

# RICE | BUSINESS

PRESENTS THE



# RICE BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION

Welcome and Orientation Webinar  
February 27, 2025

Hosted by:  **RICE | ALLIANCE**  
Rice Alliance for Technology and Entrepreneurship

# 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 will attend and pitch in-person; team members share pitching duties (and up to 4 members can participate)
- At least one of those students is be a graduate-level student and will participate in the pitching
- Only current or very-recently graduated students may participate in the pitches
- Team members will stay for the entire event: Thursday, April 10 at Noon through Saturday, April 12 at 9:30 pm (after the Awards Banquet)

**\*\*If this is an issue, let me know ASAP\*\***

**Calendar of Events and Due Dates:**

- March 3                   EFN Intro webinar at 11:00 AM CDT (teams will be sent a calendar invite)
  
- March 4                   EFN Intro webinar at 11:00 AM CDT (teams will be sent a calendar invite)
  
- March 20                 Part 2.2 of the application is due (sorry, there is no rhyme or reason to the question order):
  - business plan
  - attending team members and their info
  - academic advisors or other advisors attending with you (up to 2)
  - prize considerations
  - dietary restrictions and food allergies
  - Clear team lead in Phase 2.2 of application – who will respond to my emails after the competition to distribute your prizes
  
- March 26                 Last day to book conference hotel at our rate
  
- April 4                   Business Plan feedback from judges sent to teams
  
- April 10                 Updated business plan due in application (optional)  
--the most recent version of your BP will be visible to judges during the competition
  
- April 10-12             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 + Team Dinner

## *Saturday events*

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

\* = scored parts of the RBPC, but EPC does not count toward overall ranking

All parts of the RBPC are **required** for competing startups.

Thursday's events are at **The Ion**. Friday's and Saturday's events are at **McNair Hall in the Jones School of Business at Rice University**. Saturday night's Awards Ceremony is at the **Hilton Americas Hotel** in downtown Houston.

## What to Expect at the RBPC

- Check the RBPC website under “2025 Competition” -> **Competitor Resources** for most up-to-date info (general info, schedules, What to Expect, Scoring Criteria, hotel booking link, etc.)
- 300+ judges throughout the 3 days of competition
- 30+ prizes with total value of over \$1 million
- All competing startups get a minimum of \$900 prize
- Startups are judged on investment potential—where an investor/funder would put their money
- All meals provided; transportation between the conference hotel and campus is provided (but getting to and from the awards banquet is not)
- Startups are responsible for airfare, hotel, airport transfers, incidentals
- The RBPC is a big deal--bring your A-Game! Bring your energy (you will need it)!

## The Next 4 Weeks – How to 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):
  - 10-minute verbal investor pitch (you will use it at least twice)
  - Pitch deck for 10-min pitch (be tech-enabled, esp. Apple products)
  - 60-second verbal elevator pitch (no deck or slides 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 – How to 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 what funding you are seeking (don't say you aren't raising funds)
- Check the list of “Advice from RBPC Judges” – new this year! Coming soon

**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 startup/clarity on fundraising strategy & goals
- If you are coachable



## The Next 4 Weeks – Confirm Reservations

**Book hotel** by March 26 (you are not required to stay there, but a shuttle to and from competition sites 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 academic advisors (academic or other advisor)
- More team members than that, and there is a charge to attend, if we can accommodate them
- The RBPC is a **closed** event; there is no walk-up registration; there are no extra guests last-minute; anyone that turns up will be sent home
- The Awards Banquet is also a **closed** event (there are 700+ people in attendance!)
- Put all info in Part 2.2 of the application

**Let everyone know you are coming to the RBPC!**

## Communications – 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 I will text you 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 some time and space for the RBPC

# Questions?

Contact at any time:

[rbpc@rice.edu](mailto:rbpc@rice.edu)

713-348-3190 office

[rbpc.rice.edu](http://rbpc.rice.edu)

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