

# MAVPITCH

## MAVERICK ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM AND AWARD FUND

### Rules & Guidelines Spring 2026

#### What is MavPitch?

MavPitch is the signature component of the University of Texas at Arlington's Maverick Entrepreneurship Program and Fund. This business pitch competition encourages students to explore and express their business ideas in a friendly and encouraging environment. All UTA students (undergraduate and graduate) can compete alone or in teams for over \$250,000 in cash prizes. Up to \$40,000 in venture development funds will be awarded to the best pitches.

#### STUDENTS: The video submission portal will open on April 1, 2026

To enter, student or student teams must submit a three-minute video summarizing their business idea or venture. The submission can be a new business idea being researched and developed or a venture with the first few customers (see the rules below). Among all the qualifying submissions in the online preliminary round, up to ten of the highest-scoring semifinalists will be invited to present a live five-minute pitch to a panel of judges on May 14, 2026. Winners of the final round will receive up to \$15,000 and an opportunity to compete for an additional \$25,000 next summer.

#### UTA Students: Get your team together!

This competition is for you! To compete for a piece of the \$250,000 in cash prizes, start developing your video promoting your business idea. Rules and information are below. Please email [entrepreneurship@uta.edu](mailto:entrepreneurship@uta.edu), [jmcgee@uta.edu](mailto:jmcgee@uta.edu) (Dr. Jeffrey McGee), [magnusson@uta.edu](mailto:magnusson@uta.edu) (Dr. Robert Magnusson), or [venkat@uta.edu](mailto:venkat@uta.edu) (Dr. Venkat Devarjan) with questions or for additional details.

#### Rules for Participants

1. Must be an undergraduate or graduate student registered during the 2026 Spring semester or have graduated no earlier than Fall 2025.
2. Individuals or teams may compete. Teams must have no more than four members.
3. Other people can be involved in the venture (e.g., non-students, alumni, etc.), but MavPitch student team members must have a substantial leadership role.
4. Winners agree to allow their video submissions to be shared by MavPitch.
5. MavPitch works with numerous media outlets to highlight students' entrepreneurial achievements and experiences; finalists may be requested to prepare for media interviews.

**This web page will contain all current rules and information about MavPitch and the Maverick Entrepreneurship Program and Fund. Details are subject to change, so please revisit often.**  
<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/business/departments/management/mav-pitch>

# MavPitch Competition Rules

## Eligibility

1. **Submissions:** Each participant (individual or team) may submit only one venture concept to the competition. Initial submissions are due by May 1, 2026, 11:59 p.m. Central Time. All submissions must be uploaded through the MavPitch portal using the links provided.
2. **Participants:** These can be individuals or teams. Teams should be at least two and no more than four students.
3. **Repeat Participation:** Students may submit in multiple years. However, any venture recognized as a Top 10 Finalist in any previous Round 1 cannot be resubmitted. In other words, prior finalists must submit a new idea for a different venture.
4. **Student Enrollment:** The competition is for current or recently graduated (no earlier than Fall 2024) UTA students (undergraduate or graduate).
5. **Student Involvement:** The competition is for student-created and student-managed ventures, including new ventures launched by licensing university technology.
6. **Students are expected to:**
  - a. Play the primary role in developing and leading the business.
  - c. Have key management roles in the venture.
  - d. Have fundamental, equity-holding (or potential equity-holding) positions within the company and have a combined ownership/possible ownership of at least 25% of the founder's equity in the company.
  - e. Be part of only one MavPitch team.
  - f. Be present during the award presentations to be eligible for prizes.
7. **Forms of Business:**
  - a. Submissions are for new independent ventures in the seed, start-up, or early growth stages.
  - b. Submissions should not include buyouts, entity expansions, not-for-profits, subsidiaries, or recapitalizations.
  - c. The MavPitch team has the final decision on which participants are invited to compete in the competition and reserves the right to include or exclude any participant for any reason.
8. **Business Status:** This competition is for new ventures and opportunities, so submissions must not be from established companies. Indeed, submissions focusing on sound new business ideas are strongly encouraged. Established companies are only eligible if they meet the following criteria:
  - a. Total funding from investments, grants, and awards — including contributions, cash investments, loans, and paid expenses by any team members, founders, or individuals — cannot exceed \$100,000 (all-time).

- b. Total sales at the time of the MavPitch submission cannot exceed \$100,000 (all-time).
- 9. **Point of Contact:** Students must designate a single point-of-contact person responsible for communication with competition organizers and submitting the entry into the MavPitch application portal. The submission form will have an area to designate this individual and how any award proceeds should be distributed.
- 10. **Email Correspondences:** MavPitch news and updates will be emailed to the designated student. Please email us at [entrepreneurship@uta.edu](mailto:entrepreneurship@uta.edu) to add additional students to our MavPitch email news list.
- 11. **MavPitch News & Updates:** We will post all updates to rules or information on this web page, which is subject to change at any time.

## Submission

- 1. **Format:** A video is required for each submission and must be submitted through the MavPitch portal to be eligible. Participants must adhere to the time limits.
  - a. The video pitch submission should be no longer than 3 minutes. This is the storied “rocket pitch” and should convey the key attributes of the opportunity, as depicted in a typical Pitch deck. The video file should be saved in one of these video file formats: .MOV, .WMV, .MP4 (email us with any technical questions at [entrepreneurship@uta.edu](mailto:entrepreneurship@uta.edu).)
  - b. Video submissions may be a PowerPoint (or equivalent) deck, animated presentation, or a live-action production. Please refer to the samples posted on the MavPitch website. Kindly note substance trumps style.
- 2. **Original Work:** The business submission must represent the original work of each entrant.
- 3. **Integrity:** The submission must contain only accurate information about participants' backgrounds, experience, educational levels, stage of product development, product performance claims, or market survey results.
- 4. **Data Retention:** After MavPitch concludes, only contact and basic information about each entry will be retained. All provided files will be permanently purged from the MavPitch online system, except MavPitch winners and entries selected for mentioning on the UTA family of websites.

## Format

- 1. **Phase I:** This round of MavPitch consists of the following two stages:
  - a. “Knockout” Round: At least two judges will review each video pitch entry. Scoring will be against a pre-prescribed rubric, and up to 10 finalists will be selected and revealed on May 4, 2026. Finalists must consult an assigned mentor to help prepare for the live pitch.
  - b. **Final Round:** The finalists will present a five-minute live pitch to a panel of judges on May 14, 2026. The judges will evaluate the presentations against a scoring rubric and deliberate to determine the awards. Participants can receive up to \$15,000.

## 2. Phase II

- a. **EpiCMavs Deep Dive:** All Phase II participants must complete the EpiCMavs Deep Dive program. Deep Dive is a seven-week cohort program that provides UTA students and faculty the opportunity to receive hands-on mentoring while they work on their business ideas. The participants create a value proposition and business model canvas analysis of their business ideas under the guidance of mentors from TECH Fort Worth. Next, participants learn about financials and project the company's needs and expenditures over the first few years of the business. Finally, participants learn how to put together a pitch for any situation. Participants have the opportunity to practice their pitches and receive valuable feedback from entrepreneur mentors.
- b. **Grand Finale:** Participants will have the opportunity to compete for an additional \$25,000 by presenting their business idea again in front of a panel of judges next summer. The progress made on the participant's business idea should be the primary focus of the MavsPitch "Grand Finale" pitch.

## Awards

1. **"Knockout Round":** Finalists will be identified on May 4, 2026.
2. **Final Round:** Finalists will be eligible for up to \$15,000! Awards will be announced immediately following the judges' deliberations on May 14, 2026.
3. **Grand Finale:** Participants will be eligible for an additional \$25,000—for a total of \$40,000! Awards will be announced immediately following the judges' deliberations.
4. **Attendance:** All competitors must be present to be considered for any award.
5. **Required Forms:** Each participant must provide appropriate documentation to receive award payments, including a personal W-9 and a creative release form. No prizes will be awarded without the required documents submitted. International students must also submit proper documentation to be granted prize money and instructed individually on the required forms.
6. **Materials:** The MavPitch team reserves the right to use any material prepared for the competition to publicize and promote the event. The MavPitch team may video record any portion of the competition and utilize these videos however it sees fit.
7. **Changes:** While not anticipated, these rules and prizes are subject to change at the discretion of the MavPitch team at any time. MavPitch staff has the right to interpret these rules according to their own judgment.
8. **Awards:** All decisions regarding the competition rules, procedures, and processes are at the sole discretion of the MavPitch team. Changes and/or interpretations of these rules may be made by the MavPitch team at any time, even though they may be (or may appear to be) in conflict with previously published information. Selecting the MavPitch participants and deciding on the winners are at the sole discretion of the judges and the MavPitch team. Best efforts will be made to make decisions following this Official Rules document.
9. **Confidentiality:** All sessions of the competition, including but not limited to oral presentations and question/answer sessions, are open to the public. These sessions

may be shared with interested persons through media, including radio, television, printed materials, and the Internet. Any data or information discussed or divulged in public sessions by entrants should be considered information entering the public realm. Entrants should not assume any right of confidentiality in any data or information discussed, divulged, or presented in these sessions. Due to the nature of the competition, we will not ask judges, reviewers, sponsors, staff, or the audience to agree to or sign non-disclosure statements for any participant. By participating in the competition, entrants agree that no member of the Maverick Entrepreneurship Program and Award Fund, MavPitch, or the University of Texas at Arlington will assume any liability whatsoever for any disclosures of business plan information that may be made (whether inadvertently or otherwise) by any judge, reviewer, staff member, audience member or other individual connected with, participating in, viewing, hearing, or receiving information from the competition.

10. **Copyrights & Permissions:** If a participant uses copyrighted materials and/or images from a third party in their submissions or presentations, they must obtain permission and authorization in advance from the owners to use this material.
11. **Brokerage:** Information presented by the students at the competition is the sole responsibility of the students. The MavPitch team has not taken and does not intend to take any steps to verify the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of any information, materials, or statements presented by the students, aside from confirming the eligibility requirements of the team and venture. The students and advisor, not the MavPitch organizers, are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, and other securities laws. It is solely the student's responsibility to comply with applicable laws. The MavPitch organizers do not give investment advice, endorsement, analysis, or recommendations regarding any securities and are not a broker, venture fund, or investment advisor.

Visit the Maverick Entrepreneurship Program and Award Fund website for additional information.  
<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/business/departments/management/mav-pitch>



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