



SMALL BUSINESS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY GUIDELINES

All submissions must be completed through vealeentrepreneurs.org by 11:59PM on Wednesday, February 4, 2026. An Executive Summary no longer than 5 pages is required in .pdf, .doc, .docx or .txt format. The questions below are provided to guide you in completing your Executive Summary and fulfilling the criteria in the scoring rubrics. It is preferable to answer the questions in the given order. The [Small Business](#) and [Innovation](#) judging rubrics are available at the website if you wish to view the scoring criteria.

Provide statistics and/or findings from research you've conducted (e.g., surveys, interviews, internet searches, etc.) whenever possible in your answers to support your assertions and achieve maximum points. This could be in the form of data, graphs, citations, etc. You may attach up to 3 images (sketches, diagrams, prototype photos, etc.) along with your entry to help the judges visualize your concept.

AI is not a substitute for human creativity and innovation. The use of AI tools should supplement a person's work, not replace it. It should be noted that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. To promote transparency, accountability, and critical thinking, participants are required to describe how they incorporate AI into their process for creating their Executive Summary. See "Reflection on AI use" section below.

Concept

- Describe your concept.

Customer / Problem

- Who are your customer / user segments and what problem are you solving for them?
- How do you know that this is a real problem experienced by the customer / user?

Your Solution

- Describe how your solution solves the problem.
- What is your product or solution's unique value proposition?

Business Model

- Please describe the components of your business model.
**Business model may contain distribution channels, key partners, key activities, value proposition, key resources, pricing, cost structure, revenue stream, etc.*
- Tell us how you'll generate revenue.
- Tell us about your team and their roles/qualifications? How do you plan to obtain the skills / resources required for your business?

Market

- How large is the market for your product/service?
- What share of the available market do you aim to capture?

Competition

- Identify and describe your competitors?
- What's your competitive advantage or "secret sauce"?
- How will you be able to defend your position against competitors?

Growth

- Describe the next steps you will take to launch this business.
- Tell us how you will grow your business. What are your most immediate needs?

Reflection on AI use

- Describe how AI was used, what tasks did it assist with, how did you verify or adjust AI outputs?
Document your use of AI and prompts.