

Competition Rules



Who can pitch, how to submit, how judging works and how to receive prize money.

1 Who Can Pitch

LaunchPad pitch competitions are open to current students, from undergraduate through doctoral programs.

Current Students

- Any current Syracuse University undergraduate, graduate or doctoral student may pitch as a founder or co-founder.
- You may present a pitch by yourself or as part of a team.
- You **may not pitch two ideas where you are the only team member** on both. For example, you cannot pitch a food brand as a one-person team and also pitch a consumer product as a one-person team.
- You may pitch your own idea and also join a team pitch for a different qualified venture.

Students in Alumni Businesses

A current student who works in a business founded by an alum may pitch that business only if the student meets **ALL** of the following:

- Has been involved with the company since before the original founder graduated.
- Has been with the company for at least one year or for 50% of the company's existence, whichever is longer.
 - **Only exception:** a student with less than one year may qualify if they own at least 10% of the company.
- Plays an integral role in the development of the product, service or company, equal to co-founder status.
- Will stay with the company for at least one year after the pitch.
- Is not working on any other project. This business must be their only project.

Alumni Founders

- Alumni founders **may not pitch**, either alongside the current student or on their own.
- A team member, such as a COO, who has been with the alumni founder since the founder was a student may pitch for the business.
- Someone hired after the founder graduated, such as an intern, may not pitch for the business.

2 Submissions

To qualify, complete every part of the registration by the posted deadline.

Registration Includes

- Personal information: name, email, school and founding date
- Executive summary
- A link to your pitch deck in Canva or Google Slides

Share your deck. Share the link with LaunchPad staff or set it to "Anyone with the link can view." It is your job to check the link with LaunchPad staff 24 hours before the event. If staff cannot open your deck, you will not be allowed to pitch.

72-hour cutoff. No pitch decks or executive summaries will be accepted less than 72 hours before the competition. **No email submissions will be accepted.**

3 Competition Day

- 1 **Opening ceremony**
- 2 **Pitch rounds.** Every room has at least two judges. Each team pitches, then answers questions from the judges.
- 3 **Final round (larger competitions).** Judges from every room weigh in on the winner, drawing on their personal experience and the rubric scores, including minority opinions.
- 4 **Closing ceremony.** Winners are announced after the final judging period.

4 Judging

Judges choose the winners and may award prize money to any company they see fit.

Judges may use

- The judging rubric
- The pitch and answers from the question period
- The executive summary
- Their life and professional experience
- Knowledge from past judging
- Knowledge from mentorship meetings with the company
- Information from networking before the event
- The opinions of other judges

Judges may not use

- Any information or input from LaunchPad staff, full-time or part-time

LaunchPad staff have no say in any judging round of any competition. Prize decisions are based only on what judges already know about the company and what is said during the pitch and question period.

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Receiving Prize Money

- 1 **Schedule a meeting** with the program manager or director after you win.
- 2 **Complete the necessary forms** at that meeting.
- 3 **Receive your funds** in your bursar account or your business checking account.

Allow 4-8 weeks for the money to arrive in your account.