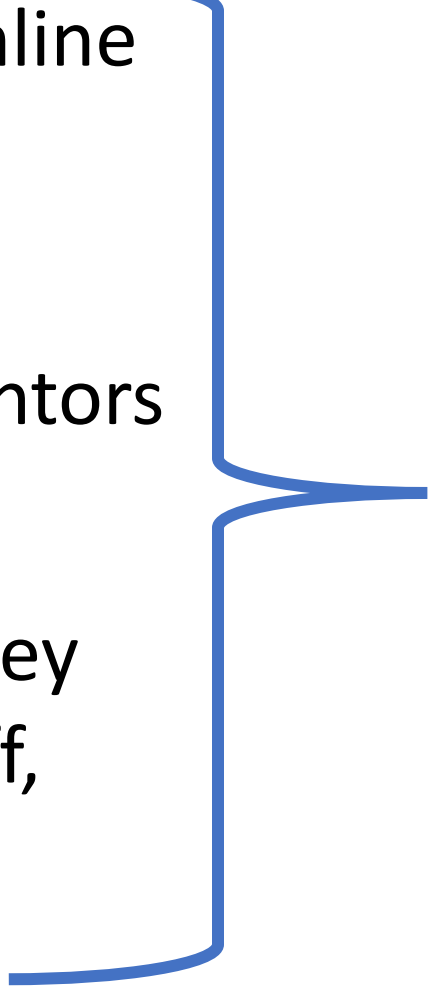
UNC community survey:

- Preferences for finalist ideas vs. existing resources
- Linking finalist teams with volunteers



UNC Classroom; Photo by John Gardiner

# Other University-Based COVID Crowdsourcing

- MIT: Community forums, online suggestion box
  - U-M Campus Challenge: Undergrads paired with mentors to create solutions
  - UConn: Crowdsourcing survey (students) & workshop (staff, faculty)
  - Run by (or direct partners with) university leadership
  - Limited range of stakeholders & opportunities for building your own team
  - Narrow definition of pandemic challenges
- 

# Conclusions

## Open calls are a feasible method for rapid, digital engagement during COVID

- Strong participation among racial/ethnic minorities, disproportionately impacted by the pandemic
- Early warning of UNC community concerns



*raise  
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voice!*

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# THANK YOU

**Steering Committee:** Ada Adimora, Mimi Chapman, Giselle Corbie-Smith, Elizabeth Manekin, Reeves Moseley, Dee Poon, and Barbara K. Rimer

**Organizing Committee:** Fouad Abu-Hijleh, Claire Amon, Sarah Asuquo, Vanya Bhat, Elizabeth Chen, Fairchild Davis, Suzanne Day, Chelsea Deitelzweig, Elizabeth DuBose, Larry Han, Lisa Hightow-Weidman, Takhona Grace Hlatshwako, Chunyan Li, Hailey Mason, Sarah Payne, Audrey Pettifor, Rohit Ramaswamy, Weiming Tang, Joseph D. Tucker, and Kathryn Wagner

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Innovate Carolina

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