



Growth Accelerator | SBIR Catalyst
2021 SBA Prize Competition

Growth Accelerator Fund Competition and SBIR Catalyst Prize Competition Rules

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Growth Accelerator Fund Competition and SBIR Catalyst Prize Competition Rules

1) **Subject of Competition:**

The Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Investment and Innovation (OII) is offering \$5,250,000 in prize awards to impactful and inclusive approaches that support entrepreneurs involved in research and development (R&D). OII will run the competition in two tracks, with eighty-four (84) \$50,000 prizes for accelerator or incubator programs, and seven (7) \$150,000 prizes to launch regional collaborations that increase underrepresented entrepreneur involvement in the Small Business Innovation Research and Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) programs.

SBA welcomes proposals from the nation’s innovation-focused entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs) that can speed the launch, growth, and scale of high-tech small businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous obstacles, including for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) entrepreneurs who disproportionately drive the creation of jobs and contribute towards economic recovery. By addressing the capital gap many ESOs face, SBA’s prizes will assist critical activities around the country – new collaborations, targeted programs, and support services for early-stage startups to increase the likelihood of STEM/R&D entrepreneurs to not only take off, but de-risk their work for follow-on investors.

SBA plays a substantial role in the Federal Lab-to-Market ecosystem, serving as the hub of the SBIR/STTR programs – also known as America’s Seed Fund. The programs have become an increasingly important resource for a wide range of startups, researchers, and innovators working on big ideas but lacking access to capital. Incorporating SBIR/STTR exposure through the Growth Accelerator Fund Competition (GAFC) network will significantly expand SBA’s ability to reach a larger number and more diverse potential small business applicants. Piloting regional collaboratives, the SBIR Catalyst program will work to ensure those potential applicants embody the full potential of the US innovation ecosystem – finding ways for individuals from diverse and underserved communities, including women, people of color, and individuals living in underrepresented geographic regions, to better participate, contribute, and benefit.

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Track One: Growth Accelerator Fund Competition (GAFC)

Awards in this track will infuse accelerators and incubators with additional resource capital to provide focused assistance to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs, including but not limited to support for company formation as well as awareness and education of the SBIR/STTR programs. For the purposes of this Competition, the accelerators and incubators are referred to as Growth Accelerators (or Accelerators) and include accelerators, incubators, and/or other models to accomplish similar goals.

Accelerators play a critical role in supporting STEM/R&D startups as they transition into the market. By connecting entrepreneurs with partners, introducing to investors, assisting with prototyping, and advising on commercialization, Accelerators are often a gateway for individuals who have developed strong technologies but are newcomers to the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Model of Operation Elements

Contestant model of operations must include most, if not all, of the following elements:

- Training and mentorship for STEM/R&D startups.
- Introductions to customers, suppliers, advisors, and other key players.
- Opportunities to pitch ideas and startups to investors and/or other capital formation avenues to startups, such as commercialization assistance.
- Regular networking opportunities offered to startups.
- Selective process to choose participating startups.
- Programs focused on building a strong startup community.

Target Entrepreneurs

In their proposal, Contestants under GAFC must focus proposed efforts to support entrepreneurs in one (1) of the following target areas:

- Women entrepreneurs
- Minority entrepreneurs
- Applicant choice (i.e., rural, veterans, individuals with disabilities, etc.)

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Technology Areas

In their proposal, Contestants under GAFC must identify efforts to support entrepreneurs building technologies to address one or more of the following:

- Clean Energy: such as electric vehicles, solar, wind, geothermal, nuclear, energy efficiency
- Supply Chain Resilience: such as semiconductors, pharmaceuticals and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), high-capacity batteries, critical minerals, agricultural commodities
- Infrastructure: such as broadband, electrical grid, water supply and sewer, transportation infrastructure, electric vehicle charging stations
- Other STEM/R&D areas

The awards are to be used to fund the accelerators' and incubators' operating budgets, not for direct investing in small businesses or startups.

Track Two: SBIR Catalyst

The SBIR Catalyst prizes will invest in collaborative partnerships to build and catalyze connections across ESOs that support innovation focused entrepreneurs from underserved communities. A main Contestant will submit a proposal involving multiple ESOs and partners from separate states/territories, or within a large geographic area (states do not have to be adjoining or in the same region).

SBIR Catalyst winners are expected to be connectors across current and future programs that fund innovation clusters, hubs, and navigators. Successful proposals will also detail efforts to align federal resources with existing state and local resources, regional strengths and economic growth opportunities. Fulfilling SBA's mission, awards will address current gaps in access to the innovation economy for communities of color, women entrepreneurs, and rural communities.

Prize funds may establish novel partnerships, strengthen existing alliances between stakeholders (including public, private, non-profit, and academic partners). Funded collaborations are intended to: (1) expand access to expertise and mentorship in areas required for early-stage technology development (including scientific, regulatory, reimbursement, business, legal, and project management), (2) build programs for training and equipping SBIR/STTR applicants to submit competitive proposals, (3) develop commercialization pathways for STEM/R&D companies, and (4) engage with other SBIR Catalyst partners to address and fill gaps in the innovation ecosystem.

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To encourage local and regional support, preference will be given to Contestants who secure matching funding. The match is not required and can be federal or nonfederal funds.

Characteristics

- Cluster/consortia model to leverage multiple networks (within a state/territory or among a group of states/territories).
- Features leadership experienced in STEM/R&D entrepreneurship with a specific focus on bringing technologies from lab to market.
- Increases local and regional connectivity to support underrepresented STEM/R&D entrepreneurs.

2) Prizes

The Competition will award up to \$5,250,000 in total prizes.

- GAFC:** up to \$50,000 prizes will be awarded to accelerators and incubators that provide focused assistance to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs. In total, SBA expects to award up to 84 GAFC prizes.
- SBIR Catalyst:** up to \$150,000 prizes will be awarded to scale collaborative partnerships that catalyze connections and support for SBIR/STTR applicants and awardees. In total, SBA expects to award up to 7 SBIR Catalyst prizes.

The winners will be announced late-August 2021. Only one prize will be awarded for each winning submission, regardless of the number of Contestants that submitted Applications or were involved with that submission. A main Contestant may apply to both tracks but may only win one prize in the Competition.

3) Important Dates

- Submission Period: May 26, 2021 4:00 PM EDT to July 2, 2021 4:00 PM EDT.
- Screening, Vetting and Judging Period: July - August 2021.
- Winners Announced: Late-August 2021.

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4) Competition Criteria

Information/Documents to be included as part of Application:

- a) **Contestant Information:** Basic contact details collected in the short application form accessed via the links at www.sbir.gov/accelerators.
- b) **Submission Slide Deck:** A presentation/slide deck no more than twelve (12) slides and must address all items in the relevant track, in the order listed. The presentation/deck must be submitted as a PDF. The deck will not be made public.
- c) **Video Narrative:** A video of not more than ninety (90) seconds that describes how the applicant is uniquely qualified to address the needs of the entrepreneurs it serves and implement its proposed GAFC or SBIR Catalyst plan. The video must be posted to a public site (such as YouTube or Vimeo). The URL link to the video must be included in the application form and must be accessible to Competition judges. If selected, the video will be made public.

Submission Slide Decks

Note: there are separate slide requirements for the two tracks (GAFC and SBIR Catalyst). Applicants should address the relevant elements for their track. The Competition judges will score the submissions based on the content provided. Slide deck should be submitted in PDF format.

GROWTH ACCELERATOR FUND COMPETITION (Track One)

Slide 1: Summary Information

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name of Primary Contestant (entity) ● City and State/Territory ● Website of Contestant ● Contact Person (First & Last Names) ● Contact Email and Phone ● Other Key Team Members (Names) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Target Entrepreneur Group (i.e., women, minority, or applicant choice) ● Technology Area/s (i.e., clean energy, supply chain resilience, infrastructure, other STEM/R&D) |
|--|---|

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Slide 2: Mission

- What is the Accelerator's mission (in one sentence)?
- What specific elements make your accelerator model stand out?
- Per the model of operation elements listed in Section 1, discuss the Accelerator's approach and how it addresses these elements.

Slides 3-4: Working with Targeted Entrepreneur Group (Women, Minority, Applicant Choice)

- Contestants under GAFC must focus their proposed efforts to support entrepreneurs in one (1) of the following areas – what is your targeted entrepreneur group?
 - Women entrepreneurs
 - Minority entrepreneurs
 - Applicant choice (i.e., rural, veterans, individuals with disabilities, etc.)
- How is the Accelerator uniquely qualified to work with this group?
- How does your organizational leadership reflect your prioritization of this group?
- Discuss the approach to identify and support the targeted entrepreneur group.
- What are the potential challenges and opportunities for the Accelerator to work with the targeted entrepreneur group?
- How will participation be measured?
- Who has benefited from your past work, and why does that matter for your proposed activities?

Slide 5: Experience with STEM/R&D and the SBIR/STTR Programs

- What is the Accelerator's experience in working with STEM/R&D entrepreneurs?
- What is the Accelerator's experience in working with the SBIR/STTR programs?
- Discuss the unique connections the Accelerator can provide to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs (i.e., stakeholders that can support entrepreneurs in preparing competitive SBIR/STTR proposals, access to venture or angel capital, etc.)

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Slides 6-8: Overall Plan for the Award

- What is the Accelerator’s plan for the GAFC funds if awarded a prize?
- Describe your ability to pilot, adjust or enhance your current programs.
- Describe your unique value proposition and structural advantages related to your overall plan.
- What type of assistance will be provided? Examples could include, but are not limited to:
 - Access to capital, including understanding and applying to the SBIR/STTR programs as well as angel funding and venture capital
 - Mentors to provide business advice and counseling
 - Networking opportunities
 - Commercialization training
 - Pitch days or demo events
- How will participants be recruited, and cohorts managed, in the current COVID environment?
- Will any level of assistance be provided to companies located in designated HUBZones and/or for companies to better understand and participate in the HUBZone program? If so, please describe.
- Contestants under GAFC must identify efforts to support entrepreneurs building technologies in the sectors below. Detail how your proposed efforts will impact any of the following areas, and why:
 - Clean Energy: such as electric vehicles, solar, wind, geothermal, nuclear, energy efficiency
 - Supply Chain Resilience: such as semiconductors, pharmaceuticals and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), high-capacity batteries, critical minerals, agricultural commodities
 - Infrastructure: such as broadband, electrical grid, water supply and sewer, transportation infrastructure, electric vehicle charging stations
 - Other STEM/R&D areas

Slides 9-10: Implementation and Metrics

- What does success look like?
- Provide information on the phases for implementation (i.e., tasks and timeline).

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- Share relevant metrics:
 - Estimated number of clients/entrepreneurs the Accelerator anticipates assisting in the target group.
 - Estimated number of training hours to be provided to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs as part of this award.
 - Amount of capital raised for entrepreneurs over the past two years (approximate).
 - Additional key metrics the Accelerator will use to self-evaluate/measure the success of the proposed plan and the estimated results.
 - Number of Phase I and II SBIR/STTR proposals submitted.
- What makes the Accelerator's staff qualified to implement the plan?
- What are the primary risk factors you anticipate mitigating or overcoming to successfully implement the plan?

Slide 11: Partner Entities

- Describe any former, current, or future partnerships/working relationships with federal, state, regional, and/or local entities that you would like to highlight.
- Discuss how the Accelerator leverages other available resources to support the organization's entrepreneurs.
- Include specific detail on the effectiveness of past collaboration efforts.

Slide 12: Additional Information at Competitor's Discretion

- Competitor may use this slide to provide any additional information that would be useful for the submission.

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SBIR Catalyst (Track Two)

Slide 1: Summary Information

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name of Primary Contestant (entity)• City and State/Territory• Website of Contestant• Contact Person (First & Last Names)• Contact Email and Phone | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name of Each Partner Entity with their City and State/Territory |
|--|---|

Slide 2: Partnership Objectives

- Why is this collaborative partnership forming?
- What is the shared vision?
- Describe the roles of all partner entities.
- Explain the partnership focus area – will it be around a particular underrepresented demographic, geography, shared resource, or technology?

Slides 3-4: Working to Build an Inclusive R&D Ecosystem

- Each collaborative partnership is expected to expand the participation of women and/or individuals from underrepresented groups in innovation, technology translation, and entrepreneurship. Identify how the entrepreneurs you focus on are underserved.
- How does your organizational leadership reflect prioritization of this group?
- How are you and your partners uniquely qualified to work with underrepresented STEM/R&D entrepreneurs?
- Discuss the approach to identify and help targeted entrepreneur groups with understanding and applying to the SBIR/STTR programs.
- How will participation be measured?
- What are the potential challenges and opportunities for you to build an inclusive R&D ecosystem?

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Slide 5: Working in STEM and with the SBIR/STTR Programs

- What are the partners' experiences in working with STEM/R&D entrepreneurs?
- What are the partners' experiences in working with the SBIR/STTR programs?
- Discuss the unique connections the partners can provide to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs (i.e., stakeholders that can support entrepreneurs in preparing competitive SBIR/STTR proposals, access to venture or angel capital, etc.)

Slides 6-8: Overall Plan for the Award

- What is your plan for the SBIR Catalyst funds if awarded a prize?
- Describe your unique value proposition and structural advantages related to your overall plan.
- What type of assistance will be provided?
- Describe and defend proposed assistance, considering other technology-based economic development projects in the region.
- Clearly identify gaps or opportunities to improve assistance leading to the start and growth of STEM/R&D companies, particularly from underrepresented entrepreneurs.

Slides 9-10: Implementation and Metrics

- Discuss how the plan will improve the operational sustainability of your organizations, including developing new or enhancing existing financial or in-kind support.
- Provide information on the phases for implementation (i.e., tasks and timeline).
- What does the success of this partnership look like? Describe metrics and/or baseline data (if available). Examples include:
 - New, formal connections between ESOs.
 - Estimated increase in underserved entrepreneur engagement with SBIR/STTR.
 - Estimated number of clients/entrepreneurs the Catalyst Partners anticipate assisting with SBIR/STTR proposals or team development.
 - Number of Phase I and II SBIR/STTR proposals to be submitted.

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- Additional key metrics the Catalyst Partners will use to self-evaluate/measure the success of the proposed plan and the estimated results.
- What are the primary risk factors you anticipate mitigating or overcoming to successfully implement the plan?

Slide 11: Match Component and Partner Entities

- Describe any matching funding promised or secured, including source and conditions. The match is not required and can be federal or nonfederal funds.
- Describe any former, current, or future partnerships/working relationships with federal, state, regional, and/or local entities that you would like to highlight.
 - Include specific detail on the effectiveness of past collaboration efforts.
- To what extent are local partners aligned and supportive of the project concept and the outcomes it aims to produce?

Slide 12: Additional Information at Competitor's Discretion

- Competitor may use this slide to provide any additional information that would be useful for the submission.

Note: Winners will be asked to respond to a metrics survey and submit a written assessment approximately 12 months after receiving prize funds. As part of this Assessment, additional questions may include: What worked? What did not? What would the Accelerator or Catalyst Partners do differently?

Video Narrative – Both Tracks

Video Narrative – (will be made public)

A video of not more than 90 seconds that:

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- Describes how the applicant is uniquely qualified to address the needs of the entrepreneurs it serves currently and implement its proposed GAFC or SBIR Catalyst plan.

Judging Criteria includes:

- a) Quality and Clarity of Submission
- b) Alignment with Track-Specific Goals
- c) Plan Feasibility and Implementation Description

5) Eligibility Rules for Participating in the Competition

This Competition is open only to:

- a) citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of their submission of an entry (or teams of such individuals);
- b) private entities, such as corporations or other organizations, both for profit and nonprofit, that are incorporated or organized in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States. Individuals submitting on behalf of corporations, nonprofits, or other organizations or groups of individuals (such as an academic class or other team) must meet the eligibility requirements for individual Contestants. **An individual cannot belong to more than one team per track submitting an entry in this Competition.**

SBA employees and contractors are not eligible, nor are Federal entities or Federal employees acting within the scope of their employment. Individuals or organizations that are currently suspended or debarred by the federal government are not eligible for this Competition.

GAFC	SBIR Catalyst
Contestant model of operations must include most, if not all, of the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and mentorship for STEM/R&D startups. 	Characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster/consortia model to leverage multiple networks (within a state/territory or among a group of states/territories).

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions to customers, suppliers, advisors, and other key players. • Opportunities to pitch ideas and startups to investors and/or other capital formation avenues to startups, such as commercialization assistance. • Regular networking opportunities offered to startups. • Selective process to choose participating startups. • Programs focused on building a strong startup community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features leadership experienced in STEM/R&D entrepreneurship with a specific focus on bringing technologies from lab to market. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases local and regional connectivity to support underrepresented STEM/R&D entrepreneurs.
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6) **Registration/Submission Requirements**

Interested persons or entities should review these Competition Rules before entering the Competition. All Contestants must enter the Competition through the Competition website at www.sbir.gov/accelerators.

Necessary steps and considerations include the following:

- a) Access the submission link at www.sbir.gov/accelerators. Submissions will only be accepted between May 26, 2021 4:00 PM EDT to July 2, 2021 4:00 PM EDT.
- b) Complete Contestant information on the submission page.
- c) Upload submission in the designated field. At a minimum, submissions must include:
 1. A submission slide deck addressing all listed elements for the Contestant's chosen track (either GAFC or SBIR Catalyst) and the link to a public video.
 2. Maximum length of submission slide deck is 12 pages. Maximum length of the video is 90 seconds.
 3. A standard, 11-point minimum font size applies. Tables, images, and illustrations may use a reduced font size not less than 8-point and may be landscape.

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4. Only Portable Document Format File (.pdf) will be accepted. The slide deck attachment must not exceed 10 MB in size. Submission attachments that exceed the file size above will not be accepted and will not be evaluated.
5. All pages must be appropriately numbered and identified by the complete Contestant name and date in the header and/or footer.
6. Page count will not be based upon the numbers of pages printed but rather dictated by the number of pages in a print layout view of the application. Counting pages in the order they appear for viewing will make up the page count. The page limits are applicable to graphs, tables, drawings, and any other attachments submitted with the proposals and not specifically excluded by the submission. Any index, table of contents, glossary or integrated master schedule will not be included in the maximum page limitation.
 - d) Submissions must not include business or personal information not specifically requested by these Competition Rules, for example, social security numbers should not be included with a submission.
 - e) Registration is Free of Charge.
 - f) No SBA logo – The application must not use SBA’s logo or official seal in the Submission and must not claim SBA endorsement. The award of a prize in this Competition does not constitute an endorsement of a specific entity, service, or product by SBA or the Federal government.

7) Judging

Ultimately, a Judging Panel will rate the submissions based on the criteria and requirements specified in these Competition Rules. The decision of the Judges will be announced on the Competition website mid-August 2021.

The members of the Judging Panel will be selected by SBA, at its sole discretion, and will be comprised of SBA personnel, other federal agency representatives, and private sector experts. Each judge will serve on a volunteer basis. Each judge will be screened by SBA to ensure he/she does not: (1) have personal or financial interest in, or serve as an employee, officer, director, or agent of, any Contestant; or (2) have a familial relationship with a Contestant.

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8) Selection of Winners

- a. **Screening and Vetting** - Once the submissions period closes, SBA will review the submissions for completeness and Contestant eligibility. SBA may, at its sole discretion, request clarifying or explanatory information. Eligible Contestants selected for awards will be vetted by SBA for, among other things, conflicts of interest with the Agency.

- b. **Winners Selection** - The Judging Panel will choose as winners those submissions that, in the Judging Panel’s sole judgment, best satisfy the Competition criteria and present the greatest potential for success. If an applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria and does not provide the basic contact details and the information outlined for the Submission slide deck (See Section 4), the application will be deemed ineligible. In addition to reviewing the applications for the individual merit of their proposals, judges may also take into account the geographic location and dispersal of Contestants, the extension of services to underserved populations, industry diversity, the risk posed by the Contestant’s organization, and other similar considerations when selecting winners. SBA intends for no less than 50% of GAFC prizes to go to first-time GAFC winners, and no less than 50% of GAFC prizes to go to Contestants located in the 29 states/territories receiving the fewest number of SBIR/STTR Phase I awards (see table below). SBA aims to fund multiple accelerators that also help companies navigate HUBZone opportunities. During the judging period, SBA may ask Contestants for clarification of the technical and cost aspects of their proposals. This should not be construed as a commitment to fund the proposed effort.

States/Territories with Low FY19 SBIR/STTR Phase I Awards

Alaska	Nebraska
American Samoa	Nevada
Arkansas	North Dakota
Delaware	Northern Mariana Islands
District of Columbia	Oklahoma
Guam	Puerto Rico
Hawaii	Rhode Island
Idaho	South Carolina
Iowa	South Dakota
Kansas	Vermont
Louisiana	Virgin Islands
Kentucky	West Virginia

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Maine	Wisconsin
Mississippi	Wyoming
Montana	

9) **Verification of Winners**

The winners must continue to comply with all terms and conditions of these Competition Rules, and winning is contingent upon fulfilling all applicable rules, policies and requirements, including the requirements contained herein.

10) **Applicable Law**

This Competition is being conducted by SBA pursuant to the America Competes Act (15 U.S.C. § 3719) and is subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations. By participating in this Competition, each Contestant gives its full and unconditional agreement to the Competition Rules, which are final and binding in all matters related to the Competition. A Contestant's eligibility for a prize award is contingent upon their fulfilling all requirements identified in these Competition Rules. Publication of these Competition Rules is not an obligation of funds on the part of SBA. SBA reserves the right to modify or cancel this Competition, in whole or in part, at any time prior to the award of prizes.

11) **Conflicts of Interest**

No individual acting as a judge at any stage of this Competition may have personal or financial interests in, or be an employee, officer, director, or agent of any Contestant or have a familial or financial relationship with a Contestant.

12) **Intellectual Property Rights**

All entries submitted in response to this Competition will remain the sole intellectual property of the individuals or organizations that developed them. By registering and entering a submission, each Contestant represents and warrants that it is the sole author and copyright owner of the submission, and that the submission is an original work of the contestant, or that the Contestant has acquired sufficient rights to use and to authorize others to use the submission, and that the submission does not infringe upon any copyright or upon any other third party rights of which the Contestant is aware.

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By registering and entering a submission, however, the Contestant agrees that SBA reserves an irrevocable, nonexclusive, royalty-free license to use, copy, distribute to the public, create derivative works from, and publicly display and perform a submission.

13) Publicity Rights

By registering and entering a submission, each Contestant consents to SBA's and its agents' use, in perpetuity, of its name, likeness, photograph, voice, opinions, and/or hometown and state information for promotional or informational purposes through any form of media, worldwide, without further payment or consideration.

14) Liability and Insurance Requirements

By registering and entering a submission, each Contestant agrees to assume any and all risks and waive any and all claims against the U.S. Government and its related entities, except in the case of willful misconduct, for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from their participation in this Competition, whether the injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise. By registering and entering a submission, each Contestant further represents and warrants that it possesses sufficient liability insurance or financial resources to cover claims by a third party for death, bodily injury, or property damage or loss resulting from any activity it carries out in connection with its participation in this Competition, or claims by the U.S. Government for damage or loss to Government property resulting from such an activity. Contest winners should be prepared to demonstrate proof of insurance or financial responsibility in the event the SBA deems it necessary.

15) Record Retention and Disclosure

All submissions and related materials provided or made available to SBA in connection with this Competition automatically become SBA records and cannot be returned. Contestants should identify any confidential commercial information contained in their entries at the time of their submission to SBA. SBA will notify Contestants of any Freedom of Information Act requests the Agency receives during the Competition related to their submissions in accordance with 13 C.F.R. § 102.

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16) Disclaimers

SBA and its agents are not responsible for:

- a. Any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by Contestants, printing errors, or by any of the equipment or programming associated with or utilized in the Competition;
- b. Technical failure of any kind, including, but not limited to malfunctions, interruptions or disconnections in phone lines, network hardware or software, or in connection with the Competition website;
- c. Unauthorized human intervention in any part of the entry process or the Competition;
- d. Technical or human error which may occur in the administration of the Competition or the processing of entries; or
- e. Any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, from Contestant's participation in the Competition or receipt, use or misuse of any prize.

If for any reason a Contestant's entry is confirmed to have been erroneously deleted, lost, or otherwise destroyed or corrupted, Contestant's sole remedy is to submit another entry in the Competition, provided it is submitted before the initial screening of entries is completed.

17) General Conditions

SBA reserves the right at any time, for any reason, to cancel, suspend, and/or modify the Competition, or any part of it.

Participation constitutes each Contestant's full and unconditional agreement to these Official Rules and administrative decisions which are final and binding in all matters related to the Competition. The publishing of the Competition Rules is not an obligation of funds; the final award of prizes is contingent upon the availability of appropriations.