MAINE VENTURE FUND

Maine Startup Challenge

Educator & Program Leader Guide

The Maine Startup Challenge (MSC) is a statewide entrepreneurship competition hosted by Maine Venture Fund. Students identify a real-world problem and capture an idea in a simple, one-page business plan format. See the Applicant Guide for full details.

Educators can use MSC as a short lesson, a project-based activity, or an enrichment experience, with flexibility to adapt it to their time, students, and setting.

Support & Getting Started

Maine Venture Fund can support classrooms and programs through guest visits, workshops, Q&A sessions, and early access to materials when schedules align. Email Lydia at lydia@maineventurefund.com to bring the Maine Startup Challenge to your students.

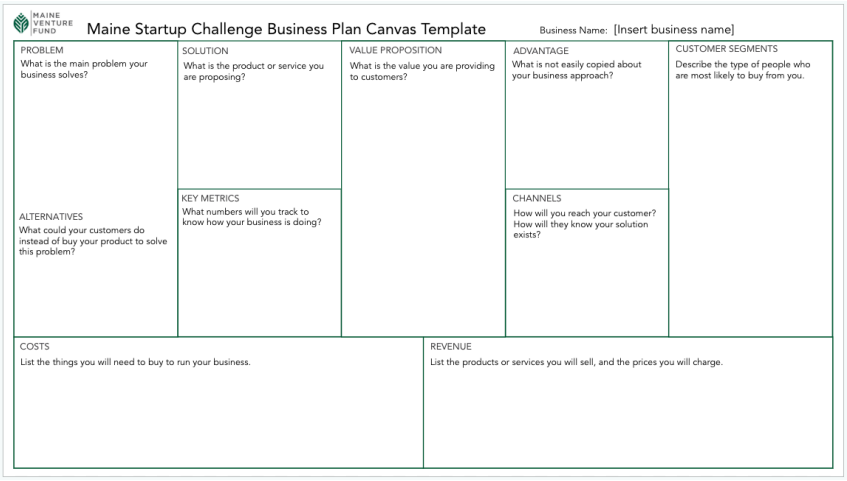
Common Ways Educators Use MSC

- A standalone classroom lesson, after-school club or enrichment activity
- Independent or team-based student projects
- Career exploration or interdisciplinary units
- Field trip opportunity: Maine Startup Challenge Showcase

Participation in the statewide competition is optional.

A Simple Classroom Flow (One Option)

1. Introduce entrepreneurship and problem-solving
2. Brainstorm problems students see in their community
3. Walk through the one-page Business Plan Canvas



Maine Startup Challenge Business Plan Canvas Template

Business Name: [Insert business name]

PROBLEM	SOLUTION	VALUE PROPOSITION	ADVANTAGE	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS
What is the main problem your business solves?	What is the product or service you are proposing?	What is the value you are providing to customers?	What is not easily copied about your business approach?	Describe the type of people who are most likely to buy from you.
ALTERNATIVES What could your customers do instead of buy your product to solve this problem?	KEY METRICS What numbers will you track to know how your business is doing?		CHANNELS How will you reach your customer? How will they know your solution exists?	
COSTS List the things you will need to buy to run your business.			REVENUE List the products or services you will sell, and the prices you will charge.	

Students respond with short phrases or bullets in each section, including:

- The Problem
- The Solution
- Who It's For
- How It Makes Money

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4. Give time for individual or team ideation
5. Optionally submit student work to Maine Startup Challenge

Key Dates - exact dates to be announced.

📅 Applications open: March 2027

📍 Showcase Event: April 2027

Contact us:

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