



2025

PITCH COMPETITION INFORMATION PACKET





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WELCOME



We are thrilled to welcome you to Grow Ada's 2025 Pitch Competition! This information packet includes a step-by-step guide to the application process, an overview of the event, and other key details that you will find helpful. This business pitch competition is designed to give entrepreneurs the opportunity to present their business ideas to a panel of judges and compete for money prizes. Whether your idea is still in the concept stage or already gaining momentum, we want to hear your pitch!



Thank you for being a part of the sixth annual pitch competition. Your support helps make this event a success, and we look forward to an unforgettable competition.

EVENT DETAILS

LOCATION-	THE VENUE ON MAIN, 116 W MAIN
DOORS OPEN-	5:45PM
PITCH PRESENTATIONS BEGIN-	6:00PM
PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD POLLING-	7:30PM
AWARDS CEREMONY AND PICTURES-	7:45PM

APPLICATION PROCESS

PITCH COMPETITION OVERVIEW

The Conduit Startup Showcase is a live pitch competition where local entrepreneurs share their business ideas with a panel of judges and a community audience. Contestants will compete for \$5,000 in total prize money across multiple divisions. The categories are as follows:

- **Revenue-Generating Category (Adult)**– For businesses currently earning revenue.
- **Idea-Stage Category (Adult)**– For adult entrepreneurs with early-stage or pre-revenue ideas.
- **Student Innovation Award**– For high school students pitching either an idea-stage concept or a revenue-generating business.
- **People’s Choice Award**– All finalists are eligible, voted on by the audience the night of the event.

Top applicants in each division will be selected to pitch live on **Thursday, October 23, 2025**. Finalists will have five minutes to present their business idea, followed by a Q&A session with the judges. In addition, the audience will get the chance to vote for their favorite pitch of the night!

RULES

- Each individual or team may submit one application.
- **Eligibility:** Applicants must be Oklahoma residents with businesses based in Oklahoma.
- The business must be in either the idea, prototype, or early operational phase.
- Preference will be given to Pontotoc County residents during finalist selection.
- High school students must currently be enrolled in high school and may compete only in the High School Division.
- Adults (18+) must compete in the Adult Division.
- The business must either be:
Less than two years old, or
An established business pitching a new product or service.
- Finalists must submit a digital pitch deck by **Monday, October 20, 2025**.
- Pitch presentations are limited to 8 minutes, followed by Q&A.
- **Intellectual Property Notice:** Participants are responsible for protecting proprietary or confidential information. Conduit Startup Showcase and Ada Jobs Foundation are not liable for disclosure of intellectual property.
- By submitting an application, participants affirm that all materials are original and do not violate third-party rights

STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION GUIDE

1. Complete the application and email presentation slide deck to:
Daniel Castaneda, dcastaneda@growada.com
2. Finalists will be announced on **October 15th, 2025**.
3. Submit revised and final presentation by **Monday 20, 2025**.
4. The live competition will be hosted on **October, 23, 2025**.

JUDGING CRITERIA



A panel of judges made up of community leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals will evaluate the presentations using a standard scorecard. Judging will focus on:

- Business potential and viability
- Creativity and innovation
- Presentation and delivery

All judging decisions are final.

PRIZES

1st PLACE REVENUE GENERATING CATEGORY (ADULT):	\$1,750
2nd PLACE REVENUE GENERATING CATEGORY (ADULT):	\$750
1st PLACE IDEA STAGE CATEGORY (ADULT):	\$1,000
2nd PLACE IDEA STAGE CATEGORY (ADULT):	\$500
STUDENT INNOVATION AWARD:	\$500
PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD:	\$500

NOTE: All finalists will be eligible for the People's Choice Award, which will be determined by audience vote during the event. Prize money will be distributed after the competition. In order to receive payment, winners must submit a signed W-9 form. Checks will be available for pick-up at Grow Ada (209 W Main St.) once processed.

PRESENTATION TIPS

THE PITCH

Your pitch is a brief and compelling presentation of your business idea. You'll have 5 minutes to make your case, followed by a Q&A session with the judges. Use your time wisely and aim to clearly communicate the value of your idea.

Your pitch should answer:

1. Who are you and what is your business?
2. What customer problem are you solving?
3. What's your solution?
4. Who is your target market?
5. How will you make money? (Business model)
6. Are your financial projections realistic?
7. Who's on your team?
8. Who are your competitors and how are you different?
9. What's your ask or next step?

Tips to strengthen your pitch:

- Start with a hook- a surprising fact, a short story, or a bold question to grab attention.
- End with a strong ask- what do you want from the audience or investors?
- Speak with confidence, be passionate, and show why your idea matters.
- Keep it simple, clear, and engaging-avoid jargon and focus on your message.

SLIDE DECK GUIDELINES

You must email your slide deck to dcastaneda@growada.com by Monday, October 20, 2025. Your application is not complete without the slide deck.

Each finalist will be selected based on the strength of their application and slide deck. Consider using the following outline for your presentation slides:

Slide 1 – Introduction / Elevator Pitch

Brief overview of your business
What you do, how, and why

Slide 2 – The Problem

What problem are you solving?
Who has this problem and why does it matter?

Slide 3 – Your Solution

How does your product or service solve the problem?
What makes it unique or better than alternatives?
(Optional: include a demo, mock-up, or prototype)



Slide 4 – Business Model

How will your business make money?
Any financial projections or early sales?

Slide 5 – Market Size

Who is your target customer?
How big is the market opportunity?

Slide 6 – Marketing Plan

How will you reach and retain customers?
Who are your competitors?

Slide 7 – Team

Who is on your team and what are their strengths?

Slide 8 – Milestones & Impact

What are your goals for the next 6–12 months?
How will winning this competition help you grow?

SLIDE DESIGN TIPS

- Think of each slide as a billboard — simple, visual, and easy to read at a glance
- Focus on one idea per slide — break up large chunks of text
- Tell a story — walk your audience through your business journey
- Highlight the problem and your unique solution
- Avoid clutter — make spreadsheets, charts, and tables readable
- Use visuals when possible — logos, product shots, graphics
- Remember: You are the creative entrepreneur — this is your moment! Don't be afraid to think outside the box and have fun with your presentation.

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HANDLING Q&A

- Stay calm — the judges are here to support your growth
- Listen carefully to the full question before answering
- Be honest — if you don't know, it's okay to say so
- Keep answers short, focused, and clear
- Be confident in your idea and your work
- Most importantly, enjoy the process! This is a celebration of innovation and entrepreneurship in our community.

