

Fremont County Startup Challenge- 2026

Competition Rules:

General Eligibility

1. **Team Composition:**
 - o Teams can consist of **1 to 3 members**
 - o Each team must designate a **Team Leader** to act as the main point of contact.
2. **Business Stage:**
 - o Open to startups in the **idea, prototype, or early-revenue stages**.
 - o Applicants must not have generated more than **\$200,000 in total revenue** in the past 12 months.
3. **Ownership:**
 - o Participants must own at least **50% of the business idea** to qualify.
 - o Teams cannot submit ideas that are wholly owned by an established corporation or another entity.
4. **Originality:**
 - o Submissions must be **original ideas** developed by the team.
 - o Ideas that infringe on existing intellectual property or patents are ineligible.
5. **Previous Winners:**
 - o Teams or individuals who have won **first-place prizes in this or similar competitions** within the past 24 months are not eligible to compete.
 - o Previous winners have the opportunity to submit an application with a new business idea.

Geographic and Demographic Rules

6. **Residency:**
 - o Participants must at least one member of their team reside in or have significant ties Fremont County
 - o International participants may be allowed if they meet other criteria (optional).
7. **Student Eligibility:**
 - o Open to current **undergraduate or graduate students**, as well as recent alumni (graduated within the last 12 months).
 - o Written parental or guardian consent is required for applicants less than 18 years of age

Funding and Financial Rules

8. **Funding Cap:**

- o Teams or businesses must not have received more than **\$100,000 in outside investment or grants**.
- o Personal savings and bootstrapping contributions are excluded from this limit.

9. **Affiliation Restrictions:**

- o Participants cannot submit projects funded by or affiliated with large organizations or corporations unless they retain significant creative control.

Idea and Market Rules

10. **Type of Business:**

- o Submissions must fall within the scope of **legal, ethical, and socially responsible businesses**.
- o Prohibited business types include those involving:
 - Gambling
 - Controlled substances (except legal cannabis markets, if allowed by local laws)
 - Adult content
- o Preference may be given to ideas with a focus on **community impact, sustainability, or innovation**.

11. **Feasibility:**

- o Submissions must demonstrate realistic potential for execution within [6-12 months] after the competition.

Other Rules

13. **Commitment:**

- o All team members must agree to participate in the full competition, including mentorship, workshops, and the final pitch event.
- o Teams must confirm their availability for all scheduled activities.

14. **Code of Conduct:**

- o Participants must adhere to the professionalism and respect for other teams, judges, and organizers during event.

15. **Conflict of Interest:**

- o Judges, mentors, and organizers cannot participate as competitors.
- o Immediate family members of judges or organizers are ineligible to compete.

16. **Multiple Entries:**

- o Participants can submit only **one idea per team**.
- o Team members cannot participate on multiple teams.

17. **Agreement to Rules:**

- o Participants must sign an **agreement** confirming they understand and accept all competition rules.