



# BUSINESS PLAN & BIG IDEA COMPETITION 2025

*WRITE IT, PITCH IT, WIN IT!* 

**2025 GUIDEBOOK**

# Business Plan Competition & Big Idea Competition

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### > Sponsors

We are grateful to several individuals and businesses who encourage entrepreneurship by sponsoring the CBPP Business Plan Competition. The full list of sponsors was not available during the revision the guidebook and will be provided at: <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-business-and-public-policy/events/business-plan-competition-2025/index.cshtml>

### > Questions?

If you have any questions after reviewing this guidebook, please contact the Competition Organizer, Dr. Helena Wisniewski, at [hswisniewski@alaska.edu](mailto:hswisniewski@alaska.edu).

# Overview

## > Business Plan Competition and Best Idea Competition

This year, 2025, the competition has two paths: The Business Plan Competition and the Big Idea Competition. Two Paths to Win. You can submit a Business Plan to unlock your entrepreneurial potential, or if you are not ready for a business plan, join the Big Idea Competition.

The CBPP Business Plan Competition inspires and encourages entrepreneurship and economic development. UAA students and aspiring entrepreneurs from the community present their startup ideas and meet and receive feedback from experienced investors, executives, and seasoned entrepreneurs who have successfully started and grown businesses.

Finalists in both categories will be invited to attend a session focusing on elements they should incorporate into their presentations for the culminating Perfect Pitch event.

### NOTE:

- Entrants for both the Business Plan Competition and the Big Idea Competition may win multiple prizes.
- The Sustainability Award will be given for the best plan in one of the following:
  - The best description in the business plan of how the startup will sustain its business and grow.
  - The best business plan for green technology.
- The best use of AI must illustrate how the idea uses or is based on an aspect of AI and that it is feasible.
- If two different plans fulfill one of these categories, then the award will be split.

## > Stages of the Competition

### > Stage 1

#### **WRITTEN BUSINESS PLAN:**

The required business plan format and components are detailed starting on page 4 of this guidebook. Finalists are selected from the submitted business plans. They receive a Finalist Certificate and are invited to the next stage of the competition.

#### **BIG IDEA COMPETITION:**

The required components are detailed starting on page 8.

> Stage 2

**BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION - PERFECT PITCH TRADE SHOW & INVESTOR PITCH:**

Overall, winners will be selected based on a trade show display and a live investor pitch presented before a panel of judges and an audience at the final Perfect Pitch event. To compete at Perfect Pitch, finalists must be present in person and deliver a live pitch followed by a Q&A session with the judging panel. Final scores are based on the trade show display (10%) and the live pitch/Q&A (90%).



**BIG IDEA COMPETITION:**

Winners will be selected based on their live pitch, followed by a Q&A session with the judging panel.

> Award Categories

> Awards total at least \$20,000 in the following categories:

**BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION:**

- Grand Prize - \$8,000
- Second Prize - \$4,000
- People’s Choice - \$1,000
- Sustainability Award - \$2,000
- First Fortune 500 Award - TBD

**BIG IDEA COMPETITION:**

- Grand Prize: \$2,000
- Best Use of AI - \$1,000
- People’s Choice - \$1,000
- Sustainability - \$1,000

> Timeline

> March 17, 2025

Business Plan and Big Idea proposals **due by 11:59 PM Alaska Time** to: [hswisniewski@alaska.edu](mailto:hswisniewski@alaska.edu) with a copy to [uaa\\_cbpp\\_bpc@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa_cbpp_bpc@alaska.edu).

> April 11, 2025

Finalists announced. The number of finalists may vary from year to year.

➤ **The week of April 14, 2025**

Investor Pitch Info Session to help finalists prepare for the Perfect Pitch presentation and Q&A.

➤ **April 25, 2025**

**Perfect Pitch.** Finalists will attend this culminating event in person to showcase their businesses during a mini Trade Show followed by live investor pitches in front of a panel of judges and a live audience.

## Eligibility Requirements

The CBPP Business Plan Competition inspires and encourages entrepreneurship and economic development. UAA students and aspiring entrepreneurs from the Municipality of Anchorage present their startup ideas and meet and receive feedback from experienced investors, executives, and seasoned entrepreneurs

➤ **2025 CBPP Business Plan Competition & Big Idea Competition is open to:**

- UAA students from any discipline at all UAA campuses,
- Aspiring entrepreneurs in the community.
- Team size should not exceed five members.
- Multi-disciplinary, cross-pollinated teams are encouraged.
- We will accept business plans for new ventures, products, innovative projects, and non-profit ideas as well as plans for existing businesses in the early-stage who need resources to grow.
- The objective of the business plan competition is to promote marketable business and social enterprise ideas that have the potential to attract funding, launch, and prosper. Each person on the team should be involved from the concept through the development of the business plan. Ideally, each team member will take an active ownership role in the startup.
- All plans, pitches, and presentations must be accurate and truthfully represent the venture. Misrepresentation will result in disqualification.

## Evaluation Criteria

*There are two stages of the Business Plan Competition. In Stage 1, competitors are evaluated based on a written business plan. Based on the strength of the written plan, finalists will be selected to compete in Stage 2: The Perfect Pitch. During Perfect Pitch, finalists are evaluated on a trade show presentation and a live investor pitch/Q&A. Criteria for all Business Plan components (written plan, trade show and investor pitch) are detailed below. Numbers in parentheses indicate the value of the criterion.*

### Business Plan Competition - Criteria (100 points possible)

- *Necessary components* – The business plan contains all the required sections (5)
- *Viability* – The venture is implementable, realistic, and viable (20)
- *Market opportunity* – Show the market potential of the proposed venture exists and your method for taking advantage of it (15)
- *Competitive advantage* – the business has a unique, novel, or distinct approach, which gives it an advantage (15)
- *Management capability* – Contestants can effectively develop the venture and handle the tasks necessary for its success (15)
- *Innovation* – Contestants have developed an innovative solution to an existing or emerging problem (15)
- *Financial understanding* – Contestants have a good understanding of the financial requirements of the venture (15)

### Perfect Pitch finalists will be evaluated on two components

1. **Trade Show Presentation** – The trade show is held before the Investor Pitch. Finalists prepare a display/presentation in the trade show room. Judges and guests visit and chat casually with finalists to learn about their businesses. The trade show presentation is worth 20% of the final judging and will be evaluated on the following criteria: (100 points possible)
  - Professionalism of the presentation of the materials (20)
  - Professionalism of the team (10)
  - Creativity and information value of the materials (25)
  - Extent to which materials convey what the product or service is (25)
  - Consistency between information provided at the Trade Show and the Business Plan (20)

2. **Investor Pitch** – A five-minute presentation followed by a 15-minute question/answer session. One member of the team will do the presentation, but all should be present on the stage. Pitches will be worth 80% of the final judging. Investor pitches will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Clear explanation of the product/service and persuasiveness of the oral presentation/pitch (10)
- Quality of the responses to questions from the judges (10)
- Venture viability (10)
- A clear statement of the problem/opportunity (customer pain) and solution (includes value proposition and customer pain you are eliminating) (20)
- Features & benefits of goods or services that the venture proposes and business model (20)
- Market potential – the size of the opportunity, competitive analysis & competitive advantage (20)
- Forecast and Financial summary and need for investment (10)

➤ **Big Idea Competition - Criteria (100 points possible)**

- *Innovation and Originality* - The idea should be novel and original, demonstrating a unique approach (20)
- *Impact and Relevance* - The idea should address a genuine need or problem, offering significant benefits or improvements over current practices. or a new solution to a problem (25)
- *Feasibility and implementable* - should be realistically achievable and practical to implement within a reasonable timeframe and budget (20)
- *Sustainable and Scalable* - should be sustainable over the long term and have the potential for growth, and be scalable (15)
- *Market Potential and Economic Viability*: should have a clear target market and the potential for economic viability, including a sound business model or monetization strategy (20)



# Business Plan Competition Format & Components

## > Format

### > File format

A printable PDF file.

### > Length

Limit your plan to seven (7) pages, including a two-page executive summary. The page limit does not include the cover page and single table of contents page. The written plan may include an Appendix with up to four additional pages.

### > Page format

Single-spacing with one-inch margins and 12-point Times New Roman font. This line spacing and font requirement apply to the document's textual content, not to titles and descriptions accompanying pictures, graphs, tables, or worksheets. All pages must be numbered, excluding the cover page.

### > Cover page

Must include the logo, the venture name, the team members, and contact information for each team member. The contact information should consist of an e-mail address and a phone number.

### > Financial data

Financial data should be summarized and highlighted in the written plan, supporting details, and spreadsheet information in the Appendix. Startup costs and how the investment will be used, along with income and cash flow statements, are appropriate.

## > Tip - Developing your business plan

To be competitive, your plan needs to differentiate your business from other competitors. The clarity and descriptiveness of your proposal will make a difference and enhance your chances of becoming a finalist. In the business world, you would need to do the same thing to inspire stakeholders to support your new venture.

When developing your plan, you may consult any sources you deem appropriate, including websites on how to prepare a business plan. For example: [The U.S. Small Business Administration's Write your business plan.](#)



## > Components

### > Cover Page

### > Table of Contents

### > Executive Summary

- Business description concept
- The Problem that you are solving
- Solution to the Problem
- Value Proposition
- Product or service description
- Target market and size
- Financial summary –just a few bullet points that include breakeven point, and over a 3-year period revenue trend, and gross margin.
- Key management team.
- A statement of resources needed, increments of capital accepted.
- Exit strategy

### > Business Description

- Company description
- Value proposition
- Mission
- Product and/or services description
- Business model
- Current Status
- Current or committed funding and all funding sources

### > Competitive Analysis and Advantages

Comparison between your company and your competitors (you can use a chart to compare).

### > Market Opportunity & Analysis

- Customers
- What customer problem are you going to solve?
- How are you going to solve it?
- Market segment
- Size of market

### > Organization & Management Team

- Founders and key management personnel
- Form of ownership
- Partnerships
- Board of Advisors
- Board of Directors

### > Operational Plan

- Description of operations
- Exit strategy

### > Financial Analysis

- An analysis of your financials, including a breakeven point, and a spreadsheet that covers a three-year period.
- Gross margins over a three-year period
- Revenue over three years
- Cash flow over three years
- Profit
- Income statement
- Balance sheet

### > Funding

Explain how you will use the funding to support/start this business venture and sustain it beyond the initial funding

# Big Idea Competition Format & Components

Submit a cover page with the title of the Big Idea concept and the names of the team, followed by 3 pages that address the Big Idea Competition criteria.

## Submission

The Business Plan and Big Idea proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format to the Competition Organizer, Dr. Helena Wisniewski, at [hswisniewski@alaska.edu](mailto:hswisniewski@alaska.edu), with a **copy** to [uaa\\_cbpp\\_bpc@alaska.edu](mailto:uaa_cbpp_bpc@alaska.edu), **by 11:59 PM on March 17, 2025**.

### > After Business Plans are submitted:

- Business plans will be forwarded to a panel of judges for review prior to the competition. The list of judges is in the final section of this document.
- Finalists will be selected and announced on April 11, 2025.
- Finalists will prepare a five -minute pitch for the Perfect Pitch event, to be presented in front of the judges and a live audience.
- An info session to help finalists prepare for the Investor Pitch will be held the week of April 14, 2025. The forum will be via Zoom. Additional information regarding the time, date, and Zoom link will be e-mailed to each finalist.
- The Perfect Pitch final competition will be on April 25, 2025. Details, including a schedule of events, will be posted on the College of Business and Public Policy website at <https://business.uaa.alaska.edu/>

## Perfect Pitch Activities

Perfect Pitch is an exciting culmination of our Business Plan Competition. It is held in person in Anchorage, with the following components:

### ➤ **Trade Show Presentation**

- Each individual or team contestant finalist will be provided with a table to display prototypes, artifacts, information materials, and flyers relating to the product/service they are proposing in their new ventures.
- Each finalist can do a one-on-one presentation to each of the judges, using their Trade Show display as a prop. The trade show is a marketing opportunity and a chance to impress the judges further.
- Finalists will also get a chance to interact with other Perfect Pitch attendees, which can be an important part of the People's Choice selection.
- During the Trade Show portion of Perfect Pitch, finalists must be present at their designated tables to describe their displays and answer questions. All contestants should be versed in the venture and be able to explain it succinctly.
- The Trade Show presentation is worth 20% of the final Perfect Pitch score. Thus, products or services should be presented in a professional, attractive, and informative way.

### ➤ **Investor Pitch**

Each team or individual contestant will make a 5-minute presentation to the judges, using props or electronic media, as necessary. The judges will then have 15 minutes to pose questions to the contestants. The Investor Pitch accounts for 80% of the final Perfect Pitch score.

### ➤ **People's Choice Voting**

After presentations are completed, the audience will vote for the People's Choice Award while the judges are deliberating.

### ➤ **Award Ceremony**

The evening will culminate with the announcement of winners in all categories of the Business Plan Competition and the Big Idea Competition.

## Judges

We have an impressive group of judges who provide a wealth of experience as entrepreneurs, executives, venture firm partners, and accelerator directors. Thank you to our judges, who volunteer their time to provide valuable experience for our finalists. Please visit the website for pictures and other information about the judges.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ➤ I live outside Anchorage. Can I still submit a Business Plan?

Not unless you are a UAA student. The competition is limited to UAA students or aspiring entrepreneurs who live within the Municipality of Anchorage (Chugiak to Girdwood).

### ➤ I started my business a couple of years ago. Am I eligible to compete?

The process for getting a business up and running can take time. If your business is fairly new and you need funds to grow or are looking for expert feedback on your ideas, you are invited to submit your business plan to the competition.

### ➤ There are multiple prizes available. Is it possible to win more than one prize?

Certainly. For example, the 2022 winning team won Grand Prize, the Sustainability Award and the First Fortune 500 award. It is also possible to split a prize with another team if it is determined multiple teams are equally deserving.

### ➤ I'm going to be out of town on the date of the Perfect Pitch. Can I submit a video presentation instead?

If you are a finalist and would like to compete for prizes, you need to attend Perfect Pitch in person. Aside from the investor pitch, there is an important Q&A session with the judging panel and a Trade Show when you interact with judges and other Perfect Pitch attendees. Therefore, competition rules require in-person attendance.

### ➤ I'm on a team that was named a finalist. Do all of us have to be present at Perfect Pitch?

Yes, all team members must participate fully.

➤ **I won a cash award. Do I have to spend it on my business?**

The CBPP Business Plan Competition is sponsored by individuals, organizations, and businesses that want to support the entrepreneurial spirit. At its core, the Business Plan Competition has significant value beyond the cash awards. Participants gain much from the experience itself: preparing a solid plan, giving a pitch, receiving feedback from our expert panel of judges, and potentially catching the interest of an investor.

During Perfect Pitch, each finalist details their “ask” and describes what they need to do to further their business. Winners are expected to invest cash awards in their business idea, but there is no binding requirement to do so. At the least, we hope that finalists and winners will support the CBPP Business Plan Competition in the future by:

- Providing quotes/insights into how the experience helped them.
- Providing updates on their entrepreneurial progress. For example, even if the business plan entered doesn't become a reality, perhaps the experience led them to a new business idea or they found success applying entrepreneurial skills in a different way.
- Helping promote and expand the CBPP Business Plan Competition by spreading the word within their own networks.
- Attending future Perfect Pitch events to support and cheer on future contestants.