New York Business Plan Competition
Capital Region Semi-Finals

TEAM RESOURCE GUIDE

Friday, April 12, 2019

Massry Center for Business
**Welcome**

Thank you for your interest in the Capital Region Business Plan Semi-Final Competition. This event is hosted by the University at Albany School of Business. It will take place on Friday, **April 12, 2019** at the **Massry Center for Business at the University at Albany** campus.

This competition is open to students from schools and colleges in the greater Capital District of New York. Student teams must pick a track in which to compete. Winners of each track will compete against each other to win the regional championship. First and second place winners of each track will also become eligible to compete in the **statewide finals on April 26, 2019 in Albany**.

**What to Expect**

**Schedule**
Please the note schedule on page 3. Teams not present at roll call will not be eligible to present.

**Location & Parking**
The Massry Center for Business is located adjacent to the Collins Circle on the uptown campus of University at Albany. Team members may park in the student parking lot on the State Quad. You will receive a parking pass and campus map by email. This must be printed and placed on your dashboard. Please be sure to park only in the student parking lots that are marked Gold on the map. Failure to comply may result in parking tickets.

**Dining Options**
A light dinner will be provided. Campus Center dining options will be also open throughout the duration of the competition.

**Accommodations**
Hotel accommodations are not included in the registration. If you need accommodations, you may book directly at one of the many hotels within walking distance.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Do all members of a team have to be students?**
Yes, every member of a team must be a student currently enrolled in a college or university in the Capital District of New York.

**How many members are needed per team?**
There is no minimum requirement. Teams can be one single student.

**How can I be sure which track I should join?**
Use the track descriptions that follow to select the track that comes closest to your business plan. If you are unsure, send us a message.

**What are the prizes?**
Winners of each track will receive $300. Second place winners will receive $150. The team winning the regional final (Capital Cup), across all tracks will win an additional $500. Also, first and second prize winners in each track will become eligible to participate in the statewide final on April 26.
**Schedule**
(Subject to change. A final schedule will be available the day of the event.)

**Track Semi-Final**
4:45 PM – Judge Briefing & Dinner
5:00 PM - Registration
5:30 PM - Roll Call & Rule Review
6:00 PM - Track Presentations
6:30 PM - Judging & Track Results Announced

**Regional Final**
7:00 PM - Roll Call & Rule Review
7:15 PM - Track Winner Presentations
8:30 PM - Judging
9:00 PM - Regional Results Announced

**Team Eligibility/Requirements**
In order to be eligible to apply for and participate in the NYBPC, all teams must meet the following criteria:

- “Students” are any graduate, undergraduate, and/or community college students enrolled part- or full-time in accredited New York colleges and universities during the current academic year.
- Students who graduated during the previous Fall semester are still eligible to compete in the competition during the Spring semester.
- Student(s) must be the presenter(s) in all stages of the competition.
- Teams may compete in only one region per year.
- Students may not participate on more than one team per year.
- Grand prize winning teams from previous years’ competitions are no longer eligible to participate in the competition. (They are encouraged to participate as speakers, mentors, volunteers, and judges!) Individual members of the winning team may return with new teams in subsequent years.

The following rules apply to teams with incorporated ventures:
- Cumulative public and private capital raised may not exceed $100,000. This does not include research funding that may have supported the development of the technology in an academic laboratory.
- The business venture must be at least 80% owned by students.

The New York Business Plan Competition reserves the right to withhold prize money and revoke 1st or 2nd place designation from winning teams who do not comply with the eligibility requirements.
Category/Track Definitions

- Students may apply to whichever track they deem the best fit. Regional and state organizers may be consulted to help determine the best fit. Category fit will be considered for judging criteria but will not be grounds for disqualification from the competition.
- State/regional organizers may adjust track assignments as needed.
- Teams in each of the tracks may represent for-profit or non-profit ventures.

The tracks are listed from most specific to most general and are designed to fit all businesses. Teams should select the most specific track for which their team will qualify by beginning at the top of this list and selecting the first matching track.

For example, a medicinal herb tea subscription box business could match with AgTech & Food, MedTech & Well-Being, or Consumer Products & Services. Since AgTech & Food is listed first, it is the most specific category and the best match for the venture.

AgTech & Food
- Any idea, technology, process, product, and/or service that relates to agriculture, food production or distribution or food waste
- Examples: tea subscription box, crop management software, composting service, protein shakes, craft beer or alcoholic beverages, food prep subscription boxes

Energy & Environment
- Any idea, technology, process, product, and/or service, not included in any previous category, that relates to energy, clean energy, renewable energy, energy efficiency, environmental, and/or sustainability applications.
- Examples: Recycling technology, LED manufacturing technology, lithium ion batteries, clean energy crowdfunding service

Military & First Responder
- Any idea, technology, process, product, and/or service, not included in any previous category, that relates to the needs of utility workers, military, first responders, government applications or transportation industry.
- Examples: high temperature safety clothes, utility inspection software, drone technology, fleet management and routing software

MedTech & Well-Being
- Any idea, technology, process, product, and/or service, not included in any previous category that relates to biotech, sports, medical care or well-being, including mental health.
- Examples: new method for testing pharmaceuticals, physical therapy massager, implant technology, suicide prevention apps, skin care solution

Technology & Entertainment
- Any idea, technology, process, product, and/or service, not included in any previous category, that relates to consumer software/online platforms, cryptocurrency, entertainment, fintech, or music.
- Examples: an app that helps pair potential roommates, a website/app that uses social media to collect payments from friends, a web service designed to tailor resumes for specific jobs, a file sharing service, software platform for salon management
Consumer Products & Services

- Any idea, technology, process, product, and/or service, not included in any previous category, generally intended for use by individuals or households.
- Examples: designer eyewear, custom vending machines, camera backpack, fashion subscription box, custom clothing design

Tracks may be combined when needed based on number of competitors, and companies may be reassigned to different tracks at organizer’s discretion. Feel free to reach out to nybpc@albany.edu if you have questions or if you’d like help with track selection.

Category/Track FAQs

*We use a website to sell our product or service. Does that make us IT/Software?*

Websites and apps are part of many marketing strategies. If the value added created by your product requires an app, website, or software program, then the idea should be classified under IT/Software. If the app/website is being used as a marketing tool or one of the channels to market, another category may be more appropriate.

For example, consider two solar technologies. One is an app/website that aggregates reviews, contact information and reviews of all installers in a 200 mile radius. The value added by the idea is the collection and delivery of information through the app. It should be classified in IT/Software.

The other company is a solar installation company that has a website with a cost calculator and a tool that estimates solar power potential based on their address. The value added by this company is in the installation of the panels themselves and the web tools are used for marketing. This company should be classified in Clean Technology.

*Our product fits into multiple categories. Which one should we choose?*

The categories are listed in order of decreasing specificity. You should pick the first (most specific) category you feel applies to your product.

*We have pivoted and now feel like we should be placed in a different track. Can we change?*

This policy is region-specific. In the Capital Region, a team may change their track up until they submit their final presentation for the regional event. Inform the organizer and you will be re-categorized. At the finals, teams must compete in the track they advanced in at the regional competition.
Application

The complete application is available on the Capital Region Competition Semifinals webpage: https://www.albany.edu/business/NYBPC.php. Below is a truncated version of the application, which does not include category/track definitions. Applications cannot exceed three pages and must be submitted online at https://www.albany.edu/business/NYBPC.php by midnight, Monday, April 1, 2019.

Team/Company Name:  
Category: (see track definitions)  
Academic Institution:  
Team/Company Presenter:  
Academic Advisor:  
Please indicate the academic makeup of your team (graduate, undergraduate, and/or community college students):  
Address, City, State, Zip:  
Phone:  
Email:  
Team Makeup:  
Veteran Status:  
Minority and/or Women Owned eligibility:

Business Model and Team  
1. **Structure**: What is the structure of your company? Do you have the team members that you need to grow the business? How will the structure change with growth?  
2. **Value Proposition**: What is your company’s key value proposition (e.g. lowest cost, highest reliability, best performance, etc.)?  
3. **General Description**: What is your business model? Describe how your business makes money and how it will assure great and long term sustainability for the future.

Product/Service  
1. **Product/Service**: What is your product/service offering?  
2. **Function and Benefit**: How does your product/service work? Define and quantify key benefits (e.g. cost, performance, technical, etc.) for customers.  
3. **Development Stage**: Where is the product/service in its evolution (e.g. idea/conception, proof of concept, fully tested prototype, etc.)?

Competitive Position  
1. **Competitors**: Who is your competition?  
2. **Edge over Competition**: What makes you better than other companies currently in the market?  
3. **Sustainability**: Is this competitive position sustainable?  
4. **IP Protection**: How will you protect your proprietary information?

Markets  
1. **Target Market**: What markets and market segments are you targeting? How big are these markets and how can you sustainably capture them?  
2. **Barriers to Entry**: What are the key market barriers and how will they lend to your success?

Customers  
1. **Customers**: Who are the specific customers that you are pursuing or will pursue? Do you have any letters of interest and/or intent to purchase? Do you have any actual sales to date?
Submission and Presentation Guidelines

Presentation Format
The presentation format for the regional semifinal and statewide final competitions may vary slightly based on the number of teams participating in each region. For the Capital Region semifinal competition, each team will have 10 minutes to pitch, followed by 5 minutes of Q&A with the panel of judges. Be sure to focus your presentation on the judging criteria on page 9. Judges are advised to act as they would in a closed-door boardroom investment presentation during the Q&A session.

Presentation Submission
Teams must submit their final presentations to nybpc@albany.edu no later than midnight, Friday, April 5, 2018 to be eligible to compete. The only file formats accepted are PPT and PDF. Neither internet access nor specific versions of PowerPoint and Adobe software are guaranteed at the final competition, and students should plan accordingly.

Sample Presentation
Our Solution
- Describe your product
- Explain how it solves the problem in a way that is disruptive.
- Technology company note:
  - Know the difference between a technology, invention, and a product
    - Your technology is the science that will make a product valuable.
    - Invention is the mechanism that uses the science (often what is patented).
    - Your product is what your customers will ultimately buy.

Business Model
- Business concept – How will business generate sustainable profits?
- Who are key customers? (names, demographic profile etc.)
  - Who is your target customer?
  - How will you reach them?
- Customer discovery – Show that you have talked to customers and they are excited about your product. (Letters of intent, etc. are a huge bonus)

Work Plan
- Gantt Chart
  - Include:
    - Milestones
    - Achievements to date
    - Technical milestones
    - Commercial milestones
    - 3 week horizon
    - Financial forecasts
  - Include your ask. How much do you need and what will you do with it?
  - Rule of Three: It will take 3Xs more money and time than you could ever imagine.

Market
- Size of markets and growth rate (Be specific)
- How to reach these markets (go-to-market strategy and distribution)
- Other trends likely to influence market

Competitive Landscape
- Industry
  - Key competitors
  - How to deal with competition in the market
  - What is your competitive advantage?

Company Name
- People
  - Management team and relevant experience
    - Focus on education
    - Include industrial and entrepreneurial experience
  - Other key people and advisors
  - Any organizations, incubators, etc. offering you assistance.
  - Include professional leadership

Backup slides
- Detailed technical slides
- Financials
Judges
The New York Business Plan Competition prides itself on innovation and technical merit. Both of these values are hallmarks of the organizing institutions, and we strive to integrate them into every aspect of the competition. To do so, we have established a transparent judging process with no conflicts of interest between our judges and the teams that they are evaluating.

All of our judging panels are composed of a mix of investors and industry experts, including venture capitalists, angel investors, investment bankers, other sophisticated public and private investors, and seasoned entrepreneurs. Moreover, we ensure to have technical subject matter experts – each of them with expertise in one of the categories – to evaluate the technical feasibility and scalability of the plans in their category.

Judging Criteria
Judges are asked to evaluate companies according to the following criteria:

- **Market Opportunity:** Clear market need and a plan to take advantage of the need.
- **Competitive Advantage:** The product or service is something unique that has a protectable competitive advantage in the proposed market.
- **Management Capability:** The team has the skills and experience to develop this venture and address the associated risks.
- **Financial Understanding:** The team has a solid understanding of the financial requirements of the venture.
- **Roadmap/Growth Strategy:** The team has engaged in short and long-term planning and has considered strategies for growth.
- **Sustainable Business Model:** The team understands and can communicate their core business model. They are most likely to develop a sustainable venture.

Judges will be asked to focus their deliberations around the sustainable viability of each venture.

Prize Information
Teams have the opportunity to win first prize of $300 in each of the six tracks. Second place winners will receive $150. Winners of each track will be eligible to compete in the grand prize (Capital Region Cup) competition for and additional $500. First and second place in each track will be eligible to compete in the NYS Finals Competition on April 26. Prizes for this competition can be found on [www.nybpco.org](http://www.nybpco.org).

Questions?
For questions or further information, please contact nybpc@albany.edu