



## **USAID | Smith School Global Challenge: Creating Alliances for Economic Prosperity**

*Brought to you by USAID's Business Growth Initiative and the Smith School's CIBER and Center for Social Value Creation*

### **RULES & GUIDELINES**

#### **A. The Challenge**

The USAID | Smith School Global Challenge: Creating Alliances for Economic Prosperity (the Challenge) is a new spin on the case competition format. Teams will be given a short open-ended prompt that will require members to employ their creativity, research skills, business acumen, and knowledge of international development issues and best practices to conceptualize a mutually beneficial alliance between a multinational corporation or regional private sector enterprise (MNC/RPSE) and a host country government or a donor agency in a given region and industry. The prompt used in the Challenge has been specially designed for the Challenge, and thus will be previously unpublished and untested.

#### **B. The Organizers**

The Challenge is organized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business (Smith School). This event has been made possible by the hard work and contributions of USAID's Business Growth Initiative (BGI) and the Smith School's Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) and Center for Social Value Creation (CSVCS). Hereafter, these organizations will be referred to as the Organizers.

#### **C. Eligibility**

The competition is open to students enrolled in a graduate program at an accredited U.S. college or university (school) with an MBA program. To be eligible, one must have completed an undergraduate degree from an accredited school and be registered for at least one graduate level course in both the fall 2009 and spring 2010 semesters.

#### **D. Team Composition**

Each team will be composed of up to four graduate students from the same school. At least one of the students must be enrolled in the school's MBA program. Other team members may be students enrolled in other graduate programs at the same school. Exactly one of these students must be listed as the team leader, and will serve as the main point of contact between the team and the Organizers.

There is no limit to the number of teams any school may enter for the first round. Each student may only participate on one team. Cooperation between teams from the same or different school is not allowed; each team must work independently.

#### **E. Alternates**

During the registration process, each team may designate one alternate who fulfills the eligibility requirements listed above. The alternate may participate in the Challenge only in the event of extenuating circumstances that preclude the participation of one of the original team members. A team that seeks to substitute its alternate for an original team member must seek and obtain the approval of the Organizers prior to the alternate joining the team and contributing to its work. Once an original team member has withdrawn from the Challenge, s/he may not be reinstated as a team member.

In the event that the team is selected to participate in the final round in Washington, DC and one of the original team members is unable to attend, the alternate may participate, but only after the team seeks and obtains approval from the Organizers.

#### **F. Timeline** (All time deadlines listed are based on Washington, DC time)

Competition announced: January 11, 2010

Registration period: January 11, 2010 – February 5, 2010 (5 p.m.)

Case distributed: February 8, 2010

Round one (written) submissions due: March 5, 2010 (5 p.m.)

Round one decisions released: March 22, 2010

Submit presentation materials for Final round: April 22, 2010 (5 p.m.)

Final round (oral presentations) and award ceremony: April 23, 2010 (9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

***Late submissions will not be considered. While the Organizers do not anticipate any changes in the timeline, all dates are subject to change. All teams will be notified of any changes.***

## **G. Communication**

Except in the event of exceptional circumstances, or last-minute changes, all official communication will occur through e-mail between the Organizers and the designated team leader. It is the responsibility of each team to read e-mails sent from the Organizers.

Teams may contact the Organizers with logistical questions at [csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu). The Organizers reserve the right to not answer questions. If the Organizers determine that a response to the team is appropriate, they will publish their response on the Challenge Blog, which can be found off of the Challenge website at <http://www.rhsmith.umd.edu/globalchallenge>, so that all teams will have access to the information presented. It is the responsibility of each team to check the Challenge Blog regularly, as Organizers will not alert teams of new posts.

## **H. Challenge Structure**

The Challenge will be divided into two rounds. All registered teams will submit written responses to the Organizers for initial judging. A panel of expert judges will evaluate the responses based on the judging criteria listed below. Up to eight teams will be invited to attend the final round at USAID in Washington, DC, in which teams will give oral presentations (supplemented by minimal written material).

## **I. External Resources and Input**

Teams may not consult any current employee from USAID, BGI, or the Smith School for content input. This includes, but is not limited to conversations, emails, phone calls, and other contact regarding the case.

Teams may not consult with one another on issues related to the case; teams from schools with multiple teams are not allowed to consult with other teams from their university or any other.

Teams may receive advice and guidance from faculty and third-party consultants, but no one outside of the team may contribute language or exhibits to the submissions. Additionally, all interviews performed for the case must be clearly documented in the Works Cited section at the end of the written submission.

Each team is allowed to reference and use an unlimited number of books, magazines, newspapers, compendiums, readers, collections of articles, and publicly-available Internet resources.

## J. Round One Submission Requirements

Round one submissions will be written documents, sent as a Microsoft Word attachment to [csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu). The document must be single spaced, written in English, have one inch margins, use Times New Roman font size 12, and be no longer than ten single-sided pages. This ten-page limit includes a 200-300 word executive summary, but excludes the following required items: title page, exhibits and works cited list. Note that while there is a ten-page maximum, there is no minimum required length for submissions; for example, a succinct, complete five-page submission will be considered as seriously as a ten-page submission.

Submissions should be sent as *one* Microsoft Word file using the following file-name: schoolname\_teamleader'slastname\_round1.doc. A complete submission contains (in this order) 1) a cover page that lists *only* the team members' names and the title of their submission, 2) a complete response to the Challenge (ten page limit) including the executive summary, 3) exhibits, and 4) a works cited list in MLA format. In *no* place on the submission should the team make any reference to its university or geographical location. Any submissions that do not meet these requirements will not be considered.

This submission should include the following information:

- a brief socioeconomic profile of the country the team selects;
- a summary of the country's critical development needs;
- a company profile of the MNC/RPSE involved in the business solution;
- a summary of the MNC/RPSE's longterm strategic interests;
- a description of a market-based solution that stimulates economic growth through a public-private alliance; and
- a description of how this public-private alliance will meet each party's needs and the host country's overall development objective.

To ensure fairness, at the onset of the judging process the organizers will assign each submission a number and remove the cover page so that round one judges will not have any information about the university or team members responsible for the submission.

## K. Round One Scoring & Judging Criteria

A secret panel of expert judges in fields relevant to the prompt will evaluate all submissions based on the following general criteria.

- Originality 20 points
- Business Feasibility 20 points
- Social/Development Impact 20 points
- Economic Sustainability 20 points
- Persuasiveness 20 points

Detailed judging criteria will be released with the prompt. Up to eight teams with the highest scores will be invited to participate in the final round of the Challenge.

#### **L. Round One Tie-Breaking**

In the event that multiple teams at the cut-off point receive the same number of points (e.g. three teams are tied for 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> place), a judge who has not seen any of the submissions will break the tie by reading and ranking the submissions.

#### **M. Waitlist**

Up to four teams will be placed on a waitlist and will be invited to attend the final round in the event that any of the finalist teams withdraw from the competition.

#### **N. Final Round Submission Requirements**

The final round will be predominantly oral. Teams will make presentations in English using Microsoft PowerPoint 2007. Final presentations may be no more than fifteen slides in length (including title slide). The teams may use note cards during the presentations, as they feel comfortable. Team presentations will be strictly limited to fifteen minutes, followed by three minutes of questions and answers from the judges. After fifteen minutes, the team will be cut off. During the presentation, teams must neither make any reference (oral or written) to their school nor display/wear any school colors or paraphernalia. Each present member of a team is required to participate in the team's presentation but not necessarily in the question period following the presentation.

Finalists must submit their final PowerPoint slides to [csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu) no later than Thursday, April 22, 2010 at 5 p.m. (Washington, DC time). After slides have been submitted, no changes may be made. Final round submissions should use the following file-name: schoolname\_teamleader'slastname\_finalround.ppt. School name or colors should not appear anywhere on the slides.

Finalists may make changes to their Executive Summaries before the final round. Whether making changes or not, Executive Summaries should be sent as a Microsoft Word document to [csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:csvc@rhsmith.umd.edu). The document must be single spaced, written in English, have one inch margins, use Times New Roman font size 12, and be no longer than 500 words. Finalists must submit their Executive Summaries no later than 5pm EST on Wednesday April 14. Executive Summaries should use the follow file-name: schoolname\_teamleader'slastname\_ExecSummary.doc. These submissions should include: a cover page that lists *only* the team members' names and the title of their submission and the executive summary. Final round judges will receive these prior to the presentation and will factor them into the final scores given.

At the start of the morning of the final round, immediately preceding the presentations, each finalist team must submit four hardcopies of their PowerPoint slides (two to a page). Final round judges will not see any of the team's materials from round one.

The order of the team presentations will be determined by a random drawing. Teams will not know the order until the morning of the competition. For the sake of fairness, teams will not be allowed to watch each other's presentations. Teams will not have access to private preparation rooms or the presentation computer/room prior to the final round. The Organizers will ensure that all PowerPoint Presentations are loaded and ready for the teams to use. Teams may not make any installations on the presentation computer. Teams will not be given additional time for preparation in the event of technical problems. Teams may not bring laptops to the final round. Teams will not have access to printers or computers, and thus are expected to arrive at the final round fully prepared.

The final oral presentation should address all main aspects included in the round one written submission (i.e. socioeconomic profile of the country, summary of critical development needs, MNC/RPSE's profile, MNC/RPSE's long-term strategic interests, proposed public-private alliance, etc.). Teams should consider the judging criteria (below) when determining which content to focus their presentation on.

#### **O. Final Round Scoring & Judging Criteria**

The final round judges will be selected by the Organizers. They will represent leaders in the fields of international development and business, and will include experts in the industry and region central to the Challenge.

All scores from round one will be discarded and all finalists will enter the final round on equal footing.

The final round judges will evaluate all submissions based on the following criteria:

- Originality 20 points
- Business Feasibility and Economic Sustainability 25 points
- Social/Development Impact 25 points
- Quality of Presentation 15 points
- Overall Persuasiveness 15 points

Finalists will receive detailed judging criteria. The team with the highest score from the final round will be declared the winner of the Challenge at the subsequent award luncheon.

#### **P. Final Round Tie-Breaking**

In the event that multiple teams receive the highest number of points (e.g. two or three teams tie for 1<sup>st</sup> place), the final panel of judges will convene privately to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each concept and presentation to determine the rank of the top three teams.

#### **Q. Final Round Guests**

To ensure sufficient space for the industry leaders, each team may only bring up to four guests to the final round presentations and award luncheon in Washington, DC. If additional space becomes available, teams will be allowed additional guests on a rotating basis.

#### **R. Prizes and Benefits**

The team that wins the final round will receive \$5,000 and will have its submission published on the BGI website ([www.businessgrowthinitiative.org](http://www.businessgrowthinitiative.org)) as well as distributed to international development professionals in hardcopy at subsequent BGI events. Teams placing second and third will receive \$2,500 and \$1,000, respectively, and will have their submissions published on the BGI website. All teams participating in the final round will have the unique opportunity to network with leaders in the fields of international development and business.

#### **S. Non-return**

By participating in the Challenge, Teams grant to the Organizers a nonexclusive, irrevocable license to copy, reproduce, display, or distribute the submission, and to make derivative works based upon the entry or a substantial portion of the entry without attribution or prior permission. Entries become property of the Organizers and will not be acknowledged or returned.

#### **T. Recording**

In the final round, the Organizers will record all team presentations for the purposes of promoting the Challenge. Teams will have access to a copy of their presentation in the weeks following the final round.

#### **U. Fees and Expenses**

There is no registration fee to participate in the Challenge. Teams invited to participate in the final round of competition in Washington, DC will be responsible for covering their own accommodation, food, travel, and other related expenses. All finalists, and their guests, will partake in a formal award luncheon, sponsored by the Organizers.

## **V. Non-Compliance**

All participants and Organizers commit to being fully honest and making a good faith effort to become familiar with and abide by the rules and guidelines, which have been established to ensure utmost fairness in the Challenge. The Organizers retain the right to disqualify any individual or team from the competition, and/or from future competitions, if the above rules are not observed. Any concerns or disputes regarding the implementation of the rules and guidelines must be brought to the immediate attention of the Organizers. Any decision of the judges is final, and is not subject to review.

## **W. Spirit of the Challenge**

The rules and guidelines are not all encompassing, and situations may arise that have not been covered in this document. The Organizers expect that any issues or disputes will be resolved in the spirit of friendly competition and professionalism. It is therefore expected that teams will maintain a proper standard of conduct and, above all, have a fun learning experience.