The STEM Entrepreneurship Contest (Grades 9-12)

Entrepreneurs – the driving force of our market economy creating and providing jobs for others, offering products and services to better the lives of others, introducing new technologies and resources, and paying taxes to support their communities. As of the 2010 Census, there were 27.9 million small businesses registered in the United States, compared to just 18,500 companies of 500 employees or more. Over 99% of American owned businesses are considered small. All large corporations began with a new idea, the willingness to take a risk, and a lot of hard work.

Innovation is the act or process of introducing new ideas, devices or methods that can improve the quality of life. The U.S. leads the world when it comes to innovation and all countries and communities benefit when new Goods and Services are produced.

Examples of well-known inventions and the entrepreneurs that brought them to life:

- Personal Computer: Henry Edward Roberts – designer of the Altair 8800 Computer
- Email: V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai – developed this as an inter-organizational paper mail system
- GPS systems: Roger L. Easton – principal inventor and designer of the Global Positioning System
- ATMs: John Shepherd-Barron – invented and developed paper vouchers for a machine to read and process

An entrepreneur draws upon his or her skills and initiative to launch a new business venture with the aim of making a profit. Often a risk-taker, inclined to see opportunity when others do not. This competition is designed to showcase your entrepreneurial and innovative approach to starting a new business!

Do you have what it takes to create a new business?

Can you effectively share your mission and the value to the community?

Can you inspire and lead others to invest in your idea, product, and/or service?

You’re invited to create a video presentation!

Videos will be judged on the following criteria

- Must BRIEFLY present your new business concept that will improve the economy or people’s lives, and/or provide new jobs. Your goal is to create this video presentation to solicit funds from a venture capitalist. (The new business needs to be an original idea for creating a new business, product and/or service). Feel free to be creative. Don’t just tell us – SHOW us!
- Should be between 2-4 minutes long.
• Must share the price of your product (good) or service. *TIP: The price should be high enough to make a profit, but low enough to be competitive and encourage people to buy.*
• Must contain only your own or your group’s original work (your explanations/examples, music, sound effects, photography). *See the Resources and Tools section below for a list of creative tools you can use.*
• Can be any production type including but not limited to live action video, animation or animated photo essay. (An animated photo essay is a series of still images that have been strung together using video editing software and set to music, narration or both.)
• Create excitement. Have FUN!

*Before taping the video, consider how to inspire others to financially support your idea and to get involved with your business!*

**Entry Guidelines**

**AGE:** Open to all students, grades 9-12, that live in northern Illinois.

Entries can be submitted by an individual student OR a group of four or fewer students playing a central role.

Judging will be based on the following criteria:

• Overall Effectiveness
• Accuracy addressing the criteria
• Creativity/Originality
• Technical Quality (i.e. focused images, clear sound, interesting graphics)

**Submission Guidelines**

**Parent/Guardian Consent Forms**

Every student involved in your video needs to have a signed consent form submitted with the video.

• **REGARDLESS OF AGE** - Have a parent or guardian fill out, save, and submit the Consent Form as an attachment along with the emailed entry URL link to the online video *(See DEADLINE* section)

**Post your video on YouTube**

• Set privacy setting to “Public”.
• Enter the Video Title and Description
• Use the following Tags:
  o STEMOutreachNIU
  o Entrepreneurship 9-12
  o EconIllinois
  o FinanceLearningExchange

For help on how to submit a video to YouTube, visit the YouTube Help Center: [https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57407?hl=en](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57407?hl=en)

If you encounter any difficulty uploading your video contact Beth at bmetzler@niu.edu for support or alternate submission method.

**Resources and Tools**

  Video/Animated Slideshow Editing
• **Microsoft Movie Maker** – Video editing tool
• **Microsoft PhotoStory** – Create animated slide shows with music and narration
• **Wax** – Video SoftwareMusic

**Music**

• **Aviary** – Online music creator
• **Audacity** – Record and mix your own music or voice
• **Hobnox** – Create your own high energy tracks
• **JamStudio** – Create your own music online

**Animation**

• **SAM Animation** – Watch the intro video on this one. There are some great ideas!!
• **Scratch** – Create and program your own animation

**Deadline**

*Videos must be submitted via email to bmetzler@niu.edu by 8 AM, September 26, 2016. Each student should have a parent or guardian's signature on a submitted consent form that accompanies the entry.*

- Have a parent or guardian fill out the [Consent Form](mailto:bmetzler@niu.edu) and submit it with the emailed entry.
- Subject line: STEM Entrepreneurship 9-12.
- In the body of the email, include your name, grade, school, parent/guardian email address, and home telephone number.
- Multiple submissions by the same student are allowed, but student will only be eligible to win one prize.
- Available prizes are to be announced mid-September.

**Additional Questions?**

Contact Beth Metzler at [bmetzler@niu.edu](mailto:bmetzler@niu.edu).

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Econ Illinois is a unit of the NIU Division of Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development