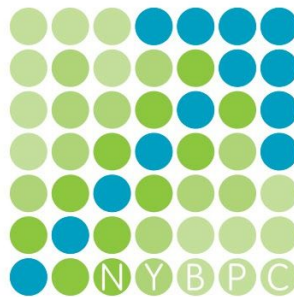


# NYBPC Rulebook

# 2021

The official document  
outlining rules, requirements,  
and judging criteria for the  
2021 New York Business Plan  
Competition.



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competition

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## About the Competition

The 2021 New York Business Plan Competition will feature regional competitions in New York's 10 Regional Economic Development Council zones – Capital Region, Central New York, North Country, Mohawk Valley, Finger Lakes, Western New York, Southern Tier, Mid-Hudson, New York City and Long Island - followed by a final, statewide competition. The regional semifinals are hosted by local partner colleges and universities generally in March. The top teams from each of the 10 regions advance to the final round of the statewide competition. The winners will be selected by esteemed judges, including venture capitalists, angel investors, investment bankers, experienced entrepreneurs, and leaders from the business community.

*Since 2010, over 2,800 student teams from colleges and universities from across New York State have pitched their ideas and ventures at the NYBPC.*

## Philosophy

- Entrepreneurship is vital to support a thriving economy.
- Entrepreneurial skills are invaluable - including problem solving, communication, economics, creativity, resilience, and accountability, regardless of students' career paths.
- The intercollegiate competition platform is an important experiential anchor for students from all backgrounds and for ventures of all types.

## Mission

The NYBPC's mission is to provide a robust, fair competition for students across New York State to promote entrepreneurship and to start new ventures.

## 2021 Calendar

Due to the increased possibilities for unforeseen changes and challenges this year for students, colleges, and organizers, these dates remain subject to change as needed to best suit the needs of all those involved. We will communicate any changes through our email lists and on our website.

### **Friday Jan 1:**

- Student application opens

### **Monday March 1:**

- Final track definitions and special prizes announced
- Final prize structure and amounts announced

### **March-April:**

- Regional competitions

### **Sunday April 25:**

- Finals videos and slide decks due

### **Wednesday April 28-Monday May 3:**

- Finals judge review

### **Tuesday May 4:**

- Judge deliberation calls and top 3 teams/track notified

### **Wednesday May 5:**

- Special prize decisions made by prize sponsors

### **Friday May 7**

- 9-11am - "Track rooms" - Top 3 teams pitch "live" for judging panel with live Q&A
- 11-11:30am - Judge deliberation - track winners determined
- 12-1pm - Grand Prize deliberation
- 4pm - Finals event and award announcements

## Competition Structure

The NYPBC consists of two levels of competition. Regional semifinals are held in March and April in 10 regions across NY state. The winners of these competitions move on to the statewide finals.

Students will be assigned to a semifinal regional competition based on the location of their school. All semifinal competitions follow this rulebook and rubric, but format and timing of the semifinal competitions vary.

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All students will fill out a single, unified application which will be available **January 1, 2021** via the website, NYBPC.org. Please check the website for the deadlines and dates specific to each regional competition.

The teams finishing in first and second place within each track at each of the regional competitions will advance to the statewide final competition to be held **online** in May 2021. Finalists will submit pitch videos and slide decks **due by April 25, 2021**. The top three teams in each track will be invited to pitch to a panel of finals judges with live Q&A. Winners will be announced at an online awards ceremony on **May 7, 2021**.

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All students are invited to the finals event to cheer for their teammates, meet mentors, attend workshops and gain exposure to entrepreneurial resources from across New York.

Each region may send up to two teams per track. No alternate teams will be invited.

Please visit the [NYBPC website](#) to apply and to find more information about the regional competitions.

Regional coordinators must email a list of winners and team contact information to [info@nybpc.org](mailto:info@nybpc.org) within 48 hours of the completion of their competition.

Once those lists are received, eligible teams will receive instructions for submitting their final presentations, which are due **by 11:59PM on Sunday, April 25, 2021**.

## Team/Student Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply for and participate in the NYBPC, all teams must meet the following criteria:

- “Students” are any graduate, undergraduate, and/or community college students enrolled part- or full-time in accredited New York colleges and universities during the current academic year. Students who graduate during the Fall semester are eligible to compete in the competition during the Spring semester. Exchange students are also eligible.
- Presenters must be eligible students in all stages of the competition.
- Teams may compete in only one region per year.
- Students may not participate on more than one team per year.
- Grand prize winners from previous NYBPC competitions are not eligible to participate in the competition. (They are encouraged to participate as speakers, mentors, volunteers, and judges!) Individual members of winning teams may return with new teams in subsequent years.
- Cumulative public and private capital raised may not exceed \$100,000. This does not include research funding that may have supported the development of the technology in an academic laboratory.
- The business venture must be at least 80% owned by eligible students.

Teams do not need to have incorporated legal entities to compete. The NYBPC reserves the right to withhold prizes from winning teams who do not comply with the eligibility requirements.

## Track Definitions & Assignments

The competition is divided into six categories, called tracks, at all levels of competition.

To keep pace with our rapidly changing world and to provide a balanced competition, track definitions will be finalized and announced on **March 1, 2021**.

This will allow time for a review of this year's applicants. Students will no longer select a track on their applications, but will instead select one or more category tags. These tags may align with the track definitions or with special prize definitions or with neither. They could relate to the type of business, attributes of the team, the type of product or service, or target markets or customers.

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The list of tags will not be finalized until the student application opens on January 1, but some possible tags could be agtech, athletics, clothing, college students, education, entertainment, environmental impact, fintech, food, government, medtech, mental health, military, mwbe, software, travel, utility, veteran-owned.

Student teams will be informed of their track assignments prior to the regional competitions.

Teams in each of the tracks may represent for-profit or non-profit ventures. All tracks are judged according to the same criteria and rubric.

## Presentation Guidelines

The presentation format for the regional semifinal and statewide final competitions may vary. Please reach out to the organizers of your regional competition to ensure that you understand the requirements.

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### Presentation Format & Submission Requirements

For the statewide final competition, each team will be given the opportunity to submit a link to a pitch video, a slide deck, and brief written remarks to be shared with the judges. Final submissions must be submitted by **11:59pm on April 25, 2021**. No new presentations or updated versions will be accepted after that date and time. The top three finalists in each track will have the opportunity to update their presentations before the final live pitches.

Videos should be **5-7 minutes** in length. Judges will be asked to ignore anything past the 7 minute mark. Videos should only include the slide deck and presenter – no demos or footage of the product/service in use in the field. This includes software demos. Screenshots and photos are welcome and encouraged. Videos that do not match submitted slide decks will risk disqualification. To best align with judge expectations and the judging rubric, students should focus on creating a simple and clear presentation rather than a fancy video production.

Slide decks must be in PDF or PPTX format. No specific version of Powerpoint or Adobe software is guaranteed, so students should plan accordingly, focusing on simplicity and content to guarantee universal accessibility.

Additional remarks are limited to 200 words and will be shared with the judges along with the pitch video and slides.

## Presentation Content

It is recommended that you seek to address the following questions in your presentation:

### **Business Model and Team**

1. **General Description:** What problem are you solving? What is your business model? Describe how your venture makes money and how it will assure long-term sustainability.
2. **Value Proposition:** What are your company's key, differentiated value propositions (e.g. lowest cost, highest reliability, best performance, etc.)? What is your venture's right to win versus the competition?
3. **Structure:** What is the structure of your organization? Do you have the team members that you need to start and grow? How will the structure change with growth?

### **Product/Service**

1. **Product/Service:** What is your product/service offering?
2. **Function and Benefit:** How does your product/service work? Define and quantify key benefits (e.g. cost, performance, technical, etc.) for customers.
3. **Development Stage:** Where is the product/service in its evolution (e.g. idea/conception, proof of concept, fully tested prototype, etc.)?

### **Competitive Position**

1. **Competitors:** Who is your competition?
2. **Edge over Competition:** What makes you better than other companies currently in the market?
3. **Sustainability:** Is this competitive position sustainable?
4. **IP Protection:** How will you protect your proprietary information?

### **Markets**

1. **Target Market:** What markets and market segments are you targeting? How big are these markets and how can you sustainably capture them?
2. **Barriers to Entry:** What are the key market barriers and how will they lend to your success?

### **Customers**

1. **Customers:** Who are the specific customers that you are pursuing or will pursue? Do you have any letters of interest and/or intent to purchase? Do you have sales?
2. **Discovery:** What kind of customer discovery have you conducted to find out about people who want what you are offering?

## Judging Criteria

Judges are asked to evaluate companies according to the following criteria:

- **Market Opportunity:** Clear market need and a plan to take advantage of the need.
- **Competitive Advantage:** The product or service is something unique that has a protectable competitive advantage in the proposed market.



- **Management Capability:** The team has the skills and experience to develop this venture and address the associated risks.
- **Financial Understanding:** The team has a solid understanding of the financial requirements of the venture.
- **Roadmap/Growth Strategy:** The team has engaged in short- and long-term planning and has considered strategies for growth.
- **Sustainable Business Model:** The team understands and can communicate their core business model. They are likely to develop a sustainable venture.

Judges focus their deliberations on the long-term viability of each venture.

## Prize Information

This year's prize structure and amounts will be announced by **March 1, 2021**.

First, Second, and Third Place prizes will be awarded for each of the six tracks. A Grand Prize winner will be selected from among the First Place teams. Winners will be selected by judging panels.

Special prizes will be awarded across the tracks. Criteria and amounts will be announced by **March 1, 2021**. These winners will be selected by their respective prize sponsors.

Evidence of incorporation is required for prize dispersal for Grand Prize and First Place teams. W9 forms are required for all cash prizes. Incorporation may take any form related to a business entity or identity including a local DBA or state-level corporate structure such as an LLC, C-corporation, etc. Feel free to reach out to us at [info@nybpc.org](mailto:info@nybpc.org) if you need help navigating the options.

Grand Prize and First Place teams will receive the first half of their cash prizes once they have submitted the required tax forms to [info@nybpc.org](mailto:info@nybpc.org) and have worked with NYBPC organizers to establish milestones. The second half of the prizes will be paid upon completion of the agreed-upon milestones. All other teams will be asked to meet with NYBPC organizers to set milestones and will receive one payment.

All prizes must be claimed within 12 months of the date of the competition or will be forfeited. Cash prizes are taxable according to state and federal tax law.

## Judges

Judging panels are composed of a mix of investors and industry experts, including venture capitalists, angel investors, investment bankers, experienced entrepreneurs, and leaders from the business community. At the statewide finals, proctors will be assigned to each track to facilitate the judging process.

- Judges who have mentored or otherwise engaged with any competing teams are not eligible to participate on any level of the competition.

- Judges will fill out a unified application for both regionals and state finals, which will be available by **December 1, 2020**.
- Judges may serve as either regional judges OR finals judges, but not both.
- Judges should avoid interaction with all competitors until the event is completed.

If you are interested in participating as a judge for the 2021 NYBPC, or know someone who would be a good fit, please contact us at [info@nybpc.org](mailto:info@nybpc.org).

## Ethics Questions & Rule Enforcement

An ethics committee consisting of a cross-section of participants from across the state handles rule infractions, challenges, and questions at all stages of the competition. Their rulings on these and any unforeseen scenarios will be final. Please [contact us](#) if you are interested in participating on the ethics committee.

Thank you for your contributions to New York's entrepreneurial ecosystem and the NYBPC!