JUDGING CRITERIA BY ROUND

START UP ROUND
The Start-up Round is an opportunity for all semifinalist teams to become familiar with the presentation room, equipment and competition format. This round will include 5 minutes for 60 second Elevator Pitch and feedback, and a presentation format which consists of a 30 minute running clock during which time judges may ask questions.

Judging Criteria:
Judges will provide general but limited feedback on your venture strategy but will focus more on presentation quality, structure, flow and strength of arguments. This is a practice round and not scored.

TRADE SHOW
The Trade Show offers competing teams a first look at their competition in an informal setting. Team’s should consider this a professional “working” trade show and be prepared to “sell” their venture to tradeshow attendees. Judges will not be identifiable, and teams should consider all guests as potential investors.

Details:
• Each team will be provided one 6’ banquet table with skirting. Teams should create a tabletop display of its new venture product and services. Teams may bring easels, power strips, electrical cords and other A-V equipment. The venue does not permit hanging anything on the walls. All signage must fit in your six-foot area, and may not intrude on other teams.
• Wireless Internet access while available may be limited.
• During the posted Trade Show period, at least one student per team must be available at all times to discuss your concept with trade show attendees.

Judging Criteria:
• Prompt acknowledgement and explanation of the venture
• Attractive and informative display
• Effective marketing collateral available
• Efficient and confident response to questions
• Call to action before parting

ELEVATOR PITCH COMPETITION
The Trade show includes an Elevator Pitch Competition. One representative of each team will introduce themselves, and then have 60 seconds to pitch the essence of their business to the judges and the audience in an attempt to entice a team of investor/judges to inquire further about the venture.

Details:
• Team presentation order will be determined by a random draw during the competition.
• The pitch must be a bare-bones verbal communication (visual aids of any type are not allowed) and be delivered in one minute or less—there will be a “hard stop.”
• Presenter must stay on the stage during the pitch.
Judging Criteria:
- Ability to grab and hold attention – set the “hook”
- Well defined problem/pain and solution
- Well defined and quantified accessible market
- Justification for team’s ability to succeed
- Interest in a follow-up meeting

SEMIFINAL ROUND
In the Semifinal Round, each team will be given 30 minutes to present its business plan during which time the judges may ask questions. TIME LIMITS WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. Following the completion of each NVC round, teams will receive 20 minutes of private feedback from their panel of judges.

Judging Criteria:
All competing Semifinal Round venture teams will be evaluated by a team of qualified business professionals. Judges will use three evaluation forms that will be weighted to help them assess your written plan (30%), your presentation (30%), and an overall quantitative and qualitative assessment of your venture’s viability (40%). Judges will be instructed to consider the quality of your business plan in relation to the quality of your team and the team’s ability to understand the unique strategic needs of your venture as demonstrated through your performance during the presentation. Regardless of the quality of your presentation, the quality of your business plan must meet a professional level of acceptability and credibility in order to expect winning the round.

Business Plan (30%)
- Executive Summary - clear, exciting, and effective as a stand-alone overview of the plan
- Company Overview - presents a vision, history, genesis of concept, current status, overall strategy, and objectives for the business
- Go to Market Strategy - description of market, competitive analysis, customer needs identification, market acceptance, unique capabilities, and sales and promotion
- Products or Services - describes the key features and benefits, pricing, current state of development, and proprietary position
- Management Team - backgrounds of key individuals, ability to execute strategy, additional personnel needs, organizational structure, and role of any non-student executive/team members
- Environmental Sustainability & Social Responsibility – any claims should supported with a clear problem/solution and credible measurements of success
- Financials - presented in an easy to read and understandable format that is consistent with the launch and growth strategies of the plan and supporting assumptions. Financial information should provide a balance between sufficient details in the early years with annual summaries over a reasonable investment horizon.
- Operations - plan for production, delivery of product or services, cost, margins, operating complexity, and resources required
- Investment Offering - Proposal/terms to investors; indicates amount seeking, the structure of the deal, the ROI, and possible exit strategies
- Written plan composition – Communicative value and quality; is the plan maximum of sixteen (16) pages with minimal redundancy

Oral Presentation (30%) Clear concise presentation of the following)
- Problem definition and opportunity
- Solution overview
- Business model
- Go to Market and sales strategy
- Operations
- Management
- Financial outlook
- Offering and investment analysis
Company Viability (40%)
• Market opportunity – indicates a clear market need and a way presented to take advantage of that need
• Distinctive competitive advantage – company provides a unique/special element that provides a competitive edge
• Management team capability – the team is capable of effectively developing and growing the venture
• Financial understanding – the team has a solid understanding of its business model and the financial statements reflect this
• Growth and investment potential – the request for funding and the risk and return of investing is clearly outlined
• Integration of Environmental Sustainability & Social Responsibility - the team demonstrates commitment to embedding environmental and or socially responsible practices into the value chain of their venture

FINAL ROUND
In the final Round, each team will be given 30 minutes to present its business plan during which time the judges may ask questions. TIME LIMITS WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. Following the completion of each NVC round, teams will receive 20 minutes of private feedback from their panel of judges.

Judging Criteria:
All competing Final Round venture teams will be evaluated by a team of qualified business professionals. Judges will assess your written plan, your presentation, and an overall quantitative and qualitative assessment of your venture’s viability. Judges will be instructed to consider the quality of your business plan in relation to the quality of your team and the team’s ability to understand the unique strategic needs of your venture as demonstrated through your performance during the presentation. Regardless of the quality of your presentation, the quality of your business plan must meet a professional level of acceptability and credibility in order to expect winning the round.

SUSTAINABILITY ROUND
The AECOM Sustainability Round is an opportunity for teams with a high level of environmental and/or social sustainability claims integrated into their plan to compete for an additional award. The Sustainability Round allows for a 10-minute presentation with a 15-minute Q&A with judges. The judges will have already ready the full business plan, and teams should expect to spend the presentation time briefly explaining the venture and fully delineating their venture’s sustainability claims. Prior to NVC, all semifinalist teams will be reviewed by a panel of judges and four finalist teams will be selected to compete in this round.

Details:
The four selected teams will be notified a week prior to NVC. The selected teams will be required submit an executive summary (min 1 page, max 2 pages) prior to the competition. This narrative summary should include answers to the following questions:
1. How does your solution address a pressing environmental and/or social issue through enterprise?
2. How does your solution transform or disrupt the status quo of the market you are addressing? How does your solution drive change through innovation?
3. What is the scalability of your solution? How are you going to maximize impact?
4. How do the sustainability attributes of your solution contribute to your competitive advantage as an enterprise?
5. What does success look like for your enterprise and the environmental/social issue you are solving? How will you measure the impact of this success?

Judging Criteria:
Presentations should highlight the team’s competitive advantage as a sustainable solution or enterprise. During presentations the judges may interrupt with clarifying questions. Teams must be prepared to validate their plan with additional details.
LIGHTNING ROUND
The remaining 12 semifinalist teams that do not advance to the final round will compete in the OEN Lightning Round which runs concurrently with the Final Round competition. During an individual, closed door session the team conducts a round-table presentation/discussion with three judges. This round does not allow for the use of presentation materials or props. Teams compete in one of four, three team concurrent tracks. One winner from each track will be selected by the judges. Only student team members that participated in the Semifinal Round can actively participate.

Scenario: By a coincidental meeting, a targeted group of business executives / potential investors are available for a condensed pitch from the venture team. Previously prepared marketing materials and visual aids are not allowed and the team is judged on their ability to focus, absorb feedback, and make adjustments "on the fly."

Details:
• During this round, teams will have a 10 minute initial presentation time, followed by a 15 minute feedback session in which the judges will identify specific issues for the team to consider. Teams will then have a 20 minute adjustment period to prepare a response to the judges’ identified issues. In the adjustment period, teams may access research information, related materials, laptop computers and other reference items. The Lightning Round concludes with a final 15 minute follow-up presentation where the team presents a strategic response to the judges identified issues.
• Teams will be provided only with table napkins and ball-point pens to prepare any visual aids in presenting their responsive strategies to the judges.
• Faculty advisers are allowed to sit in on the initial presentation/discussion but MUST LEAVE during the team’s response analysis and preparation time and may not communicate with the team or judges.

Judging Criteria:
• Ability to, verbally only, present the essence of your venture
• Confidently and non-defensively discuss strengths and weaknesses of your business model and strategies
• Effectively understand discussed areas of improvement
• Quickly create, only with the assistance of table napkins and ball-point pens, a cogent, confident and well structures response to the defined areas of improvement provided by your judge panel