Rice Business Plan Competition

POWERING FOUNDERS. SHAPING THE FUTURE.

WELCOME AND ORIENTATION WEBINAR | FEB. 29, 2024
Welcome to the RBPC! We are very happy you are here--Shaping the Future!
Today’s Agenda

1. Confirmation of participation
2. Calendar and due dates
3. Competition overview
4. What to Expect at the RBPC
5. The next 5 weeks
6. Communication – Stay in touch!
7. Questions
Confirmation of Participation

Everyone has confirmed they can attend--yay!

What this means:

• At least 2 members from your startup must attend and pitch in-person, sharing pitching duties (and up to 4 members can participate)

• Only current or very-recently graduated students may participate in the pitches

• At least one of those students must be a graduate-level student

• Teams need to stay for the entire event: Thursday, April 4 at Noon through Saturday, April 6 at 9:30 pm (after the Awards Banquet)

**If this is an issue, let me know ASAP**
Calendar and Due Dates

March 4  EFN Intro webinar at 11:00 AM CDT (see next email for reg. link)

March 6  EFN Intro webinar at 11:00 AM CDT (see next email for reg. link)

March 18  Parts 2 and 3 of application due
  - business plan
  - attending team members and their info
  - prize considerations
  - dietary restrictions and food allergies (I forgot to ask)

March 18  Last day to book conference hotel at our rate

March 30  Business Plan feedback from judges sent to teams

April 4  Updated business plan due in application (optional)
  - the most recent version of your BP will be visible to judges during the competition

April 4-6  RBPC
Competition Overview

**Thursday events**
- Welcome and Orientation sessions
- Practice Pitches
- Elevator Pitch Competition*
- Company Showcase + Reception

**Friday events**
- Round 1*
- Feedback Sessions
- Semi-Finalist Announcement + Reception

**Saturday events**
- Semi-Final Round/Wildcard Round*
- Final Round*
- Awards Ceremony (big party)

* = scored parts of the RBPC

All parts of the RBPC are **required** for competing startups.
All parts of the RBPC take place at Rice University except the Awards Ceremony, which is at the Hilton Americas Hotel in downtown Houston (5 miles from campus).
What to Expect at the RBPC

Check the RBPC website under 2024 Competition -> Competitor Resources for most up-to-date info (general info, schedules, What to Expect, Scoring Criteria, hotel booking link, etc.)

250+ judges throughout the 3 days of competition

35+ prizes with total value of over $1 million

All competing startups get a minimum of $950 prize

Startups are judged on their investment potential—where an investor would put their money

All meals provided; transportation between the conference hotel and campus is provided (but getting to and from the awards party is not)

The RBPC is a big deal--bring your A-Game! Bring your energy (you will need it)!
The next 4 weeks - Prepare

• Explore **EFN Mentoring program** – 4 weeks of free mentoring
• Practice your pitches – check the RBPC website for **past competition videos** from the EPC and Finals
• Prep your “**deliverables**” (full list is under Competitor Resources -> What to bring to the RBPC):
  • 15-minute verbal investor pitch
  • Pitch deck for 15-min pitch
  • 60-second verbal elevator pitch (no deck needed)
  • Showcase table items
• Read the Competition Rules and Format and **What to Expect** docs
• Read the **Prizes page of the website** before coming to the RBPC
• Read the **Stipulations for Prizes and Guidelines for Accepting Prizes**
The next 4 weeks - Prepare

• Check the list of questions judges frequently ask (What to Expect doc):
  • they love to ask about IP or unique selling prop
  • they want to know your raise (don’t say you aren’t raising funds)
• Check the list of “Advice from RBPC Judges” – new this year! Coming soon
• You are here to advance your startup – be clear with fundraising strategy & goals
• Judges want to see:
  • Clear and defined product or service
  • Proprietary tech or unique selling prop
  • What you need to advance your startup
  • Why you need funding to advance your business
  • If you are coachable
The next 4 weeks – Confirm reservations

• **Book hotel** by March 21 (you are not required to stay there, but a shuttle to and from campus will be available) – see website Competitor Resources

• **Confirm guest list** – who will come from your team?
  • At least 2, and up to 4, presenting team members
  • Up to 2 mentors/advisors (including your academic advisor)
  • More team members than that, and there is a charge of $125 to attend
  • The RBPC is a **closed** event; there is no walk-up registration; there are no extra guests last-minute
  • The Awards Banquet is also a **closed** event (there are 700+ people in attendance!)

• Put all info in Part 2 of the application

• **Let everyone know you are coming to the RBPC!!! #RBPC24**
Communication – Stay in Touch!

• There are more updates and reminders to come, but . . .
• I aim to send only one weekly email on Thursday afternoons – please look for it
• Weekly email will be sent to all team members who are listed in the application
• I will communicate to you mostly by email, but by text if I need an answer quickly
• You can contact me anytime by email or phone (call or text)
• You all have a LOT going on, but please make a little space for the RBPC
Questions?

Contact at any time:
rbpc@rice.edu
713-348-3190 office