



Judging Guidance and Process

Judging Process

All judges will assess every pitch using the agreed judging criteria, ensuring a fair and consistent process across the competition.

Sandbox Pitch-Off

- Each industry judge will act as the lead judge for the Sandbox challenge they sponsored or supported.
- All judges will score every pitch, not only those within their own challenge area.
- For each pitch, the relevant lead judge will ask the finalist one question following their 3-minute pitch.
- The finalist will have up to 2 minutes to respond.
- Other judges will not ask additional questions during the live pitching session but can record comments or points they wish to raise during deliberation.
- All judges, including the internal advisory judge, will contribute to the final deliberation and decision.
- Where consensus cannot be reached, the relevant lead judge will have the casting vote for their Sandbox category.

Open Pitch Competition

- The internal advisory judge will act as the **lead judge** for the Open Pitch Competition.
- All industry judges will score every Open Pitch finalist and contribute to the deliberation.
- Following each pitch, the internal advisory judge will ask **one question**, with the finalist given up to **2 minutes to respond**.
- Where consensus cannot be reached, the internal advisory judge will have the casting vote.

Rationale

This guidance is for:

Pitch-Off - 25 November 2026 - Applications for this Pitch-Off close on 16 November 2026 at 12:00 pm

AND

Pitch-Off - 23 March 2027 - Applications for this Pitch-Off close on 12 March 2027 at 12:00 pm



This format ensures that every finalist benefits from a range of perspectives while keeping the live event fast-paced and engaging. Having one question from the lead judge gives finalists an opportunity to demonstrate their thinking beyond the prepared pitch without allowing the Q&A to dominate the competition.

All judges remain actively involved by scoring every pitch and contributing to the final deliberation, rather than only participating during their own category.

A member of the Student Enterprise Team should accompany the judges during deliberations to facilitate the discussion, ensure the agreed process is followed and make sure each lead judge has the opportunity to contribute to the final decisions.

Judging Criteria	What judges should consider	Score
Problem & Need	Is the problem clear and meaningful? Have they demonstrated that a genuine need exists?	/10
Solution	Is the solution clear and compelling? Does it effectively address the problem? Is there something unique about the approach?	/10
Customer	Do they understand who their customer and user are? Is there a real market opportunity?	/10
Validation	Have they tested or explored their assumptions through research, customer conversations, prototypes or other evidence?	/10
Pitch Delivery	Was the pitch clear, engaging and convincing?	/10
Total		/50

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