APPLICANT GUIDELINES

LOCAL COMPETITION HOSTED BY:
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center
10201 S. Padre Island Dr. • Corpus Christi, TX 78418
Tel: 361-825-3539
www.cbbic.tamucc.edu/innovateHER2017
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COMPETITION OVERVIEW

InnovateHER is a prize competition to unearth innovative products and services that help impact and empower the lives of women and families. Through the competition, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is seeking to amplify products or services that 1) has a measurable impact on the lives of women and families, 2) has the potential for commercialization, and 3) fills a need in the marketplace.

The initial round of the Competition will take the form of local competitions by host organizations such as universities, accelerators, clusters, scale-up communities, SBA resource partners, and other economic development organizations. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center (the Business Innovation Center) is honored to host a local competition for the Coastal Bend region. One winner from this local competition will advance to the semi-final round. For more information regarding this local competition, please visit cbbic.tamucc.edu/innovateHER2017. From the pool of semi-finalists, the SBA will select up to 10 finalists who will be invited to the National InnovateHER: Innovating for Women Business Challenge to be held in September 2017. The finalists will pitch their products and services to a panel of expert judges and compete for up to $70,000 in cash prizes at the national InnovateHER pitch contest.

For information about the Competition not provided in these Guidelines, please contact the Competition Administrator by phone 361-825-3539.

Prizes
The host organization will identify one winner that will advance to the semi-final round of the Competition. The winner of this local Competition will be granted one-year membership to the Business Innovation Center’s programs. No prize money will be awarded at the local competition level.

One winner from this local competition will advance to the semi-final round. From the pool of semi-finalists, the SBA will select up to 10 finalists who will be invited to the National InnovateHER: Innovating for Women Business Challenge to be in September 2017. The finalists of the national competition will pitch their products and services to a panel of expert judges and compete for the top three awards in cash prizes:

- 1st Place: $40,000
- 2nd Place: $20,000
- 3rd Place: $10,000

For winning entries submitted by teams, prize money will be awarded to the self-identified project leader for distribution to the rest of the team at their discretion and independently from SBA.
Eligibility Requirements
This Competition is open only to 1) citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are at least 18 years of age at the time of their submission of an entry (or teams of such individuals); and 2) private entities, such as corporations or other organizations, that are incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States. Individuals submitting on behalf of corporations, nonprofits, or groups of individuals (such as an academic class or other team) must meet the eligibility requirements for individual contestants. An individual may belong to more than one team, corporation, or nonprofit organizations submitting an entry in this Competition. SBA employees are not eligible nor are Federal entities or Federal employees acting within the scope of their employment.

Competition Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Competition Kick-Off</td>
<td>April 17, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Competition Submission Due Date</td>
<td>May 22, 2017 by 5:00 P.M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification of Finalists of the local Competition</td>
<td>May 23 - 25, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch Coaching</td>
<td>May 26 - 31, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Pitch Contest</td>
<td>June 2, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcement of the local winner</td>
<td>June 2, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Winner due to SBA</td>
<td>June 23, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 10 Finalists Announced</td>
<td>July 31, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Competition</td>
<td>September 2017</td>
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</tbody>
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COMPETITION PROCESS

LOCAL COMPETITION
Phase I: Application Submission
- Phase I is open to all interested contestants who meet the Competition’s eligibility requirements outline above
- Contestants must submit a complete application package (an application form + a business plan overview). Contestants with incomplete application package will be disqualified from the Competition (See Appendices A & B)
- A complete application package must be submitted no later than 5:00PM (CT) May 22, 2017.

Phase II: Local Pitch Contest
Phase II is only open to top competitors who have been notified by the host organization (the Business Innovation Center) that they have been selected as finalists of this local Competition. Notification will be sent to finalists during May 23 - 25, 2017. To compete in Phase II, selected final contestants must pitch their innovative products or services to a judge panel established by the host organization on June 2, 2017. The host organization will offer one-on-one assistance on pitch rehearsal to the finalists at the local competition level. The host organization will notify the final contestants about the time and location.

All invited pitch presentation will be no longer than 10 minutes followed by a 10-minute questions and answers session with the judge panel. Presentations should not include proprietary or confidential materials. Presenters will be provided a computer with PowerPoint® software and a screen for presentations. Invited presenters will be provided additional instructions upon notification to prepare for Phase II. The winner of the local Competition will be further instructed to prepare for the semi-final round.

**NATIONAL COMPETITION**

Semi-final Round – National Competition
SBA will review the semi-finalist nomination packages submitted by the local competition host organizations and select up to 10 Finalists whose products or services, in SBA’s sole judgment, best satisfy the Challenge criteria identified in Paragraph 1 of these Rules and present the greatest potential for success. In addition, in order to achieve nationwide distribution of prizes for the purpose of stimulating the growth and development of new products and services across the entire United States and across a diverse range of project types, SBA may take into account nominees’ geographic locations when selecting winners, including support to geographic regions that traditionally have limited access to capital, as well as diversity in the types of products and services. Finalists selected by SBA will be required to sign a form certifying that they meet the eligibility requirements and have complied with the Challenge rules.

Final Round – National Competition
The finalists will be offered the opportunity to participate in the InnovateHER Final Challenge to be held in September 2017, where they will make a live marketing pitch to a panel of expert judges drawn from the private sector. The panel of judges will select the three finalists whose pitches, in their sole judgement, best satisfy the Challenge criteria and present the greatest potential for success and rank them in descending order. Finalists will be responsible for covering their own travel costs for the national competition.

**JUDGING PROCESS**

The local Competition will be judged by a judge panel selected by the host organization. The judge panel will score all contestants according to the competition criteria and
nominate one winner to advance to the semi-final round. The SBA will administer the semi-final and final rounds. All nominations will be screened by SBA for eligibility. Selection as a semi-finalist following a local competition is the only means of registering for the national Competition. Contestants cannot submit entries directly to the SBA.

**Competition Criteria**

The SBA is looking for entrepreneurs to create a product or service that:

- Has a measurable impact on the lives of women and families (30%)
- Has the potential for commercialization (40%)
- Fills a need in the marketplace (30%)

Local contestants must submit a complete application package (an application form + a business plan overview) to the host organization no later than 5:00 PM (CT) May 22, 2017. Maximum size limit of the entry is 5MB attachment. Contestants with incomplete application package will be disqualified from the Competition. All fields on the application form are required fields unless otherwise noticed.

**ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANCE**

One-on-one assistance in preparing a business plan overview is available through:

1) **Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center**  
   Contact Name: Sebastian Garzon, Program Manager  
   Phone Number: 361-825-3539  
   Email Address: Sebastian.garzon@tamucc.edu

2) **The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Del Mar College**  
   Contact Name: Monica Benavides, Program Coordinator DMC SBDC  
   Phone Number: 361-698-2422  
   Email Address: Mbenavides11@delmar.edu

3) **SCORE – Counselors to America’s Small Businesses**  
   Contact Name: Rebecca Esparza, Director of Business Development  
   Phone Number: 361-779-5453  
   Email Address: corpuschristi@scorevolunteer.org
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 Official Rules and the related administrative decisions described in these 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 Rules. Publication of these 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.

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 family or financial relationship with a contestant.

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 if the submission is a work based on an existing application, 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.

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.

LIABILITY AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

By registering and entering a submission, each contestant agrees to assume any and all risks and waive claims against the Federal 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. By registering and entering a submission, each
contestant further represents and warrants that it reasonably believes it possesses sufficient liability insurance or financial resources to cover claims by a third party of 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 Federal 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 SBA deems it necessary.

**RECORD RETENTION AND DISCLOSURE**

All nomination packages and related materials provided to SBA in the semi-final and final rounds of the 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. SBA will notify contestants of any Freedom of Information Act requests the Agency receives related to their submissions in accordance with 13 C. F. R. Part 102.
Appendix A
Local Competition Application Form

Application Form
The completed application must be submitted no later than 5:00PM (CT) May 22, 2017
Application can be emailed to sebastian.garzon@tamucc.edu

Note:
• Maximum size limit is 5MB attachment
• Contestants with incomplete application form will be disqualified from the Competition. All fields on the application form are required unless otherwise noticed.

Company Name (for group projects only)
First Name:
Last Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip Code:
Email Address:
Primary Phone Contact:
Secondary Phone Contact:
List all persons that own 20% or more of the business (for group projects only):

Please indicate how did you find out about the InnovateHER 2017 Competition:

Provide a brief description of your business and the product/service of the business (200 words limit)
Describe how your product/service has a measurable impact on the lives of women and families (250 words limit)

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Describe how your product/service has the potential for commercialization (250 words limit)

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Describe how your product/service fills a need in the marketplace (250 words limit)

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix B
Business Plan Overview Template

Note:
- The Business Plan Overview should briefly address essential components of a standard business plan. The winner selected to continue the semi-final round in the Competition will be required to elaborate on the Business Plan Overview during the next phase of the Competition.

- The Business Plan Overview needs to follow the format requirements of a) 2 single-side pages maximum, b) 12-point font, and c) single-spaced text. Charts, diagrams, and tables are not required; however, if submitted, they must provide support for the required elements outlined in the Business Plan Overview.

Provide a brief description of your business and the product/service of the business

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What customer problem does the product/service solve?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

How is your product/service different from other competitors or alternatives?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Who are your direct and indirect competitors?
Who are your targeted customers?
- If consumers, what are the demographics: age, income, ethnic group, location, hobbies?
- If businesses, what industry, size, and location? What is your geographic market area? What is the potential size of the market in total purchases annually? What is the potential annual sales revenue growth?

Describe how your product/service creates value for the identified customers

What are the methods of distribution for the product/service?
Describe how the business will generate revenue


Describe all the possible sources and strategies to fund the product/service


