

Entrepreneur's Cup Rules & Guidelines

Overview

The Entrepreneur's Cup is a statewide collegiate business plan competition that empowers Oklahoma students to develop and pitch innovative business ideas. Designed to simulate the real-world process of launching a startup, the competition challenges students to research a market, write a comprehensive business plan, and pitch their venture to potential investors.

For over 20 years, the Entrepreneur's Cup has helped build Oklahoma's next generation of entrepreneurs. This initiative is made possible through the generous support of our sponsors, including our title sponsor, Love's Travel Stops.

The Entrepreneur's Cup is administered by i2E, a private not-for-profit dedicated to growing Oklahoma's most promising small businesses and fueling statewide economic impact.

i2E, Inc. reserves the right to disqualify any team that violates the rules, regulations, or the spirit of the competition.

Divisions & Eligibility

The competition is open to all full-time or part-time undergraduate and graduate students at Oklahoma colleges or universities with a faculty or mentor advisor. Students who graduated the previous December are also eligible.

Division	Eligible Students	Focus
Small Business	Students from regional universities, private universities without research components, and two-year colleges	Designed for "Main Street" ventures – customer-facing business with local or regional impact. May opt into the High Growth Undergraduate division.
High Growth Undergraduate	Undergraduate students from any Oklahoma college or university	Focused on scalable ventures with unique ideas or technologies that show strong market viability and disruptive potential.
High Growth Graduate	Teams with at least one graduate student	Reserved for graduate-level teams.

Note: Enrollment verification is the responsibility of the student and their advisor. i2E, Inc. reserves the exclusive right to determine eligibility.

Team Composition & Advisor Role

- Teams must consist of 1-6 members, though a minimum of 2 is strongly encouraged.
- Students are encouraged to form teams that bring together diverse academic backgrounds to enhance innovative thinking and problem-solving.

- Each team must designate a team leader and an advisor.
- Advisors confirm student eligibility, enforce rules, and serve as administrative contacts.
- Advisors employed by a university must submit written policy if prohibited from receiving outside compensation.

Submission Requirements

- Submit an application and one-page deal summary online by the deadline.
- Save all materials as a single PDF file.

Coaching Session

- Each team participates in a 30-minute virtual session with an industry expert.
- No presentation, handouts, guests, or advisors allowed.
- Teams must demonstrate business knowledge and may ask questions.
- Submit a one-page deal summary PDF prior to the session.

Note: Coaching sessions are not judged. They offer teams a valuable opportunity to engage with industry experts and refine their business ideas.

Business Plans

Plan Submission Requirements

- Submit business plans online by the deadline as a single PDF file.
- Business plans must be original work by official team members.
- Plans must be a new and independent venture in seed, start-up, or early-growth stage.
 - Not eligible: buyouts, expansions, roll-ups, real estate syndications, tax shelters, franchises, geographic distribution licensing, corporate spinouts, consulting projects, analyses, or nonprofit ventures.
- Plans previously submitted to Governor's Cup / Love's Entrepreneur's Cup / Entrepreneur's Cup are not eligible.

Formatting & Context

- Maximum 10 pages (excluding the cover and table of contents).
 - Up to 10 additional appendix pages allowed (max 22 pages total).
- Include:
 - Full management team roaster, including any non-university members.
 - Financial projections: cash flow, income statement, balance sheet.
 - Investment needs, funding terms, and exit strategy.
 - Licensing terms if using third-party technology.

Ineligible or Disqualifying Conditions

- A team will be disqualified if the business has already:
 - Raised or attempted to raise capital
 - Presented to investors

- Conducted significant market research prior to the current academic year
- The business must not have:
 - Received over \$200,000 in equity-based funding (e.g., seed or institutional funding)
 - Generated over \$100,000 in gross revenue before the current academic year
 - Revenue from test marketing may be excluded.

Not eligible: buyouts, expansions, roll-ups, real estate syndications, tax shelters, franchises, geographic distribution licensing, corporate spinouts, consulting projects, analyses, or nonprofit ventures.

- All submitted materials must be *original work* created solely by the official team members.
 - Plans or presentations developed through prior programs, classes, mentors, or interns using the same technology are not eligible.
- Teams will be *disqualified* if the business has been previously established through major activities such as:
 - Attempting to raise capital
 - Presenting to investors
 - Conducting significant market research before the current academic year
 - Previously submitting the plan to any Governor's Cup / Love's Entrepreneur's Cup / Entrepreneur's Cup competition
- Business must *not* have:
 - Received more than \$200,000 in equity-related capital (e.g., seed or institutional funding)
 - Generated more than \$100,000 in gross revenue before the current academic year
 - Revenue from test marketing may be excluded.

Licensing & Intellectual Property

- Use of licensed technology is allowed only with written approval.
- A permission letter from the IP owner or university is required, or the plan will be disqualified.
- Licensing terms must reflect current market conditions and be incorporated into the business plan and financials.

Prohibited Content

- Plans must not include *fabricated* information regarding:
 - Team members' backgrounds, experience, or education
 - Product development stage or performance claims
 - Technology ownership or licensing
 - Market research or survey results

Pitch Presentation

- Finalist teams will present in person to a panel of investors and business leaders.
 - Small Business division: 8 finalist teams
 - High Growth Undergraduate division: 6 finalist teams
 - High Growth Graduate division: 6 finalist teams
- Presentations must be saved to a thumb drive; internet access is not guaranteed.
- Each team will deliver a 90-second elevator pitch followed by the main presentation.
- Teams have 20 minutes to present and 10 minutes for Q&A.
- Judges will provide verbal feedback and comments.
- Only official student team members may present and participate in Q&A.
- Teams must arrive at least one hour before scheduled presentation time.
- Product samples or prototype may be displayed, but giveaways are not permitted.
- Judges will not consume food or beverage samples.
- Teams may invite guests to attend their presentations; however, competing teams are not allowed to observe.

Note: All presentations and Q&A sessions are open to the public pending space and team permission.

Judging & Awards

Judges include entrepreneurs, service providers, and investors. They evaluate the written business plans, and pitch presentations. Finalists receive cash prizes and trophies. Decisions of the judges are final.

Compete for your share of more than **\$260,000 in cash prizes and scholarships!**

Prize Amount	Finalist
\$1,500	Finalist Team
\$1,000	Finalist Advisor

Note: High Growth includes 12 Finalists total (6 Graduate · 6 Undergraduate). Small Business includes 8 Finalists.

Prize Amount	High Growth Graduate & Undergraduate Winners (per division)
\$30,000	1 st Place Team
\$2,500	Advisor
\$20,000	2 nd Place Team
\$2,000	Advisor
\$10,000	3 rd Place Team
\$1,500	Advisor

Prize Amount	Small Business Winners
\$25,000	1 st Place Team
\$2,000	Advisor
\$15,000	2 nd Place Team
\$1,500	Advisor
\$8,500	3 rd Place Team
\$1,000	Advisor

Prize Amount	90-Second Pitch Winner (1 per division)
\$2,000	1 winner per division, 3 total

Confidentiality & Media

Participants acknowledge that i2E, Inc. and the judges are not responsible for any disclosure of information contained in the submitted business plan. Participants grant i2E, Inc. the right to photograph and record for publicity and marketing purposes.

Scholarship Opportunity

Students competing in the competition are eligible to apply for one of three \$5,000 Paulsen Scholarship Awards, sponsored by the Oklahoma Business Roundtable. Finalists will be interviewed at the Pitch Competition, and the scholarship recipients will be announced at the awards dinner.

Expenses

There is no cost to enter or participate in the Entrepreneur's Cup Business Plan Competition. Finalist teams are responsible for their own transportation to the pitch competition and awards ceremony in the Oklahoma City metro. Meals are not provided.

Through the support of Love's Travel Stops, finalist teams may apply for a travel stipend to help offset travel costs such as gas and if needed, overnight accommodations.