



START UP & THRIVE

Competition Guidebook 2020





General information

The JA Europe Enterprise Challenge brings together the best student companies at postsecondary level (aged 18 to 30) from all across Europe. The Start Up programme, that directs the participants to the Enterprise Challenge, focuses on developing viable and sustainable business ideas with real investment potential—it goes beyond the basics of doing business and challenges participants to find a truly marketable product or service.

The jury will be constituted of 10 members. The main aspect judges should look at is the value (financial, social or cultural) each start-up is creating and its potential to grow. The jury will choose the winners based on the industry specialization, expertise and experience of the members. As the jury members are different every year, it is impossible to rely on a “winning pattern”.

In this guidebook you find all the relevant information concerning the competition (requirements, criteria and guidelines). All participants should read this information carefully and consult any need for additional details with their JA Member organisation.

Age Requirements

Achievers representing their start-ups in the competition **must be at least 18 years old and maximum 30 years old** on the date of the competition. Younger or older students may not participate in any part of the competition.

Team Requirements

Any Member of JA Europe implementing the JA Start Up Programme can send a team. A team should not participate in the competition more than once. Only teams that are working on their business idea for less than one year are eligible to participate in the competition.

The competing teams should consist of a minimum of 2 and maximum of 6 members. Requests for exception from this clause must be presented to JA Europe before the registration deadline.

Official Language

The official language of the competition is English.



Competition Stages

The competition takes place during 3 consecutive days and includes the following stages:

- **Start Up Pitch Deck:** The Pitch Deck is developed to explain what the company is doing and which customer problem it's going to solve. The idea of the Pitch Deck is to give enough information to get the reader interested in the idea and make them wish to know more about the company.
- **Video Commercial:** The 30-second commercial is a public video that promotes the start-up and their product or service. The commercial aims to grab the attention, garner interest, and get people excited about what the company does/sells.
- **Investor's Pitch & Jury Interview:** The pitch is an opportunity for the students to try to sell their idea; to motivate the judges to explore the idea in greater detail; to make the judges consider "investing" in the company if relevant; and to solicit feedback from the judges on the progress and potential of the idea.

Awards

Main Awards

- JA Europe Enterprise Challenge Main Award (Prize: 2.000 Eur)
- 2nd Place (Prize: 1.000 Eur)
- 3rd Place (Prize: 500 Eur)

European Signature Awards

While the main jury will concentrate on the investment potential, the signature juries, that usually represent JA partner companies, will award teams for outstanding performance in different areas of entrepreneurship or business operations. In 2020, the following signature awards will be selected:

- **Avanade Digital Innovation Award** – recognises the young entrepreneurs who were best able to put their digital skills into practice to conceive an innovative business idea or concept
- **Microsoft Innovation in Technology Award** – recognises the student company that demonstrates the best technology-driven concept, with strong business potential and sustainability as well as viability and scalability

National Signature Awards

TBC



Special Awards

- **Alumni Leadership Award** - given to outstanding individual students demonstrating extra initiative and extraordinary leadership during the program.
- **People's Choice Award** - given to the start-up that receives the most public votes online with mentoring as a prize

All the results will be announced during the Awards Ceremony.

Judging Criteria

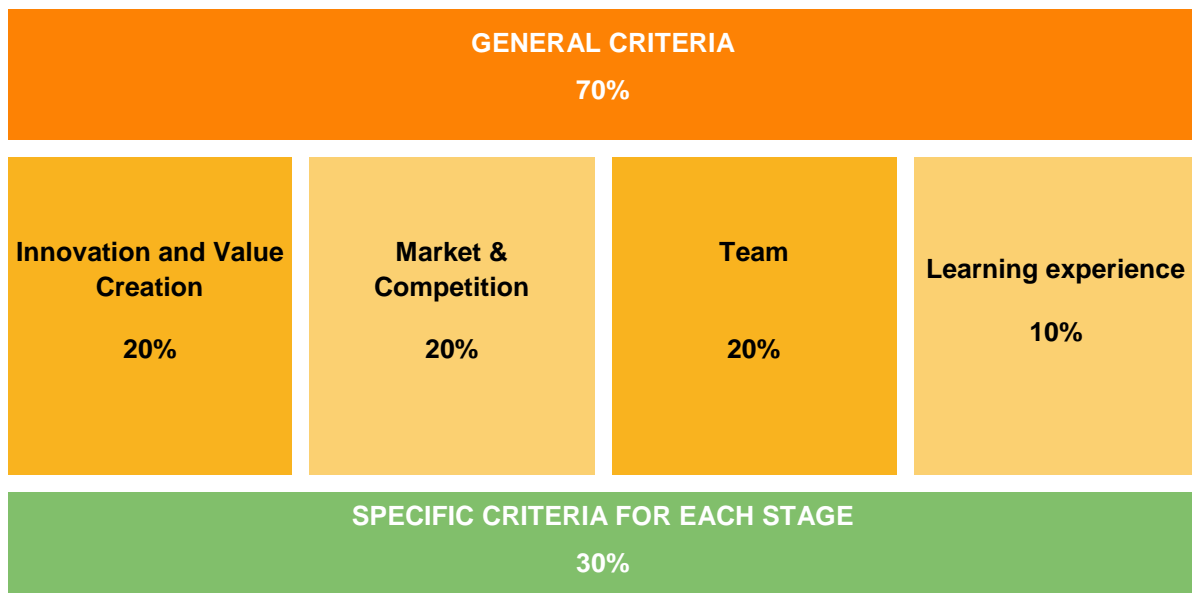
Throughout the judging process, the judges think of themselves as potential investors or partners in the company and the team that participates in the final.

Judges evaluate the learning of the whole team throughout the Start Up programme and the change this experience has brought to every member of the team.

The main aspects judges look at is the value (financial, cultural or social) each start-up is creating, its potential to grow and the team behind the idea. Is the idea viable, has the team learned during the year and has the team showed a commitment to keep their promises?

The company that meets the formal criteria and receives the best scores from highest number of judges will win the final.

The criteria are structured in general criteria (70%) and specific criteria for each stage of the competition (30%).



General criteria

The judges will analyse the teams' performance across four areas within the general criteria. The general criteria will be the same throughout the competition.



Innovation and Value Creation

This criterion (weighting 20%) is expected to answer the questions below (but not limited to):

- Did the team clearly define the business problem and its solution?
- Does the product/service fulfil a customer need, has resonance and desirability?
- Does the business solution change or significantly improve an existing process?
- Did the team take an approach to social, ethical and environmental issues?

Market & Competition

This criterion (weighting 20%) is expected to answer the questions below (but not limited to):

- Did the team clearly identify the target market and the market potential of their product/service?
- Did the team show an understanding of their product/service differentiation in relation to competitors?
- Is the business model both realistic and viable?
- Does the company demonstrate scalability in both geography and solution?

Team

This criterion (weighting 20%) is expected to answer the questions below (but not limited to):

- Does the team have the necessary mix of expertise to be successful?
- Does the team have commitment and motivation to persevere through highs and lows?
- Does the team demonstrate the ability to adapt if needed?
- Has the team managed to recruit advisors when needed?

Learning experience

This criterion (weighting 10%) is expected to answer the questions below (but not limited to):

- Are the students able to reflect the learnings acquired through the experience?
- Do the students demonstrate an understanding of how to apply theory into practice?
- Are the students able to reflect on, act on, and react to problems aligned with the objectives of the company?
- Can the team tolerate and admit their mistakes (does the team support this behaviour)?

IMPORTANT: Given the exceptional circumstances lived during this school year due to the COVID-19 outbreak, judges will also consider how the teams analysed the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on their business and adapted accordingly. This additional element is included within the general criteria and can be demonstrated in any phase of the competition. However, the jury should be aware of the fact that some students / countries had their Start Up Programme before the outbreak of COVID-19.



Specific criteria

The jury will also analyse to what extent the team was effective in conveying the message in each stage of the competition (see below the questions juries will take into consideration in each stage).

Pitch deck

- Does the Pitch Deck include all the necessary information?
- Is the Pitch Deck well structured, clear and easy to understand?
- Is the visual identity consistent with the idea and target group?

Video Commercial

- Was the video commercial effective in conveying a message?
- Is the video commercial appealing and consistent with the idea and target group?

Investor's Pitch & Jury Interview

- Was the pitch exciting and compelling?
- How efficiently did the team allocate their time?
- Did the students engage the jury and catch their attention?
- Were the students able to speak with confidence and address the jury's questions demonstrating knowledge of the business environment?



Guidelines for participants

Pitch deck

Purpose: The Pitch Deck is developed to explain how the start-up has worked in the past to develop their product or service, the need for future resources and how the resources will be employed to grow the company, attract a potential investor to invest in the business idea, and solicit investment in the company (if applicable).

The Pitch Deck is not a presentation, but rather a visual and textual form of presenting a summary of the business idea.

Creating a Pitch deck is not a science, so there are no definite right or wrong answers, but rather set of norms that investors are usually looking for. A Good Pitch Deck usually has the following content (not necessary in the same order):

1. **Elevator Pitch:** One-sentence overview of your business and the value that you provide to your customers. Keep it short and simple.
2. **Problem:** Detail the problem you are solving and who has the problem. You can talk about the current solutions in the market, but don't spend too much time (see point 10).
3. **Target market and opportunity:** Define market size & your customer base. Explain who your ideal customer is and how many of them there are. What is the total market size and how do you position your company in the market? If you can find the data, investors will want to know how much people or businesses currently spend in the market to get a sense of the total market size. This is where you tell the story about the scope and scale of the problem you are solving.
4. **Solution:** Describe your product or service, how customers use your product and how it addresses the problems that you outlined. You'll be tempted to move this slide closer to the beginning of your pitch deck, but try and resist the temptation. This is classic storytelling where you build up the problem and describe how bad it is for lots of people. Now your product or service is coming to the rescue to help solve that problem.
5. **Business Model:** Highlight your key revenue streams. How do you make money?
6. **Momentum/Traction:** Outline your key numbers. If you already have sales or early adopters using your product, talk about that here. You can also use this slide to talk about your milestones. What major goals have you achieved so far and what are the major next steps you plan on taking? A product or company roadmap that outlines key milestones is helpful here.
7. **Market Approach & Strategy:** Outline your marketing and sales plan. You'll want to detail the key tactics that you intend to use to grow your business. How are you planning on getting customers' attention and what will your sales process look like?
8. **Team & Key Stakeholders** (Investors, Advisors, Partners): Highlight the key team members, their successes, and the key expertise that they bring to the table. Why are you and your team the right people to build and grow this company? What experience do you have that others don't?
9. **Financials:** you shouldn't have in-depth spreadsheets that will be difficult to read and consume in a presentation format. Limit yourself to charts that show sales, total customers, total expenses, and profits (realised and projections).
10. **Competition:** Describe how you fit into the competitive landscape and how you're different than the competitors and alternatives that are on the market today.
11. **Investment and use of funds:** Make your 'Ask' (funding, mentoring, market access etc.); why you need the investment you are asking for and how you plan on using it.



Resources

- [Start-up Pitch Video: How to Create a Pitch Deck for Investors](#)

Technical requirements for submission

- The Pitch Deck must be submitted in English.
- Maximum 15 slides (excluding front cover). Any appendices must be included within the 15 slides.
- Front cover should include company name and University/Universities, year of operation, country and contact details.
- **Submission Deadline: June 5 through the national JA organisations**

Video Commercial

Purpose: The video commercial is a branded recorded video that aims at promoting the start-up and their product/service. The commercial shall grab the viewer's attention, garner interest, and get people excited about what the start-up does.

Effective video commercials are created in such a way that the audience remembers not only the ad, but also the brand and the message behind the ad. Your video commercials should spark a connection with your brand and your audience. Below some tips to consider when creating the video commercial:

1. **Represent Your Brand Clearly:** Using both verbal and visual cues, your brand's name, logo and perhaps even the product itself should be conveyed throughout the commercial. Don't be secretive and wait until the end of the ad to show your brand's face. But be tasteful about it.
2. **Create a Storyline:** The best commercials don't just sell a product or service; they tell a story. Whether it is a heartfelt story, or a dose of humour or satire, create a storyline to which your audience can relate and connect.
3. **Keep it Simple:** You only have 30 seconds to get your message across and form a connection with your audience. Keep the overall concept and storyline of your commercial simple.
4. **Include a call to action:** People viewing your company's commercial must be told what to do next – visit your store, call for a free quote, or check out your website. They need to be directed so that you can land more leads and convert more people into customers.

The commercial will be made public on the Enterprise Challenge website and social media channels. The video commercial will not only be evaluated by the different juries but also by the public through online voting. The People's Choice Award will be given to the start-up whose commercial gets the most public votes. The award prize will consist of mentoring for the team members.

Resources

- [How to create a great video commercial](#)

Technical requirements for submission

- The video must be in English
- Maximum length of 30 seconds
- The video must be uploaded on Youtube.com as a public video
- **Submission Deadline: June 17 through the JA national organisations**



Investor's Pitch & Jury Interview

Purpose: This stage of the competition allows to demonstrate the ability to present the priority items of the business through an elevator pitch as well as to demonstrate the negotiation and sales conversation skills of the whole team. Show that the team can convince others and understand how the idea can be made a real business.

The pitch and interview will be conducted in the format of an investor conversation. The elevator pitch at the beginning is an opportunity for the students to try to sell their idea, to motivate the judges to explore the idea in greater detail, to make the judges consider "investing" in their company and especially in the team behind the idea. It's also a way to give ideas for discussion and to solicit feedback from the judges on the progress and potential of the idea.

A good elevator pitch should be short and concise including all key information about the company but it should also be engaging demonstrative of the team's skills and knowledge.

Critical factors of a powerful elevator pitch are the following:

- An elevator pitch is simply a quick introduction to your business
- Short and concise
- Sparks interest and response
- It's clear
- It's authoritative
- It is about them, not you
- Highlights your value, and what problem you are solving
- Introduces your uniqueness
- It's relatable

Students may bring their product or other material they need to make an effective presentation of their company.

During the interview, the judges will try to gain deeper understanding of the idea and find out if you have a good knowledge of their idea and their business, good knowledge of finances, and understand the potential of their market (total addressable market). Judges will also evaluate the team and company development and members' personal growth during the year to assess the future potential. The judges will also be able to see how the students handle presentation and how they react to questions and if the answers are clear and demonstrate understanding of their idea.

It's expected that all members of the team participate in the conversation. The judges, based on their expertise, will also offer their opinions on the possible ways to successfully develop the business or idea.

Resources

- One-minute elevator pitch template: Did you know that **[CUSTOMER CATEGORY]** experience **[MASSIVE PAIN]**? This is a **[MARKET SIZE]** billion-euros opportunity in the Europe alone. **[PRODUCT NAME]** is a **[PRODUCT CATEGORY]** that **[VALUE PROPOSITION]**. Unlike other alternatives we, **[KEY DIFFERENTIATOR]**. The team includes **[CREDIBLE TEAM BIOS]** and we make money by **[BUSINESS MODEL]**. In essence, we are the **[WELL-KNOWN ANALOGUE]** for **[ANALOGUE PRODUCT CATEGORY]** and our vision is to **[HOW WILL THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT? WHY DO YOU CARE?]**. We have already **[EXECUTED MILESTONES]** and you must be involved because **[INVITE!]**.
- Video(s): See a few examples [HERE](#)



Technical details

- Timing: max. 2 minutes' elevator pitch + max. 10 minutes' investor conversation with the judges
- The interview will be done on an on-line video conferencing platform, students and jury members do not need to gather as a group. Each member of the team and the jury members will be given a login for the session – the interviews will be private – only students and judges. A JA Europe team member will facilitate each interview session
- Test calls with all the teams will be organized before the day of the official interview
- The interviews will be held on **June 24-25 (schedule to be announced in advance)**