

Startup Pitch

These are the guidelines for the Startup Pitch competitive event at Novus Pitch Day 2022. This competitive event requires participants to write a comprehensive business plan, develop a minimum viable product or prototype, and pitch to industry practitioners. All information presented by competitors in the business plan and pitch should be true and verifiable.



Groups

Competitors are permitted to participate in this competitive event individually or within groups of 1-5 students.



Business Plan – 45% of final score

Competitors are required to submit a business plan that is a minimum of 5 pages. Students are encouraged to utilize visuals in their business plan and relevant primary/secondary research.



Pitch – 55% of final score

Competitors are required to pitch their startups to industry practitioners at Pitch Day. During this pitch, all group members must present a live pitch to judges – presenting a recorded pitch will result in disqualification.

Important Deadlines

Registration – January 31, 2022

The deadline to register for competition is January 31, 2022. Please contact your entrepreneurship teacher to register for Pitch Day.

Feedback – March 15, 2022

Get feedback on your full or in-progress business plan, which won't impact your score, through [this link](#) by March 15, 2022.

Business Plan – April 13, 2022

Final business plans are due to be submitted [here](#), by April 13, 2022 at 11:59PM CST. Business plans submitted past this time will receive -10 penalty points for each day that they are late.

Pitch Day – April 29, 2022

Pitch Day will take place virtually on April 29, 2022. Students will receive Zoom links to conference activities and pitch rooms several days before this date.

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Key Areas of Interest

The following key areas of interest were written to provide competitors with trends and technologies that are of new and exciting relevance to business, technology, and investment sectors. Competitors are encouraged (not required) to explore these ideas/trends in the development of their startups.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and Big Data

AI/ML is used to navigate roads in autonomous vehicles, provide you with interesting content on social media platforms, and determine demand for products in your local grocery store. Can AI/ML be helpful to your product/service?

Healthcare Technology, Healthtech, Telehealth, Telemedicine

The healthcare industry is riddled with governmental regulations which makes the barrier to entry quite high and consequently, the industry has been slow to innovate. However, brave and innovative startups are taking up the challenge to improve the way that patients receive healthcare and navigate the healthcare industry.

Talent Recruitment and Retention

Companies are struggling to recruit and retain talent due to evolving expectations from employees, rampant competition from other employers, and a lack of access to highly qualified talent.

Consumers are more health-conscious

Due to COVID-19, consumers have become more health-conscious in every aspect of their lives.

Consumers are more reliant on delivery services e.g. Amazon, DoorDash

Due to the rise in cases of COVID-19 and resultant regulations, consumers have become more reliant on delivery services.

Consumers are more concerned about protecting their digital privacy and data

The increased use of technology throughout the daily life of an average consumer has led to more concern over digital privacy and protection of data.

Consumers are more conscious about their consumption

Consumers have grown to care more about where their products/services come from and what they're supporting using their money.

Business Plan Requirements

These requirements capture some of the most important elements of building a startup and offers competitors guidance in writing each section of their business plan. Students are encouraged to cite reputable, secondary sources throughout their business plan to enhance their credibility.

1. Problem

When developing your startup, you should spend a significant amount of time researching and identifying a problem that you can solve. In writing this section, ensure that you can convince your reader that you are solving a *real*, prominent problem through data and a strong narrative.

2. Solution

In this section, be sure that you illustrate that your solution effectively solves the problem that you identified. In your writing, be sure to describe the solution in strong detail, be realistic about its feasibility, and speak to whether people who experience the identified problem would utilize this solution. If competing products/services exist, ensure that you address them and strongly differentiate yourselves.

3. Minimum Viable Product/Prototyping Documentation

Developing a prototype of your solution is important in demonstrating its feasibility and usability. Be aware of your technical constraints and identify ways to develop your prototype within them – if you can't develop a fully-functional application, then design it. In this section, use graphics to illustrate your prototype and cite the industry standards/principles you adhered to in its development.

4. Primary Market Research

Collecting primary research and analyzing that data to derive insights is an important part of building a startup. Utilize this section to showcase data/feedback you collected from users or customers through interviews, focus groups, or beta tests and make sure to highlight how the data impacted your startup's development.

5. Customer Segments

Identifying key demographics for your target customer is important in being able to segment your customer base and determine who you are making your solution for. Use primary and secondary research to help your reader understand your rationale for segmentation and appeal to each segment.

6. Channels

This section is focused on what channels you will use to reach your customers (e.g. Instagram, Email, Text). Most often, a multi-channel solution is needed to meaningfully interact with customers in various stage. In this section, ensure you identify when and why you'll use any particular channel.

7. Key Metrics

In planning to launch a startup, it is important to identify metrics or analytics that you can capture and analyze to understand performance. In this section, be sure to explain why this data is effective in understanding your startup's performance and also how you plan to collect the data.

8. Financial Statements/Projections

Understanding the costs and potential returns of your startup is an important step in developing a pitch. Startups use various financial templates to communicate their costs and potential revenue to stakeholders, or potential investors. Identify an appropriate financial document (e.g. cash flow, income statement, P&L) and use it to illustrate your startup's financial future.

Business Plan Scoring Rubric

Each section of the business plan is assigned a score from 0 to 5 by 2 judges. Their scores will be averaged to determine your final score. Itemized scores and any available comments from judges will be provided to students following Pitch Day.

Below Standards

0 - 1 points

Incomplete or missing, unrealistic ideas/deductions, grammatical and/or spelling errors, none or limited credible sources, limited potential for product-market-fit

Meets Standards

2 - 3 points

Compelling writing, limited to no grammatical/spelling errors, realistic ideas and deductions, mostly credible sources, sufficient graphics, moderate potential for product-market-fit

Exceeds Standards

4 - 5 points

Compelling writing, no grammatical/spelling errors, mostly credible sources, strong use of graphics to convey meaning, realistic ideas/deductions, high likelihood of product-market-fit



Pitch Guidelines

This competitive event culminates in a pitch to industry practitioners. In a group entry, all members of the group must participate in delivering the live pitch. During the pitch it is important for students to showcase the key points from each section of their business plan, in order to communicate a story about their exciting business opportunity. Competitors are not required to make a financial request, or pitch for investment – judges will evaluate pitches based on the rubric on *Page 6*.

Setup • 1 Minute

Competitors have 1 minute to complete setup (e.g. screensharing). Testing technology beforehand is highly recommended as the need of additional time for setup will be deducted from pitch time.



If participating within a group, all members must participate in delivering the live pitch.

Pitch • 10 Minutes

Whenever setup is complete, notify your judge(s) that you are ready to begin pitching. Competitors are allotted 10 minutes to deliver their pitch, minus any additional setup time, if applicable.



Pay attention to time! Going over allotted time will affect your judge's impression of you.



Secure a private space to deliver your pitch so that you're free from any interruptions.

Q&A • 5 Minutes

After 10 minutes have elapsed or the pitch has concluded, judges will begin a Q&A session. Judges are permitted to ask as many questions as they'd like during this 5 minute session.



Improve your credibility with judges by citing reputable sources in your pitch!

Pitch Rubric

In scoring pitches, judges go through each statement and indicate the level to which their standards or expectations were met.



	Below Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
The participant(s) identified a significant problem and exciting business opportunity	0 - 1	2 - 3	4 - 5
The product/service being developed is effective at solving the identified problem			
The product/service is unique and better than any applicable competing products/services			
The participant(s) identified key metrics that effectively measure the success of the product/service			
The participant(s) conducted sufficient research on their customers and segmented them appropriately			
The participant(s) identified appropriate channels and strategies to communicate with and acquire customers			
The participant(s) presented an adequate review of their financial status or projections			
The participant(s) developed and demoed an adequate minimum viable product			
The participant(s) cited credible and relevant research throughout their pitch			
This startup has a high potential to achieve product-market-fit			
The participant(s) effectively answered all questions			
The participant(s) appeared poised, confident, and prepared			