

**2017 Milken-Penn GSE Education Business Plan Competition:**  
**Venture Path Business Plan Guidelines**

**Competition Rules**

Please review the Competition Rules on our website, and ensure that your entry meets the criteria described: <http://www.educationcompetition.org/how-to-apply>

Note: Organizations entering the competition may not have raised more than the equivalent of US\$500,000 from all investors and founders since the beginning of the legal existence of the organization until the date the organization submits its Executive Summary and Application Form. Additionally, organizations entering the competition may not have had more than the equivalent of US\$200,000 in gross revenue since the beginning of the legal existence of the organization until the date the organization submits its executive summary.

**Completing Your Venture Path Business Plan Submission**

As a Venture Path applicant, you are required to complete the Venture Path online submission form (available early January 2017) and submit an Executive Summary and PowerPoint Presentation as described below. Though some portions of the online form are not *required*, we encourage you to submit the requested information wherever possible.

All documents must be uploaded via the online form.

**Formatting Guidelines For Your Executive Summary and PowerPoint Presentation**

Your venture/company plan should be submitted in the following format:

- Executive summary: 3 pages maximum.
  - The document should be **double-spaced** with one-inch margins, 12-point type, and Times New Roman font. Any references should be in APA format at the end of the document. APA guidelines can be found here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Title page, table of contents, and references are optional and will be counted towards your 3-page allotment. Please do not submit appendices – these will not be reviewed.
- PowerPoint presentation: 15 slide maximum.
  - Title slide, table of contents, and references are optional, and will be counted towards your 15-slide allotment.
- Please submit both the executive summary AND slide presentation in PDF format.

- Additional guidance regarding your submission is provided below in “*Sections of the Business Plan.*”

### **Your 60 Second Video Pitch**

While submitting a short video pitch is optional, it is highly recommended. Your video pitch should not exceed 60 seconds in length.

### **Your Venture Name**

Please be sure to include your **venture name** in the Header of your documents (on each page).

### **Deadline and Submitting your Plan**

You must complete the Venture path online submission form and submit all required PDF documents by the application deadline.

### **Sections of Your Business Plan Submission**

While you are encouraged to be creative with your submission, we suggest that your executive summary and PowerPoint presentation cover the items described below.

The recommended sections below are *not required*, but have been provided to suggest a basic foundation for your submission and highlight areas of interest to our judges. In evaluating submissions, our judges will consider this information as well as the potential impact of your venture on teaching, learning, and/or education. These recommendations do not preclude you from including additional information you deem to be significant to your business plan. Individual items may be covered in your executive summary, PowerPoint presentation, or both. Though your total submission may not exceed the document guidelines noted above, the content and structure of your plan is entirely up to you.

Suggested Sections:

#### *1. Company / Organization Description*

Describe your company or organization, including how it will be incorporated, where it will reside, and what the organization’s mission statement will be. Provide a description of the product(s) or service(s) that your organization will offer. In this section, you may also want to discuss any partnering organizations involved in your business idea.

#### *2. Market Analysis*

Discuss your target market(s), including specific populations, or entities such as schools, etc. Describe the market(s) you plan to reach in terms of its geographic location and size. Discuss the market readiness of your target market(s), including why you think the market(s) would want a venture like yours.

### *3. Competition, Competitive Position and Risk Assessment*

Describe the existing competition for your business idea. Consider who else is providing the product(s) or service(s) you will offer, and which market(s) your competitors currently reach. What is your organization's competitive advantage in comparison to your competitors? Describe how you will position yourself strategically in order to secure your market(s) and ensure your business idea's viability. You may choose to specifically address any major competitors and how you will differentiate yourself, target different market(s), and/or provide a "better" service or product. Discuss any barriers to entry, and provide a risk assessment for your venture. Describe any proprietary features of your plan, and discuss liabilities of your venture and how you will protect your organization from liabilities.

### *4. Marketing Strategy*

How will you reach your market(s), and communicate about your product(s) or service(s)? What kinds of advertising and publicity do you envision for the launch of your business idea? Describe the process through which you plan to secure your market(s) and ensure that your business idea reaches its intended participants.

### *5. Management and Operations*

Describe your organization's management team, addressing project leadership, staff members, and organizational structure. Describe the backgrounds and expertise of key personnel (you determine who is "key" to your business plan's success). Under operations, describe where your organization will reside. Consider what kind of office space you will have, any technological infrastructure or equipment you will require, and describe how the day-to-day operations of your organization will take place.

### *6. Finances*

Include an income statement detailing expected income and expenses in years one, two and three of your business plan. Under income, you may include anticipated revenue sources such as grants and donations, in addition to revenue generated by the company or non-profit organization. Under expenses, consider the costs of salaries and benefits of your employees, payroll taxes, rent and utilities, office supplies, training fees (if any), purchase of furniture and equipment, technology, travel, marketing and advertising, and other relevant costs that you anticipate. Show your net income (or surplus) for each year.

### *7. Future Growth and Sustainability*

Describe how your organization plans to grow beyond year one, and how your growth will be financially sustainable.