

Requirements

All teams in the final round of the 2019-2020 Big Ideas Contest are required to submit both a written proposal and a short application video by the **final round deadline of Wednesday, March 13, 2020 at 1pm Pacific Time**. Please carefully read all of the information contained on this webpage. Any applications that do not adhere to the requirements outlined below for both the written proposal and application video will be deemed ineligible. All decisions made by the judges and contest administrators are considered final and not subject to appeal.

Application Video

All finalist teams are required to submit a short application video between 60 and 90 seconds. This is the first year Big Ideas has required an application video, thus we are utilizing the Y-Combinator Application Video model. This format requires that teams speak directly to the camera, leaving out all production aspects (such as music, effects, images, slides, “post-production wizardry,” etc.) This is not a video making contest and no fancy editing is necessary (or desirable). We just want to hear directly from the student team members about their project in a very straightforward, clear and concise manner.

The video is an opportunity for teams to introduce themselves, explain what they are doing and why, and detail anything else they want judges to know about the team or the project. Applicants should carefully review the Y-Combinator Application Video instructions for tips and examples, some of which are outlined as follow:

1. Up to 90 Second Video
2. Upload to YouTube
3. Allow Embedding
4. Only Student Team Members Talking
5. No Effects
6. No Script
7. No Music
8. Check Audio

Videos should be uploaded to YouTube and the URL included in the application platform along with the written proposal (by March 13, 2020.)

Written Proposal

Finalist teams will have the opportunity to develop and refine their pre-proposals into full proposals due on **Wednesday, March 13th, 2020**. In the full proposal, finalists will expand on the ideas presented in their pre-proposals, edit their proposals based on judges’ feedback, and have the opportunity to refine their project ideas through collaboration with a Big Ideas mentor.

Finalists are instructed to submit full proposals no more than 8 pages in length, single-spaced (including the required budget and implementation timeline, but not references or appendices). Big Ideas recommends the format below to ensure applicants include the required proposal elements, however, students are allowed to modify the order and presentation of the information as needed to tell their story. The basic required components are as follows:

Written Proposal: Required Elements

1. Problem Statement

This section includes a clear description and background information on the identified problem. An effective problem statement is thoroughly researched, shows a deep understanding of the issue, and builds a strong case to support why the project is needed. This includes but is not limited to: research/statistics on the problem, and/or research/statistics about the target community or market.

2. Existing Solutions

This section is an overview of any existing services, programs, interventions, or products that have been designed or implemented to address this problem. Where applicable, applicants should discuss the limitations of these approaches, the gaps that still exist, and present research on what has been done in the past and where those solutions fell short.

3. Proposed Innovation

This section includes a summary of the innovative project (e.g. program, service, good, etc.) how it works, and its intended impact. This is the “nuts and bolts” portion of the proposal and focuses on what the project will look like in its 1st year of implementation. It briefly explains any implementation challenges that may arise and how they will be addressed. It may note (but does not focus on) whether the project intends to scale up or expand in future years.

4. Implementation Timeline

The timeline describes the key next steps for implementing the idea for the 1st year only. Big Ideas awards will be disbursed in June/July 2020. Therefore, for the purposes of this Contest, the 1st year is defined as June 2020-June 2021. Teams may mention work conducted prior to or following this 1-year timeframe in order to convey the broader context or vision for the project — but it should not be considered in their scoring.

5. Measuring Success

Teams should include information about how they will monitor or measure the impact or success of their project throughout the 1st year of implementation (June 2020-June 2021). This does not need to be a formal monitoring and evaluation plan, but can take the form of metrics and methods to make sure they can track their progress.

6. Budget

Includes both expected costs and revenue for the 1st year of the project (June 2020-June 2021). Note: The average Big Ideas award is approximately \$5,000 and proposals should not request more than \$10,000 from Big Ideas. The requested amount from Big Ideas is typically seen in the “Funding Gap” section of the budget template we have suggested for use. Teams may also include any plans to leverage additional funding sources, if appropriate.

7. Team Bios

A list of key project team members with brief biographies that explain the capability of the team to pursue their idea.