

## What is i.d.e.a.MSU?

i.d.e.a. MSU is a competition designed to provide Midwestern State University students with a business idea and the opportunity to hone their ideas, get valuable advice, and win some money to get started. The contest operates in two steps. Teams submit their five-page (maximum) business plan during the first step. From those plans, the judges pick up to six finalists, who then make an oral presentation to the judges on the morning of May 8<sup>th</sup>. The judges pick the winners based on those presentations.

**2025-2026 (academic year):** undergraduate and graduate students from all colleges are invited to submit business proposals and compete for prizes.

**Contact:** **Dr. DeAndrea Y. Davis, Director of the Munir Abdul Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship & Free Enterprise at (940) 397-4149 or deandrea.davis@msutexas.edu.**

## IMPORTANT DATES:

<b>Written business plan due</b>	<b>Wednesday, 4/24/26, 5:00 PM</b>
<b>Notification of finalists</b>	<b>Friday, 5/01/26</b>
<b>PowerPoint for oral presentation due</b>	<b>Monday, 5/04/26, 5:00 PM</b>
<b>Finalists' oral presentations to the judges</b>	<b>Friday, 5/08/26, 9:00 – 11:00 AM</b>
<b>Winners announced at Dillard College awards event</b>	<b>Friday, 5/08/26, 3:30 PM</b>

## Rules of the i.d.e.a.MSU Competition:

Note: The Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship & Free Enterprise ("LC"), as the administrator of the ideaMSU Competition, reserves the right to update these rules at any time. Every attempt will be made to notify participants of any modification to this document; however, it is ultimately the responsibility of ideaMSU participants to stay current with contest rules and regulations.

### I. General Requirements

- A. Team: All team members must have been students of Midwestern State University at some point in **AY 2025-2026**.
- B. Venture: This competition is for teams in the early stages of forming a venture. As such, the focus is on identifying entrepreneurial opportunities with growth potential.
- C. Business Plan (Note: we use the term "business plan" for this competition, but in reality, the material required by the competition is far less detailed than an actual business plan)
  1. The proposed business plan should not violate any intellectual property rights.
  2. The proposed business plan should not be based on or derived from an existing franchise operation.

3. Teams or team members that have received any form of outside (defined as anyone other than the team members) financial support (equity, debt, or gift) in excess of \$10,000 may not participate in the competition. Teams that have received between \$0 and \$10,000 in outside financial support should identify the sources and amounts in their business plan.
4. The proposed business plan shall be the original work of team members (e.g., it cannot have text/wording drawn verbatim or almost verbatim from another source without clearly citing the source).
5. Competition participants are not to contact judges, and judges are not to contact any participants during the competition.

## II. Prizes

- A. A panel of judges will select the three best business plans from those submitted. **Prizes will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners.** As you read below, it's in the entrants' best interest to get others to enter the contest rather than trying to keep them from entering.
- B. The oral presentations to the judges are open to the public, so please invite family and friends to the presentations.
  1. **If ten or more teams compete**, the prizes are as follows:
    - a. 1<sup>st</sup> prize – \$750
    - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> prize – \$500
    - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> prize – \$250
  2. **The prize amounts are cut in half if between five and nine teams compete.**
  3. **If two to four teams compete, there will be a \$100 prize for the 1st place team.**

## III. Entry Procedures

- A. **To enter the contest, teams must submit their plan as a Microsoft Word document via e-mail to the LC before 5:00 pm on Wednesday, April 24, 2026, at 5:00 PM.**
  1. Name the file: "TeamName\_IdeaMSU\_businessplan.docx," replacing "TeamName" with the name of your business.
  2. E-mail the file to deandrea.davis@msutexas.edu.
- B. Each submission will be reviewed and judged according to:
  1. Innovativeness and quality of product(s), service(s) and/or solution(s)
  2. Market opportunities and competition
  3. Feasibility of the product(s), service(s) and/or solution(s)

#### IV. Presentations

- A. The judges select finalists up to six teams based on the written business plans. Finalists will be notified via email of their selection on **Friday, May 01, 2026**. These finalists then orally present their plans at a public event on **Friday, May 08, 2026**, in Room 121 at the Dillard College of Business Administration.
- B. Finalist teams must prepare and then submit via email their PowerPoint presentation for the finals by **5:00 PM on Monday, May 04, 2026**.
  1. Name the file: "TeamName\_IdeaMSUpresentation.pptx," "TeamName" with the name of your business.
  2. E-mail the file to **deandrea.davis@msutexas.edu**.
- C. **Teams will have ten (10) minutes for their presentation, and the judges will have five (5) minutes to ask questions. These time limits will be strictly enforced.**
- D. Each submission will be reviewed and judged according to:
  1. Innovativeness and quality of product(s), service(s) and/or solution(s)
  2. Market opportunities and competition
  3. Feasibility of the product(s), service(s) and/or solution(s)

#### V. Confidentiality and Intellectual Property Guidelines

- A. The authors of the business plan will retain all rights to the plan regarding its use at all times before and following the competition except as stated below. Due to the nature of the competition, we will not ask judges, reviewers, staff, or the audience to agree to or sign non-disclosure statements for any participant.
- B. All public sessions of the competition, including but not limited to oral presentations and question/answer sessions, are open to the public. Any public sessions may be broadcast to interested persons through media, including radio, television, and the Internet. Any data or information discussed or divulged in public sessions by entrants should be considered information that will likely enter the public realm, and entrants should not assume any right of confidentiality in any data or information discussed, divulged, or presented in these sessions.
- C. The Dillard College of Business may make photocopies, photographs, videos, and/or audiotapes of public presentations as part of the competition. Students retain all proprietary rights. The College may use the materials for publicity purposes related to the competition and the College.

#### VI. How to Win

- A. There are many excellent online sources of information regarding how to write a business plan. It is recommended that students attend an orientation session for specific details about what should be included in a successful, i.d.e.a.MSU submission.
- B. Administrative Guidelines

1. Margins must not be smaller than 1 inch on any side.
2. Document text must be single-spaced with 11 or 12-point font type.
3. Properly cite any material directly copied from another source. If you need to include a list of references, please use a separate page

C. The maximum page count is five (excluding the title and reference pages), but it's perfectly acceptable for your plan to be shorter. Verbosity is not a virtue in business plans.

### **SUMMARY: What would be a great business venture?**

- Solve a problem involving a lot of "pain" (meaning people would pay a lot for your product) and/or a problem that affects a lot of people (meaning lots of people would buy your product).
- Solve the problem in a way superior to any existing solutions (your superiority may be that your product could be produced much cheaper than existing products).
- Finally, solve the problem in a way that would be hard for current or potential competitors to copy.

For more information, please visit the **Lalani Center website** and plan to attend one of the orientation sessions listed below. **For additional information or questions, please contact Dr. DeAndrea Davis, Director of the Munir Abdul Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship & Free Enterprise, at 940-397-4149 or [deandrea.davis@msutexas.edu](mailto:deandrea.davis@msutexas.edu).**

	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Orientation 1	Wednesday	03/25/26	3:30 – 4:30 PM
Orientation 2	Wednesday	04/01/26	3:30 – 4:30 PM

**Note: Both orientations will be held in Dillard 274D (The Priddy Conference Room)**

