



# **BIZPITCH COLUMBUS PITCH COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS**

StartUP Columbus, in partnership with the D. Abbott Turner College of Business and Technology at CSU hosts an annual Pitch Competition for entrepreneurs and starters looking to grow their business. We invite all qualified applicants to participate by completing the online application with any supporting documentation. This list of rules and regulations provides an overview of the process, application requirements, tips, judging criteria, and how funds can be used.

## **CRITERIA FOR APPLYING**

- Applicant must be owner/founder/CEO of company
- Business must be based in the United States
- Business must be operating less than three years
- Finalists must participate in the in-person Pitch Competition on November 9, 2023, from 5:00pm – 8:30pm EST.
- Early-stage plans welcome

## **QUALIFICATIONS CONTINUED**

The criteria below are critical in the success in this competition. If you cannot answer yes to all of these, it will be difficult to succeed in this competition.

- Business meets the need of a real market – there is a problem that customers will pay to have solved.
- Business shows a source of differentiation and cannot be easily copied.
- Business has a clear path to making money (business model).
- Business is a *For Profit* entity
- Business addresses a sizeable market opportunity.
- Business has the opportunity for scalability

## **APPLICATION**

You will be prompted to create a login so you may edit/update your application.

**FEE:** There is a \$20 application fee for the StartUP Columbus Pitch Competition. Please note that your application will not be fully submitted for review until your fee is paid.



## PRIZES

\$40,000 in cash prizes · Technology Winner receives \$15,000 · Technology Runner-up receives \$5,000 · Traditional Winner receives \$15,000 · Traditional Runner-up receives \$5,000 ·

## TOP FOUR FINALIST BENEFITS

- Membership to StartUP Columbus Incubator
- Workspace / Office space
- Free Business Development Programs
- Scholarship for CO.STARTERS+ at StartUP Columbus
- Exclusive previews to future programs and events
- Direct access to business development services, mentorship, and expertise
- Consulting Services from Community and Industry Experts

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **June 27** – Applications open: [Apply Here](#)
- **July 28** – Applications deadline (midnight Eastern Standard Time)
- **August 11** – Applicants notified of status from Round 1 Selection. Top 25 companies advance to Round 2.
- **September 1** – Round 2 applications deadline (midnight Eastern Standard Time)
- **September 15** – Applicants notified of status from Round 2 Selection. Top 8 companies advance to Round 3.
- **September 18 – October 6** – Round 3 workshops begin.
- **October 18** – Top 4 Finalists will be notified if they will advance as finalist in the pitch competition.
- **November 9** – 2023 BizPitch Columbus

## VOTING ROUNDS

1. Round 1 – All applications are reviewed by Selection Committee. **Top 25 are identified.**
2. Round 2 – All applications are reviewed by Selection Committee. **Top 8 finalists are identified.**
3. Round 3 – All applicants are reviewed by Facilitators and Workshop Coaches. **Top 4 finalists are identified.**

4. Round 4 – Top 4 finalists pitch at the November 9 BizPitch Columbus Competition. **Winner and Runner-up are selected from 5-judge panel.**

## **JUDGING GUIDELINES**

- Who
  - Team
    - Who is your founding team?
    - Do you have the capacity to implement?
    - Is the team multidisciplinary and complementary of one another?
- When/Where
  - Market Validation
    - What market are you competing in?
    - What is your ability to recognize and describe the problem your venture is solving?
    - Who is your competition and what is your competitive advantage?
- What
  - Product
    - Does the venture address the market problem in an innovative way?
- How
  - Business Model
    - How will you make money?
    - Have you tested your venture?
    - Is this scalable?
  - Soft Skills
    - Are you assertive?
    - Can you articulate the problem and solution and are you capable of “selling “the vision?

## **PRIZE FUNDS**

Award funds must be used for assets associated with the launch or expansion of the stated business. Funds must be used in full by November 9, 2024. Documentation of funds used must be noted and sent to StartUP Columbus with an invoice and proof of purchases. Any unused funds or funds not used for assets associated with launching or growing the stated business must be returned to StartUP Columbus, Inc. by December 9, 2024.



The Awardee warrants that it will comply with all local, state, and federal laws, ordinances and regulations applicable to its activities and agrees that such compliance is an essential condition of accepting the award and associated award funds.

*Confidentiality – StartUP Columbus, Inc. and the Turner College of Business and Technology at CSUs committed to keeping all data strictly confidential. Only our internal staff, selection committee, and five judges will have access to your data. Your deck and application data will not be shared outside this group without your written permission. Top Four Finalists and BizPitch Columbus Competition will be televised, streamed, and in front of a live audience.*

Questions? Please contact [info@startupcolga.com](mailto:info@startupcolga.com) for assistance.