

STARTUP PIONEER PROGRAMME COMPETITION RULES

1. Objectives

The objectives of the competition are:

1. **To foster entrepreneurial spirit** among our students, alongside key competencies such as initiative, creativity, teamwork, customer orientation and the ability to build professional networks.
2. **To progressively position UIC Barcelona** as a leading university in the field of entrepreneurship.
3. **To raise awareness of social entrepreneurship** by promoting projects that generate a positive impact on society.
4. **To strengthen networking among students** by extending the reach of the Startup Pioneer Programme to the wider UIC Barcelona university community.

The business ideas competition aims to:

1. **Recognise and reward creativity and entrepreneurial spirit.**
2. **Promote a culture of innovation** within the university.
3. **Disseminate knowledge and encourage the use of tools** linked to the entrepreneurial process.

Theme of this edition: *Caring for society through human relationships.*

This edition explores how innovation can strengthen human connections and contribute to a more cohesive, empathetic and healthy society.

2. Participants

The competition is open to all undergraduate, master's and postgraduate students at UIC Barcelona. Exceptionally, students from other universities may join a team, provided that the team leader is a UIC Barcelona student.

All ideas must be proposed by a team, preferably multidisciplinary, composed of students from different faculties and/or from different years and courses at UIC Barcelona.

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3. Phases

Phase 0: Registration and idea description of the idea

- **Registration:** Interested parties present their business ideas and teams. They must provide details about the concept of their company, the target market and the business model.

During this phase, teams will be supported by an **assigned tutor**, who will provide feedback and guidance on their project.

In addition, all projects will be reviewed by an **Ethics Committee**, which will ensure that proposals align with the values of UIC Barcelona and adhere to principles of sustainability, social impact and ethical responsibility.

This mentoring and ethical review process aims to ensure the quality, feasibility and coherence of the initiatives from the outset.

Phase 1. Analysis of market context

Key aspects of the current environment will be assessed to support the success of the projects, including:

1. **Market size**
2. **Market value**
3. **Customer segmentation**
4. **Competitiveness**
5. **Economic environment**
6. **Current trends**
7. **Legal and cultural regulations**

Deliverables for this stage:

PORTER, PESTEL and SWOT analyses is due between **26 January 2026 – 6 February 2026**.

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Phase 2. Market quantification

This phase explores **market research** processes to understand **how many people purchase a product or service** or hold a particular view and how often they do so.

At the end of this phase, teams will receive feedback and guidance from their **assigned tutor**.

Deliverables for this stage:

Market quantification report is due between **9 February 2026 – 20 February 2026**.

Phase 3. The value proposition

Understand **how to bring value to their customers**, how they can **alleviate their frustrations** and what products or services they can offer.

Learn how to **highlight what a business is does best and how it will benefit the people who use** those services or products and rather than those of the competition.

Deliverables for this stage:

The value proposition report is due between **2 March 2026 – 20 March 2026**.

Phase 4: The business model

Each team will describe in a coherent manner the creation of their venture by explaining **how it adds value** in economic, social, cultural or other terms.

In this phase, **the strategies** used in the pursuit of the **business objectives** will be defined.

The **value of a product** will be determined, along with what is needed to **launch it on the market** and what **type of customers** it will target.

Deliverables for this stage:

The **business model** is due between **2 March 2026 – 20 March 2026**.

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Phase 5: Project presentation

Pitch: The teams will accompany their projects with a video (pitch) of no more than 3 minutes in which they present their idea.

Selection of projects by the panel: A panel composed of academics and experts from the world of entrepreneurship will select the finalist projects based on the quality and originality of the idea, market strategy, the soundness of financial projections and the viability of the project.

Deliverables for this stage:

Present your project submission deadline is **23 March 2026**

Finalists will be selected by the panel on the **7 April 2026**

Phase 6: Post-competition support and follow-up

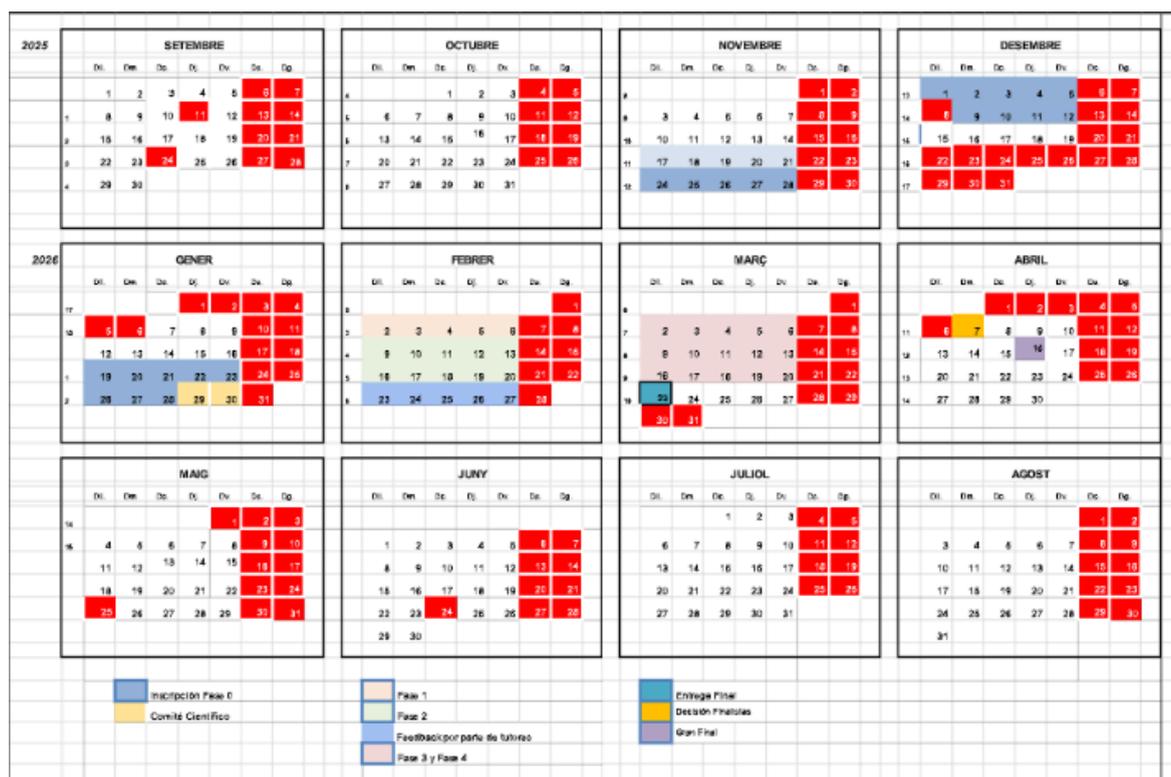
Continuous mentoring: Winning teams will receive continued mentoring through the Innovation Hub to help them develop their business.

Help will be included to **validate the business model**, as well as to start the process of **creating the MVP** and planning the **project to bring the business to life**.

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4. Deadlines

The submission period for business ideas starts on Monday 24 November.



Participants must complete the form found at the following link:

<http://UICbarcelona.acceleraria.com>

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5. Prizes

Three prizes will be awarded to the three winning projects, selected from among the six finalists. Each winning project will receive one of the following prizes:

1. **Tickets to South Summit Madrid 2026**

Entry to the leading international event in innovation and entrepreneurship, with the opportunity to attend talks, activities and networking sessions with key figures from the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

2. **Lunch/meeting with a leading entrepreneur**

A mentoring and networking experience in the form of a lunch, where winners can exchange ideas, receive guidance and gain first-hand insight into the experience of an established entrepreneur.

3. **Investment committee session**

An exclusive opportunity to attend an investment committee session as an observer, where investors analyse real projects to assess their potential for funding. A practical experience offering insight into the evaluation and decision-making process in the investment field.

Prizes are awarded at the discretion of the panel, based on the characteristics and needs of each winning project.

Prizes and honourable mentions will be awarded at the same event and will also be shared on social networks, the University website and other media.

The panel may request additional documentation from the participants that it deems necessary for evaluating the business ideas.

The competition may be declared void if the panel decides that no proposal meets the required standards or does not comply with the conditions set out in the call for entries.

For UIC Barcelona undergraduate students, this activity is recognised as 1 ECTS credit. To qualify for this recognition, students must take part in all phases, pass the evaluations and attend the entire final event.

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6. Confidentiality, data protection and copyright

The competition organisers guarantee the confidentiality of all personal data provided, in accordance with current data protection legislation. However, the project details provided by competition participants, as well as the names of those promoting the project, will be made public on the UIC Barcelona website.

To ensure compliance with data protection and image rights, participants must obtain consent from the relevant individuals for the use of images, materials, or any other personal data belonging to third parties.

The creators of the ideas guarantee that they will hold the organisers harmless in the event of any breach of data protection regulations or other applicable laws. Participants are informed that the data controller for all data generated in the management of the competition will be Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Fundació Privada.

7. Obligations of participants

Individuals participating in the Startup Pioneer Programme have the following obligations:

1. To accept the terms and conditions of the competition
2. To submit their business idea within the deadlines set out in the guidelines, complying with content requirements
3. To guarantee the originality of the proposals and the accuracy of the data
4. To inform the organisation if they withdraw from the competition

False information or failure to comply with the requirements set out in these rules will result in disqualification from the competition.

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8. Obligations of the organisation

The organisation agrees to:

1. Provide participants with the human and informational resources deemed appropriate for achieving the objectives of the competition.
2. Preserve the confidentiality of the non-public part of the submitted projects if they are not selected for one of the three prizes.

9. Exploitation, industrial and intellectual property rights

The intellectual property of ideas and projects belongs to the authors.

UIC Barcelona will reserve a copy of each of the proposals submitted.

Participation in this competition does not imply that the authors of the ideas presented cede any rights of exploitation, intellectual or industrial property of these ideas.