

VFA Support Pack

Are you thinking about applying for the Venture Further Awards? If so, you've come to the right place! This pack outlines everything you need to know to apply and some top tips for success.

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Application Process

For the initial application, you must submit a pitch deck and a 1-page business advert. Below is some guidance on how to create these documents.

Pitch Deck

Creating a high-quality pitch deck for a startup competition is crucial for effectively communicating your business idea and standing out from the competition. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you create a compelling pitch deck:

How to structure your pitch deck:

A standard pitch deck typically includes the following slides:

1. **Title Slide** - Company name, logo, tagline, and your name.
2. **Problem** - Clearly articulate the problem your startup is solving. Use real-world examples or stories to make it relatable.
3. **Solution** - Present your product or service as the solution. Highlight the unique value proposition.
4. **Market Opportunity** - Define the target market, size, and potential growth. Provide data to back up your claims.
5. **Business Model** - Explain how you plan to make money. Detail your revenue streams, pricing strategy, and customer acquisition plan.

6. **Go-to-Market Strategy** - Outline your plan to enter the market, including marketing, sales, and distribution strategies.
7. **Traction** - Showcase any progress you've made—user numbers, revenue, partnerships, or product development. Use charts and metrics to illustrate growth.
8. **Competition** - Identify your main competitors and highlight your competitive advantage. A comparison chart can be effective here.
9. **Financial Projections** - Provide 3-5 years of financial projections, including revenue, expenses, and profitability. Use realistic assumptions.
10. **Team** - Introduce your team, emphasizing relevant experience and expertise. Investors often invest in people, not just ideas.
11. **Ask** - Clearly state what you are asking for—How will you use the money if successful?
12. **Closing Slide** - Recap your key points and leave your contact information. End with a strong, memorable statement.

Top Tips

- **Simplicity:** Keep slides clean and uncluttered. Use bullet points, not long paragraphs.
- **Visuals:** Incorporate high-quality images, icons, and infographics to make your points visually appealing.
- **Consistency:** Use a consistent colour scheme, font style, and layout throughout the deck.
- **Storytelling:** Weave your slides into a compelling story that takes the audience on a journey from the problem to your solution.
- **Evidence:** Back up your claims with data—market research, customer testimonials, and pilot results.
- **Credibility:** Cite sources and avoid making exaggerated or unsubstantiated claims.
- **Polish:** Review your deck for typos, grammatical errors, and formatting issues.

By following these guidelines, you'll be well-prepared to create a high-quality pitch deck that captures attention, communicates your vision effectively, and stands a strong chance in a startup competition.

Please submit your pitch deck in either PPT or PDF format.

1-Page Business Advert

In addition to the pitch deck, applicants must submit a 1-page business summary, crafted as an advertisement directed at their target customer. Imagine it would be used as a flyer or poster to advertise your business. You have complete creative freedom over the design, but we would recommend including the key points your target customer would need to know, such as:

- **Customer Problem** - Define the pain point or need that your product/service addresses.
- **Solution/Value Proposition** - Present your offering and explain how it uniquely solves the problem.
- **Key Benefits** - Showcase the top features and advantages that resonate most with your target market.
- **Call to Action** - Encourage potential customers to engage with your product or service.

Keep the tone persuasive and customer-focused, and feel free to be creative with the design!

Please submit your advert in PDF, JPG or PNG format.

Here are some examples for inspiration:

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Ready to assist you achieving your body goals

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PHYLLIS SCHWAIGER
Professional Trainer

BOOK MORE SESSIONS SAVE MORE MONEY

- ✓ Lose weight
- ✓ Get in shape
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- ✓ Nutrition/diet supporting

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5 SESSIONS **\$55** each
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Ingoude Company

One Stop Business Solutions

We are specialized in rising your business income and bringing in more customers towards your services.

DIGITAL PUBLISHING
We rely on data to optimize your campaigns for the best possible outcomes.

BUSINESS CONSULTANT
We analyze data and takes action based on your value, purpose, and business need.

WHO WE ARE?
We are a young company driven to help achieving small business success. Our purpose is to analyze and take action against any problems your business encounter. Let us show you what our team of professionals can do for your business.

WHAT WE DO?
Ingoude Company started 10 years ago and since then we helped companies around the world to become what they are today. We are specialized in rising your business income and bringing in more customers towards your services.

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Final round

If your application is shortlisted, you must deliver the pitch to a panel of judges. Your pitch should last 10 minutes, with 15 minutes of Q&A.

- **Practice:** Rehearse your pitch multiple times. I know it's horrible to do but film yourself presenting so you can look back and review. You'll notice whether you're speaking too quickly or have any strange mannerisms. Remember to time yourself to ensure you stay within the allotted time.
- **Feedback:** Present to friends, mentors, or colleagues and incorporate their feedback. A fresh perspective can really help!
- **Confidence:** Enter the competition with confidence. Your pitch deck is a tool, but your passion and belief in your idea are what will truly sell it.
- **Backup:** Save your presentation in multiple formats (PDF, PPT) and have it accessible on different devices.
- **Q&A Preparation:** Anticipate questions and prepare concise, confident answers. Be honest, if you don't know the answer to a question, say that! We don't expect you to know everything.

Available Support

- **Support Sessions** – Come along to the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre for a brief presentation about the competition with some top tips from the organisers, with plenty of time for Q&A. The sessions will also be available online.
 - Tuesday 19th November, 13:00-14:30, Online & The Enterprise Zone, 2nd Floor of AMBS
 - Wednesday 19th February, 13:00-14:30, Online & The Enterprise Zone, 2nd Floor of AMBS
- **Drop-in Days** – Come and chat to a member of our team if you have any questions about the competition or application:
 - Wednesday 12th February 10-4 in AMBS reception
 - Thursday 13th March 10-4 in AMBS reception

Resources & Links

- [The Secret to Successfully Pitching an Idea | The Way We Work, a TED series](#)



- There is a free design website called [Canva](#) that is very easy to use and has hundreds of templates for flyers/pitch decks. PowerPoint also has some great design tools.
- [Canva advice on pitch deck design](#)