



AIBL National Conference

Entrepreneur Pitch Competition Guidelines

The **Entrepreneur Pitch Competition** is an opportunity for single students or alumni to pitch their small business idea to a panel of judges and a live audience. Each student is paired with a business professional mentor to support pre-competition readiness related to presentation, selling, and influencing skills. The EP Competition empowers Indigenous students to develop entrepreneurial projects that strengthen their communities and demonstrate leadership, innovation, and business acumen.

Who Should Participate

We encourage students or alumni to participate if they are interested in:

- sharing a venture concept for a new business idea to potential funders.
- competing as a solo emerging entrepreneur.
- strengthening business writing, presentation, and public speaking skills.

Eligibility Requirements

Active AIBL Chapter members or alumni. Competitors must travel to the AIBL National Conference to compete live on stage. If an alumni, a former advisor needs to write a letter or email on your behalf to confirm prior membership and engagement.

Competition Divisions

5 students can compete by invitation. No divisions.

Award

\$1,000 check will be awarded to the first-place winner.

Competition Overview

Preparation

- ☐ Individual students are responsible for ensuring guidelines are met and deadlines are adhered to.
- ☐ Submit your interest to compete by filling out the submission form.

Business Pitch

- ☐ Create a business pitch using Google Docs or Microsoft Word, saved in PDF format. Business pitches should be created under the guidance of a business professional mentor connected through AIBL.
- ☐ Submit the business pitch in advance of the National Conference for judges to review.

Stage Presentation

- ☐ Create a stage presentation summarizing the business pitch using the free platform Canva.
- ☐ Meet with your professional business mentor to review, provide feedback, and approve the stage presentation.
- ☐ Submit the stage presentation Canva **LINK** in advance of the National Conference.

National Conference

- ☐ Present the stage presentation in front of a live audience and judges panel at the National Conference.
- ☐ Participate in a Q&A with judges regarding the business plan after the stage presentation.
- ☐ Judges' scores tallied up following all stage presentations.
- ☐ One winner will be announced at the awards banquet.

Submission Instructions

Competitor must adhere to all guidelines, submission dates, and deadlines. All deadlines are the due dates listed on the competition portal at PST 11:59 pm. Only one business pitch and one stage presentation will be accepted. Past business pitches are not eligible for submission. Business pitches and stage presentations not submitted through the competition portal by the deadline will not be accepted, and the invitation to compete will be revoked. Submission instructions are as follows:

- ☐ Submit interest to compete by filling out the submission form at aibl.org/annual-conference.
- ☐ Submit the business pitch in PDF format for judges to review at aibl.org/annual-conference,
- ☐ Submit the stage presentation by sending the Canva “collaboration link” URL and PDF at aibl.org/annual-conference.

Parameters

Competitors are not obligated to implement their business idea. Business pitches submitted will not be returned. Contents of the business pitches will be held strictly confidential and must fall within the following parameters:

- Must be a new business concept, not currently in the market.
- Must be created solely by the competitor, not a group project.
- Must offer a tangible product(s) or service that can be marketed and sold.
- Samples are allowed to be passed out during the live presentation portion, but no paper documents of any kind.

Time Adherence

Stage presentations are 10 minutes total.

- 5 minutes: stage presentation
- 5 minutes: Q&A with judges

Business Pitch Content (what judges review in advance of the National Conference)

Business pitches must include the five areas below: introduction, problem/solution, business model, marketing strategy, and financials. Business pitches must be typed in size 11 or 12 font, single-spaced, with a maximum page length of 12 pages total. Business pitches must be saved and submitted in PDF format.

1. Introduction (1-page maximum)

- **Personal name:** first and last
- **Business name**
- **Bio:** 1 paragraph

2. Problem & Solution (3-page maximum)

- **Problem:** what are you trying to solve, provide, or share with others?
- **Solution:** introduce product or service and key features

3. Business Model (3-page maximum)

- **Business idea:** mission & vision statement
- **Market Niche:** industry sector
- **Target market:** ideal customer
- **Engagement:** where will people buy, engage, or locate your business?
- **Pricing structure:** how will the product or service be priced?
- **Competition:** what distinguishes your business from competitors?
- **Market Advantage:** why are you the right person for this venture?

4. Marketing Strategy (2-page maximum)

- **Promotion:** how and where will you market and sell your product or service?
- **Customer/client:** acquisition, engagement, and retention
- **Analytics:** how will you track, analyze, and measure success?

5. Financials (3-page maximum)

- **Financial Projections:** funding source, startup costs, profit/loss. Estimates of gross and net profits over three years.
- **Funding Needs:** how much do you need, what type of investors/partners are you looking for, and how will investments be used?
- **The Ask:** what support or funding do you need and from whom?

Stage Presentation Content (what is presented on-screen live at the National Conference)

Competitor must adhere to the following guidelines for stage presentations. Stage presentations should be created under the guidance of a professional business mentor assigned by AIBL. Mentor will review, provide feedback, and approve the stage presentation prior to submission. Mentor will focus on the clarity and coherence of the presentation's content, thoroughness of ideas, and visual appearance of the slides. Stage presentations should provide a bird's eye view of the business pitch content.

The competitor needs to arrive on time for the business pitch competition and will be asked to the main stage, by name, at their presentation time. The presentation order will not be shared with the competitor or the audience.

- Once the competitor is securely on stage and starts speaking, the timer will start.
- Each competitor is allotted 10 minutes of stage time.
- At 4 minutes 45 seconds, a Jeopardy sound will play, and at the 5-minute mark, the presentation screen will turn black. Judges will immediately begin the Q&A portion of the presentation.
- At 9 minutes 45 seconds, another Jeopardy sound will play, and at the 10-minute mark, the screen will turn black and the presenter can thank the judges and leave the stage.

Judges Scoring

The judge's scores will remain confidential during and after the competition. Pitches will be judged on the following criteria:

(Rating system: 3 = excellent, 2 = good, 1 = poor)

- **Concept** (market need, realistic, clear target consumer)
- **Pitch** (concise, impactful)
- **Selling & Influencing Skills** (persuasive, confident)
- **Project Potential** (with funding support, does judge envision this business coming to fruition)
- **Nonverbals** (posture, eye contact, attire, expressions)
- **Time Adherence** (5 minutes)