Tulane Business Model Competition goes virtual for 2021

December 7, 2020



Tulane students Mei Wang, left, and David Tulman pitch their startup Instapath at the 2017 Tulane Business Model Competition. To ensure the safety of participants and judges, the 2021 competition will be held virtually.

Applications are now open for the 2021 Tulane Business Model Competition, which this year will take place virtually to ensure the safety of participants and judges.

Hosted by the Albert Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Tulane University's A. B. Freeman School of Business, the competition rewards commercially viable student startups that demonstrate a market-tested ability to adapt to customers' needs. Last year's event awarded $125,000 in cash prizes to the three finalists.

This year both the semi-final and final rounds will take place virtually the week of March 23, 2021. In February six ventures will be selected from among all applications received to compete in the competition's semi-final round. Judges will then choose three finalists to pitch their ventures to determine this year's first, second and third place prize winners. In addition to official competition events, participants will have the opportunity to be matched with investors and mentors for virtual meetings where founders will get strategic guidance on their venture and expand their networks.

"The Tulane Business Model Competition continues to be the region's premier event for student startups," says Rob Lalka, executive director of the Lepage Center. "Last year, we had to quickly pivot from an in-person to an online event. Building off the success of that competition, we are now planning a rich virtual experience for 2021, complete with mentor and investor matching for participants."

The competition is open to early-stage ventures that include at least one degree-seeking undergraduate or graduate student. Applications for the 2021 competition opened on Dec. 7, 2020, and the deadline for submissions is 11:59 p.m. CST on Monday, Jan. 25, 2021.

Now in its 21st year, the Tulane Business Model Competition has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash prizes to innovative student startups from across the nation. In recognition of the competition and other programs for student entrepreneurs, the Princeton Review and *Entrepreneur* magazine this year ranked Freeman as one of the nation's top schools for entrepreneurs.

"Over the last decade, entrepreneurship has become an increasingly important part of the region's economy," said Freeman School Dean Ira Solomon. "Through events like the Tulane Business Model Competition and other programs of the Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the Freeman School is committed to supporting the entrepreneurial community and preparing students for careers with startups and early-stage companies."

The application is available online at https://platform.younoodle.com/competition/tulane_business_model_competition_2021. For more information and to see the complete rules, visit https://freeman.tulane.edu/lepage/tulane-business-model-competition or contact Emily Egan at eegan@tulane.edu or 504-865-5462.