



## **HOW WILL ENTRIES BE EVALUATED? A GUIDE FOR COMPETITORS IN THE IDEAS TRACK**

*Entries in the “Ideas” track of I2S will be evaluated on each of the following four criteria, using a 1-5 rating scale. The scores will be weighted according to the indicated percentage and aggregated. Each entry will be evaluated by multiple judges and judges’ scores will be averaged. The same scoring criteria will be used for both competition rounds. The first round is “virtual, however, in the second round, judges may also engage in a group discussion to determine the final prize winners.*

### **CRITERIA FOR “IDEAS” TRACK TEAMS**

**I. The Importance of the Issue (30%): The issue the team is addressing constitutes an important social or environmental problem.**

*Tips for maximizing your score on Criterion 1:*

- This criterion evaluates whether you have done your homework on the issue you are addressing and whether you can convincingly articulate why it is important. Some key questions to think about include: How important is this issue? Who is affected? Why is it important to solve this problem?
- You may demonstrate problem significance through quantitative and/or qualitative means.
- You should try to prove, as well as you can, that there would actually be customer need/demand and that a viable “market” for the proposed product/service would exist.
- Consider including items such as: quotes from interviews with potential customers or service recipients, interviews with experts or professors in related fields, statistics, and other data that show evidence of problem significance and a potential “market” for the product or service.

**II. Quality and Originality of the Solution (30%): The team clearly demonstrates that their solution is an improvement over the current state of the market. In other words, if the solution was implemented it would generate social value above and beyond the current state.**

*Tips for maximizing your score on Criterion 2:*

- To score highly on this criterion, it is very important that you demonstrate your knowledge of the current state of the market. To do this, you should discuss “competitors” – other organizations, products, or services that are already addressing

this same issue. This “competitor analysis” will help you clearly show how your product/service adds value.

- You should clearly explain to the judges why your solution adds value above and beyond what the competitors are doing.
- As an example: if you are working to end child homelessness, please tell the judges what other organizations exist that are also trying to end child homelessness. You should then explain why your idea for ending child homelessness will work better than, or as a complement to, the existing framework that already exists to address this problem.

**III. Quality of Implementation Plan (30%): The team’s implementation plan addresses key milestones, goals, timelines and financial predictions including funding requirements and potential sources of funding. The plan is based on reasonable assumptions.**

*Tips for maximizing your score on Criterion 3:*

- Clearly articulate a plan for moving forward toward implementing your solution or moving your project to the next stage. Include: key next steps, milestones, and goals.
- You also be sure to clearly articulate your financial requirements for moving the project forward to the next stage and discuss ways in which necessary funding will be obtained.
- It is also important to tell the judges about your plans for use of an I2S prize. In a couple sentences, discuss ways in which would winning a prize in this competition would contribute to your ability to take important next step. How do you plan to use the prize money to advance your project?

**IV. Professionalism in Writing and Presentation (10%): The project is clearly and professionally presented in all formats including the executive summary, video pitch (1<sup>st</sup> round only), and in-person interactions (2<sup>nd</sup> round only).**

*Tips for maximizing your score on Criterion 4:*

- The executive summary should be written clearly and professionally and contain ZERO grammatical and spelling errors. Ask an outsider to read the document and make sure they understand it (this will give a good indication of how clearly-articulated your ideas are.) Edit and proofread before submitting!
- For 1<sup>st</sup> Round Judging: The video pitch should be articulated professionally. If you have never done an elevator pitch before, there are many great resources out there to help you develop one. (Hint: the I2S Bootcamp usually involves elevator pitch practice and feedback.)
- For 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Judging: Have a short pitch prepared for the poster showcase. When someone walks up to your poster and asks about your project, you should be able to explain it in 60 seconds or less.
- Think about some possible follow-up questions judges at the Poster Showcase might ask you after hearing your pitch and develop some ways to best answer them in a clear and concise way.