Impact X Pitch Event: Overview and Guidelines

The Impact X Pitch Event is a unique opportunity for undergraduate students across Atlantic Canada to showcase innovative business ideas that create **social impact**. This event is designed to nurture new ventures in their seed, start-up, or early growth stages. Participants will present their pitches to a panel of seasoned judges, with the chance to win funding and gain valuable feedback.

Eligibility Requirements:

- **Who Can Apply**: Undergraduate and high school students from any Atlantic Canadian secondary or post-secondary institution (NB, NS, PEI, NFLD).

- **Team Composition**: Participants may register as individuals or as teams (up to four members). Inter-institutional teams are encouraged.

- **Academic Status**: All participants must be full or part-time undergraduate students or full-time high school students during the event.

- **Original Work**: Teams must prepare their business plan, pitch, and supporting materials independently. Ideas must be original.

- **Selection Process**: The event will invite up to 85 students to participate in the Pitch Competition based on the quality of applications. Consideration will be given to representation of the region, as well as representation by program. However, invitations will be made at the discretion of the selection panel.

Categories:

- **High School - Early Seed stream**: for high school students or teams with entrepreneurial ideas that are still in the very early stages of development. These ideas are typically conceptual, with minimal or no formal structure around the business plan, prototype, or market research. Participants in this division are at the stage of exploring their idea's feasibility, identifying target markets, and beginning the early work of shaping their concept into a viable business. Students in this stream will complete an idea generation workshop, a pitching for rookies workshop, and compete in the **1-Minute Pitch**: Ideal for those who want to make a quick, impactful presentation. The focus is on clearly stating the problem, your innovative solution, and its social impact. A pitch deck of some sort is required.

- **University - Early Seed stream**: for university students or teams with entrepreneurial ideas that are still in the very early stages of development. These ideas are typically conceptual, with minimal or no formal structure around the business plan, prototype, or market research. Participants in this division are at the stage of exploring their idea's feasibility, identifying target markets, and beginning the early work of shaping their concept into a viable business. Students in this stream will complete an idea generation workshop, a pitching for rookies workshop, and compete in the **1-Minute Pitch**: Ideal for those who want to make a quick, impactful presentation. The focus is on clearly stating the problem, your innovative solution, and its social impact. A pitch deck of some sort is required.

- **Open - Late Seed stream:** for students or teams whose entrepreneurial ideas have moved beyond the initial concept stage and have started to take shape. While the venture has not yet been launched or received funding, participants have made significant progress in areas such as market validation, prototype development, and refining their business model. This stream is for those who are closer to turning their idea into a market-ready venture. Students in this stream will complete a business modeling workshop, a pitching for veterans workshop, and compete in the **5-Minute Pitch**: A more in-depth presentation supported by a **pitch deck**. Participants are expected to dive deeper into their business model, social impact, customer discovery, and competitive landscape. Visual aids such as prototypes or product demos are encouraged but not mandatory. A strong emphasis is placed on storytelling, which is common in high-profile pitch events like **TechCrunch Disrupt** and **MIT 100K**.

Judging Criteria: Judges will evaluate pitches based on several key factors that reflect industry standards. Common to leading pitch competitions like **Y Combinator** and **Hult Prize**, the following criteria will be scored from 1-5 for the pitch:

Late seed (open to all) (5 min pitch)

- **Target Market & Competitive Scan**: Who is the customer, how did you research the market, and what problem are they facing? What is the competition like?

- **Problem**: What challenge or gap is your venture addressing?

- **Solution**: How innovative and effective is your solution?

- **Social Impact**: What is the measurable impact your business will have on society?

- **Go-to-Market Strategy**: How will you launch, scale, and gain traction?

- **Communication and Presentation:** Is your presentation engaging, clear, and professional? Did you effectively communicate and deliver the pitch?

University - Early seed (1 min pitch)

- **Target Market**: Who is the customer, how did you research the market, and what problem are they facing?

- **Problem**: What challenge or gap is your venture addressing?

- **Solution**: How innovative and effective is your solution?

- **Social Impact**: What is the measurable impact your business will have on society?

- **Communication and Presentation:** Is your presentation engaging, clear, and professional? Did you effectively communicate and deliver the pitch?

High School - Early seed (1 min pitch)

- **Target Market**: Who is the customer, how did you research the market, and what problem are they facing?

- **Problem**: What challenge or gap is your venture addressing?

- **Solution**: How innovative and effective is your solution?

- **Social Impact**: What is the measurable impact your business will have on society?

- **Communication and Presentation:** Is your presentation engaging, clear, and professional? Did you effectively communicate and deliver the pitch?

Pitch Rules and Guidelines:

- Teams may choose in their application to participate in *either* the 1-minute or 5-minute pitch categories, not both.

- All ideas must be the original work of the participating students.

- At least one team member must present the pitch **in person** to qualify for prizes.

- Visual aids, such as slides or props, are required for all streams. However, **Impact X is not responsible for any technical difficulties or damage to props**.

- Judges' decisions are final and not subject to appeal. This follows standard practices at top pitch competitions like **Pitch@Palace** and **Seedstars.**

- All team members must attend the award ceremony to receive prizes. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of winnings.

- No ImpactX, Echo Marketing, or Enactus StFX organizing committee members can compete in the pitch event. Impact X Brand Ambassadors are eligible to apply to pitch.

- No previous 1st place winner can compete in the ImpactX pitch competition again with the same business idea. They are welcome to pitch a different business idea though.

- Prize money will be distributed electronically after the event.

- All pitches are public domain, however, each team's pitch decks will not be publicly accessible beyond when they are being presented as part of the pitch. All participants are encouraged to respect the intellectual property of the pitchers.

Remember: **professionalism is key:** Participants must treat this as a professional networking event. Respect fellow competitors' ideas and intellectual property.

Deliverables & Resources:
- **Pitch Decks**): Participants in all streams must use a structured pitch deck following best practices (e.g., Sequoia Capital template). Your deck should explain how your venture drives **social impact**.

- **Preparation**: Participants are encouraged to rehearse their pitches extensively. Consider working with mentors or attending workshops provided by Impact X for extra preparation.

- **Resources Available**: Support from volunteers and tech teams will be available during the event. Participants are responsible for bringing any special materials (e.g., product demos).

- **Orientation:** An optional virtual orientation will be scheduled in advance of ImpactX to help prepare and support the participants.

Event Timeline: The event follows a strict schedule to ensure smooth operations.
Open - Late Seed (5 min pitch):
- **10:00 mins prior to pitch**: Waiting room check-in for instructions and readiness confirmation.

- **5:00 mins prior**: Pitch room opens to load PowerPoints and prep visual aids.

- **0:00**: Pitch begins.

- **5:00 min point**: Q&A with judges.

- **After pitch**: Move to Debrief Room for Social Media photos/videos, Q&A, and feedback.

Early Seed (high school and university) (1 min pitch):
- **10:00 mins prior to pitch**: Waiting room check-in for instructions and readiness confirmation.

- **5:00 mins prior**: Pitch room opens to load PowerPoints and prep visual aids.

- **0:00**: Pitch begins.

- **1:00 min point**: Q&A with judges.

- **After pitch**: Move to Debrief Room for Social Media photos/videos, Q&A, and feedback.

Judges & Event Personnel:
- **9 Judges**: Three judges for each of the 1-minute pitch categories and three judges for the 5-minute category.

- **Finale judges**: There will be separate judges who will judge all finale pitches.

- **Event Hosts**: One host will manage the flow of the event with numerous volunteers at each room to ensure on time execution.

- **Volunteers**: Several volunteers will be available to prep and escort participants, assist with set-up, and provide general support.

Prize Structure & Follow-up:
- **Finale:** There will be 3 finalists from each stream who advance to their own finale pitch. Each team will then pitch again to a new set of judges. Final results and prize money for each stream finale will be decided after the finale.
    - **Finale 1:** High School Early Seed Stream
    - **Finale 2:** University Early Seed Stream
    - **Finale 3:** Late Seed Stream
- **Prizes**: Awards will be distributed based on judges' scoring and feedback.

- **Follow-up Support**: Top-performing teams may be invited for additional mentoring and support through Impact X's ecosystem partners. Similar to **Startup Weekend** events, post-event incubation or mentorship opportunities may be available to help participants scale their ideas.

Conclusion: Impact X Pitch Event is designed to foster innovation, creativity, and community impact among aspiring student entrepreneurs. The emphasis on social entrepreneurship aligns with global trends seen in events like **Hult Prize** and **Global Social Venture Competition**, offering participants an opportunity to hone their skills and potentially bring their ventures to life.