

The Launch 2026

Competition Guidelines

The Launch is a semester-long competition organized by the Stovall Center for Entrepreneurship in partnership with the College of Business. The competition is sponsored by long-time supporter, Bob Goshen, and it focuses on supporting aspiring entrepreneurs to turn their business ideas into reality.

Every team that signs up for The Launch is supported directly by the Stovall Center for Entrepreneurship staff, and required workshops led by our team are held throughout the competition. Teams are also strongly encouraged to identify a mentor of their own choosing to advise them through the process. There is no charge for teams to participate in the competition. However, the following requirements must be met for teams to pitch to a panel of investors and judges.

Failing to meet any requirement listed below will result in the disqualification of the team from the competition.

Requirements

Nature of Venture

- a. The competition is open to every industry/sector contingent on its compliance with the ORU Honor Code. Examples of businesses that do not adhere to the code: those that produce, use, or sell alcohol, tobacco, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or other illicit materials/substances. The Stovall Center for Entrepreneurship has the final decision on which startups will be officially part of The Launch competition and reserves the right to include or exclude any teams for any reason.
- b. Ventures must be new, independent, and in the early stages of development: seed or startup. They must be seeking seed funding to help start their business.
- c. Businesses that do not qualify include the following: profitable businesses (even if in initial stages), buy-outs of existing companies, expansions of existing companies, real estate syndications, tax shelters, franchises, licensing agreements for distribution in a different geographical area, and spin-outs from existing corporations.
- d. Startups may have raised ANY level of equity funding.
 - i. Ventures may have been awarded other grants, prizes from competition winnings, traditional loans, and any friends and family funding. Each team is required to report any funding they received due to the mentoring and/or competition.

Team Formation

- a. Teams must be composed of 1–5 ORU students.
- b. Teams are not required to have a multidisciplinary team, but it is highly encouraged.
- c. As teams go through the competition process, team members may be added or substituted.

- d. Teams that make it past the first round of the competition are encouraged to apply to the Love's Cup.
 - i. The Love's Cup awards extra points to teams formed of majors in more than one college in the university.
 - ii. Teams that compete in the Love's Cup qualify to apply for e3, a program led by the i2E incubator that will help further develop your business and may result in additional investment.

Mentoring

- a. Coaching is provided directly by the SC4E team throughout the competition.
- b. Teams are strongly encouraged to identify a mentor of their own — an industry professional, alumnus, faculty member, or business owner familiar with their space — and to meet with that mentor regularly.
- c. The SC4E team is available to teams throughout the fall and spring; teams are responsible for scheduling time with our staff as they work through the competition milestones.
- d. Team progress will be tracked by the SC4E team and reviewed against the competition milestones.

Meet-ups with Jim Stovall

- a. A meet-up with Jim Stovall will be held prior the start of the competition, at the Stovall Social event.
- b. Additional meet-ups may be scheduled over the course of the competition and competitors will be advised accordingly.
- c. You can find the schedule for the meet-ups under The Launch Calendar at oru.edu/launchdetails.

Workshops

- a. Required workshops are led by the Stovall Center for Entrepreneurship team over the span of the competition.
 - i. Attendance, ***by at least one team member***, at the required workshops is mandatory; dates and times are published on The Launch Calendar at oru.edu/launchdetails.
 - ii. Reminders about Workshops will be sent to competitors via email and SMS.

Media materials collected during meet-ups, workshops, including elevator pitches may be used in print, web, and other media formats.

Applications and Submissions

Initial Team Application

- a. The deadline to submit the initial online team application can be found in The Launch calendar under competition details at oru.edu/launchdetails.
 - i. Teams must provide information about team members, briefly describe their business idea, and each team member must electronically sign the application.
 - ii. As teams go through the competition process, the business idea may be refined or changed.

Deal Summary Submission

- a. Teams must produce and submit the following to qualify for the round of pitches:
 - i. Completed Deal Summary
 - ii. Sign-off Form: teams must submit their sign-off form filled out by the SC4E staff, confirming your team has met all the requirements to proceed to the rounds of pitches.

Intellectual Property

It is likely that your team still does not have a license to the business's intellectual property (IP). The Launch does not require this process to be completed prior to entering the competition. However, teams are encouraged to research the viability of obtaining an exclusive license to the IP, as well as to include the potential costs in the deal summary. The owner of the IP should be notified that the team is using their IP to compete.

Rounds of Pitches

The competition is formed by two official rounds of pitches.

First Round

- a. All teams are required to sign-up for a Shred Session with the SC4E staff to receive feedback on the presentation before pitching on the first round.
- b. Teams that compete in the first round of pitches will present to a panel of judges. Judges will select the top teams to advance to the final round; coaching will continue.

Final Round

- a. All teams are required to sign-up for a Shred Session with the SC4E staff to receive feedback on the presentation before pitching in the final round.
- b. Teams competing in the final round will attend a set of workshops to sharpen and refine presentations; coaching will continue.
- c. Judges will select the top three competing teams, awarding them the cash prizes. Investors will be invited to this round but are not required to attend.

NOTE: All team presenters must be in Tulsa for each round of pitches.

Judging

- a. The panel will be formed by entrepreneurs, executives, faculty, and ORU alumni who will be selected as judges for the competition.
- b. Each round of the competition will be formed by a different set of judges.
- c. The judging panel and the SC4E have the final decision on which startups move forward in The Launch and reserves the right to include or exclude any teams for any reasons.
- d. The scorecard utilized by the panel is available at The Launch website.

Calendar & Updates

- a. Find all the information about the competition at oru.edu/launchdetails.
- b. Review important dates in The Launch calendar found at oru.edu/launchdetails.
- c. Important information concerning the competition will be sent via e-mail based on the information provided in the initial application.
- d. Follow us on Instagram (@orustovalcenter) to receive updates about the competition, events, meet-ups, etc.
- e. In case you need to contact our office, use the contact information below:
 - sc4e@oru.edu
 - 918.495.7493