



Introduction

The inaugural University System of Georgia (USG) Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition will be held April 6 - 7, 2026, at Kennesaw State University's Marietta Campus. Universities and colleges interested in participating must complete their team registration form by December 1, 2025. Detailed information about the event - including the competition format and presentation criteria - is included in this packet.

Competition and Award Overview

Each USG university and college has an opportunity to identify one team to represent their institution and showcase the entrepreneurial activities in this system-wide competition. Teams comprised of students can have a minimum of one student and a maximum of five students that consist of only currently enrolled students who are the creators or inventors of the startup or idea that is presented at the competition.

The competition will take place over two days, beginning on April 6 and concluding on April 7. The final round will be held on the last day, during which a panel of judges will select the winners. Teams advancing from the preliminary round will be invited to present their work to the final judging panel and compete for cash prizes.

Team Guidelines

Each team member must follow all of the guidelines listed below:

1. Each team must be composed of students all currently enrolled at each respective institution.
 - a. Students who have graduated or recently graduated are **not eligible** to participate.
2. Intellectual Property (IP) – if teams are not the original inventors, creators, or legal owners of the IP associated with their invention, please disclose:
 - a. Any contributions from other individuals and use of resources other than campus resources.
 - b. If applicable, any products and patents that are associated with invention.
3. Teams that have generated over \$50,000 in revenue or secured venture capital funding exceeding that amount are **not eligible** to compete.

Competition and Presentation Format

The following information will guide the presentation format used in the preliminary and final round of the competition.

- **Preliminary Round:** In this round, teams will present their ideas to a panel of judges and will be evaluated based on the presentation criteria provided below to simulate the conditions of a *Shark Tank* type of experience. Pitch presentations should remain between 3-5 minutes in length to complete their presentation followed by a Q&A, which will be between 3-5 minutes, bringing the total round at or under 10 minutes per team. The evaluations by the preliminary round judges will determine which teams will advance to the final round on April 7.
- **Final Round:** The final round gives teams a chance to not only showcase their innovative ideas with feedback from the preliminary round but also display their ability to communicate its value and impact to the judges and audience. The pitch presentations should remain at or under 5 minutes in length followed by a Q&A, which will be between 3-5 minutes from the judging panel, bringing the total round at or under 10 minutes per team. The six teams that make it to the final round will be eligible finalists.

Presentation Criteria

Teams should be prepared to address the following questions in pitches. Judges will use the categories below as a guide to evaluate teams:

Innovation

1. What is the startup or idea? Is this a new concept or existing idea?
 - a. Originality & simplicity
 - b. Product or service shows feasibility

Market Connection

2. What problem is the startup or idea trying to address or solve (pain point)?
3. Identified target market and benefits to the public
4. How has the competition addressed this? Does your team know what the competition landscape is like?

Possible Solutions

5. What is the team's proposed solution?
6. Demonstrated ways to improve/solve problem?

Financial Analysis (The Money)

7. Financial outlook – startup or idea costs and explanation of how company or team will make money (profit or nonprofit model)
8. Explanation for potential investors and managing the venture

Next Steps

9. Does your team have a plan to scale and grow this concept or idea?
 - a. What's next? Potential impact of prize money and short-term roadmap including how money will be spent.
 - b. Forward thinking – where will growth come from?

Presentation

10. Communication & Delivery
 - a. Presentation was articulated and defined clearly by team members
 - b. Pitch stayed within time limit
 - c. Presentation professionalism

Registration

To enter the competition, each university or college must complete and follow the registration process outlined below by December 1, 2025. Please note that **only one submission per university or college** is permitted.

1. Institutional Representative: The University Representative will be responsible for collecting, managing, and coordinating all pertinent information regarding university attendees participating in the USG Innovation & Entrepreneurship Competition.
2. Team Registration: Each university or college must complete the team registration form by the deadline in order to be eligible for the competition.

Team Information

Institution Name:

Team Name:

Institution Representative's Name & Cell Phone Number:

Team Project – Short Description (one sentence):

Team Project – Long Description (100 words max):

- Names of all team members presenting at competition
 - Member 1
 - Member 2
 - Member 3
 - Member 4
 - Member 5

Team Logos and Introduction Information

Please submit the following items that will be shown in communications and production. The name of files should be the following: InstitutionName-Resolution.FileType

- **Team Logo & Main University Logo**
 - Both horizontal & vertical layouts (if applicable)
 - Vector-based files (preferably EPS) or PNG
- **Team Photo**
 - File type: JPEG, PNG
 - Please dress professionally or have a unified look
- **Team Introduction – Video Clip**
 - 15-20 second video
 - This could be a “hype introduction” video or a slide deck of photos of your team working on startup project or idea
 - Preferred resolution: 4k (3840x2160)
 - Minimum resolution: 1080p (1920x1080)
 - Audio within video should not exceed -6dB

- Preferred file type: ProRes (.mov)
- Minimum file type is H.264 (.mp4)
- For slides, horizontal 1920x1080 PNGs are preferred

- **Additional Team Information**

- Please indicate any accommodation needed to ensure full participation and accessibility for all team members. Examples include:
 - i. Mobility assistance (wheelchair access)
 - ii. Dietary considerations for lunch (allergies)
 - iii. Scheduling flexibility (breaks for medical needs)

- Please list here:

- Guests attending with the team during the competition (President, Provost, Chief of Staff, family, friends, etc.) please provide information below for headcounts.



USG Innovation Competition Content Guidelines

Deliverables & Technical Specifications

- Main university logo
 - Both horizontal and vertical layouts (if applicable)
 - Provided as vector-based files, preferably EPS. PNG is minimum accepted file type, no JPEG files.

- Final deliverable of team introductory materials (video or slides)
 - Name files as: InstitutionName-Resolution.FileType
 - For video the preferred resolution is 4K (3840x2160). Minimum acceptable resolution is 1080p (1920x1080).
 - Audio within the video should not exceed -6 dB.
 - ProRes (.mov) file type is preferred. Minimum acceptable file type is H.264 (.mp4).
 - For slides, horizontal 1920x1080 PNGs are preferred.
 - Slides can be exported from PowerPoint, Keynote, or Canva.