



Startup Challenge Information

What is it? Startup Challenge Monterey Bay is a five-month competitive acceleration process that teaches, coaches, mentors, networks and connects entrepreneurs to the knowledge and resources they need.

There are four divisions in the competition:

- Venture Division is open to businesses that are intended to scale and provide venture-investor level returns. The Winner receives \$20,000 in cash and the two runners-up each receive \$5,000 in cash.
- Social Venture Division is open to for-profit and not-for-profit businesses that have a significant social mission. The Winner receives \$10,000 in cash and the two runners-up each receive \$2,500 in cash.
- Main Street Division is open to small businesses, sole proprietorships, and non-profits. The Winner receives \$10,000 in cash; the two runners-up will each receive \$2,500 in cash.
- Student Division is open to students in high school, community colleges, colleges, and graduate schools. The Winner receives \$1,500 in cash.

Note: In reviewing applications we may contact you regarding the appropriate competition division for your business. The Startup Challenge reserves the right to be the final arbiter of the selection of the division.

Important dates for participation in the 2018 competition:

- Monday, March 11, 2019, midnight - Deadline to submit your application online to compete in the 2019 Startup Challenge competition.
- Saturday, April 6, 2019 Qualifying Round Pitches - 5-minute presentation of your company in person to a panel of judges. The judges will provide feedback both verbally and online through this website. Finalists in all three divisions will be selected that day for the Final Round.
- Monday, April 29, 2018 - Last day for Finalists to submit their business summaries online.
- Thursday, May 9, 2018 - Last day for Finalists to submit their PowerPoint presentations online.
- Saturday, May 11, 2018 Final Round Pitches (Assigned time slots between 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.) - 10-minute presentations in person with PowerPoint slides to a panel of judges. The judges will provide feedback both verbally and online through this website. The top three Finalists in the Venture Division and the top three Finalists in the Main Street Division will be selected to compete in the Otter Tank that afternoon.
- Saturday, May 11, 2018 - 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. All Finalists set up exhibit tables for the Venture Showcase.

- Saturday, May 11, 2018 - 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Venture Showcase (open to the public) includes the Exhibit Hall, the Otter Tank competition, and a Reception.
 - The Exhibit Hall allows the public to meet the Finalists, see their product and discuss their new business.
 - The Otter Tank has two competitions, one for the top three Venture Division Finalists and the other for the top three Main Street Division Finalists to present to a panel of judges that is open to the public. There will be an Award Ceremony for the Winners in all three divisions.
 - The Reception provides an opportunity for celebration and lots of great networking.

Resources provided to all applicants:

- The process of going through the application will force you to think carefully about all the aspects of your business that are important for your success. Pitching your business will force you to articulate your business clearly and succinctly.
- Prior to the Qualifying Round on April 7, 2018 there will be several Preparing a Winning Pitch workshops offered for applicants to practice their pitch. We are offering these workshops to help applicants create their presentations for the Qualifying Round pitch but more importantly, to help them carefully think through all of the important aspects of their companies that need to be worked on to assure long term success. Applicants may attend the Pitch workshops as many times as they desire. The schedule for these workshops will be posted on TheStartupChallenge.org website.
- The Qualifying Round on Saturday, April 6, 2018 - This is an opportunity for applicants present their companies to a panel of business experts to advance into the final round of the competition. The judges will provide feedback to applicants which will be available on this website.

Resources provided to Finalists:

- Finalists in each division will be assigned a volunteer mentor to work with them. Finalists should attend one of the In It to Win It workshops in preparation for competing in the Final Round pitches. Mentors provide additional support to the Finalists as they develop a business plan summary to be submitted online prior to the Final Round pitches on May 11, 2018.
- Judges in the Final Round will also provide constructive feedback to the Finalists after their pitches.
- All finalists are provided a table in the Exhibit Hall of the Venture Showcase beginning at 2pm where they can display their business to the public and network. The Venture Showcase is open to the public. There will be a lot of publicity about this event so we strongly encourage each of the finalist to be present to showcase their business to the community.