

EBRC Business Plan Competition

Your opportunity to build local business together!



OFFICIAL RULES & FAQ

RULES

The Pitch is an annual Dragons' Den-Style business plan competition and exciting event in which 5 local St. Thomas and Elgin County businesses or aspiring entrepreneurs compete for a chance to win a grand prize package of cash and in-kind prizes to support their venture.

To enter The Pitch, all applicants must have their business plans submitted to Sarah Foshay, General Manager, sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca by 4:00pm November 4, 2024.

The business plans are read and evaluated by the entire Elgin Business Resource Centre staff to determine the top 5 business plan finalists, who will then go on to the grand finale.

The grand finale consists of a public speaking presentation element, where the 5 finalists 'Pitch' their business idea to a panel of judges and a live audience. The 4 judges are made up of non-biased professionals and/or sponsors who then deliberate and vote for a grand prize winner.



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A Community Futures Development Corporation

For more information, contact Sarah Foshay 519-633-7597 x328 or sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca

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As a not-for-profit organization, the Elgin Business Resource Centre has organized The Pitch in Elgin County as an economic development project with the help of community-driven sponsors since 2015. Each year we aspire to grow the cash and in-kind prize package to surpass the previous year and fuel the passion for entrepreneurship in Elgin County. Together, with the dedicated team at the Elgin Business Resource Centre, we believe we can make a difference in the community that we serve.

Our sponsorship levels consist of 5 tiers of support to accommodate your goals:
Title Sponsor, Advocate, Partner, Supporter, and Friend.

If you, as an individual, or your company is interested in being a 'Pitch' sponsor, please reach out to us for more information. Contact General Manager, Sarah Foshay, sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca 519-633-7597 ext 328.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I be a sponsor?

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What is The Pitch?

The Pitch is an annual Dragons' Den-Style business plan competition and exciting event in which 5 local Elgin County businesses or aspiring entrepreneurs compete for a chance to win a grand prize package of cash and in-kind prizes to support their venture.

When is The Pitch?

The Pitch will be in-person and presented live Tentative January 29, 2024.

Who can enter The Pitch?

Existing businesses or aspiring entrepreneurs of any age in Elgin County, including St. Thomas, can submit their business plan. The business plan is considered your application to enter the contest. If you submitted a business plan before but were not a past winner or finalists, you may resubmit an updated business plan.



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Who cannot enter The Pitch?

EBRC staff, Board of Directors and immediate family members, and businesses outside of Elgin County are not eligible to enter The Pitch. If you have been the winner or a finalist in the past, you must wait five (5) consecutive years from date of participation to be eligible to enter The Pitch again.

Anyone who does have true intention to execute their business plan are not eligible to enter.

How do business owners enter?

To enter, businesses or aspiring entrepreneurs will be required to submit their business plan to Sarah Foshay, sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca, by 4pm November 4, 2024.

What is the deadline to enter?

Business plans will need to be submitted to Sarah Foshay, sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca, by 4pm November 4, 2024.

Other important dates to remember

November - Finalists selected

November – Finalists will be notified and provided presentation tips

January - The Grand Finale - Live & In-Person

What is the cost to enter The Pitch?

It's free to enter.

What Prizes are available?

Cash and in-kind prizes, of which 100% goes towards the grand prize winner and 4 remaining finalists. The entire prize package is announced at the finale along with the sponsors who made the contribution.

How are the finalists selected?

The business plans are read and evaluated by the entire Elgin Business Resource Centre staff to determine the top 5 business plan finalists, who will then go on to the grand finale.



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Can finalists get help with their business plan?

Yes, please contact Sarah Foshay, sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca 519-633-7597 ext 328 to arrange a meeting with one of our business advisors. The advisors can assist in reviewing the plan and make suggestions you can implement before submitting your final business plan to The Pitch. Please note, we assist clients on a first come, first served basis and cannot provide constructive advice on the business plan deadline date.

A workshop is provided with tips on writing a business plan for the The Pitch September 25th.

As a finalist, if I cannot attend, can someone go in my place?

No. If you are not able to present at The Pitch, please contact Sarah Foshay sfoshay@elgincfdc.ca 519-633-7597 ext 328, as soon as possible, so we can let another business present their business plan at the finale.

Who attends The Pitch?

Everyone is welcome to attend the in-person, live presentation of the grand finale. The audience consists of EBRC staff, Board of Directors, local businesses, the general public, media, family, and friends of the finalists.

What do finalists need to do at The Pitch?

The grand finale consists of a public speaking presentation element live and in front of an audience. Finalists will be given additional information prior to the event and advice and support on how to enhance their presentation, and create a one page executive summary for the judges.

Can finalists bring family & friends to The Pitch?

Yes, finalists can bring family and friends with them to The Pitch Finale. Limited tickets are available due to the capacity of the venue. Tickets are free through Eventbrite. Everyone is invited to attend.

How many finalists will be presenting at The Pitch?

5 finalists are selected.

How is the winner selected?

The 5 finalists will present their business plan at The Pitch in front of a live audience January, 2024. A panel of 4 judges will each ask finalists questions based on their presentation. The 4 judges will then deliberate and vote for the grand prize winner.

Who are the judges?

The 4 judges are made up of non-biased professionals and/or sponsors.



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