

2015 Ropp Triplett Business Plan Competition

Application information

CONTACT:

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154 N. Main St., Bluffton, OH 45817 (Bluffton town hall)

The Bluffton Center For Entrepreneurs (BCE)

is a not-for-profit business support center offering professional assistance and customized programs to entrepreneurs and small businesses in Allen, Hancock, Hardin and Putnam counties.

The BCE 2015 Ropp Triplett Business Plan Competition

is open to startups and emerging businesses in our four-county area.

Grand Prize \$4,000 in startup costs

Second Prize \$1,500 in start up costs

Third Prize \$500 in startup costs

Major competition sponsors will be announced soon.

R.S.V.P. & APPLICATIONS ARE NECESSARY

Competition Goals:

- Spur local entrepreneurs to put their ideas into action
- Teach participants to write a business plan that will help start a new business or improve an existing one
- Give financial support to three new businesses
- Create new jobs in northwest Ohio

BCE Mission Statement

The Bluffton Center for Entrepreneurs is a not-for-profit business support center offering professional assistance to entrepreneurs and small business in Allen, Hancock, Hardin and Putnam counties. BCE clients receive customized mentoring, make more connections with the business community, and gain valuable resources, including affordable office space, access to Bluffton University interns and work groups and promotion as BCE clients.

Enrollment

Contest participation includes enrollment in a seven-session course designed to help you create a complete business plan suitable for presentation to lenders or

investors. Participation at all seven seminars is strongly recommended, but not required for entry to the competition.

Location

Seminars will be held Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. Jan. 16, to March 13, in the third floor meeting room of the Bluffton town hall, 154 N. Main St., Bluffton

Seminars

Wednesday, Jan. 14: “Launch Your Business Right”

Attend for free

Wednesday, Jan. 21: “So You Want to be an Entrepreneur”

Fees and application due

Wednesday, Jan. 28: “Planning to Start a Business”

Wednesday, Feb. 4: “Developing Your Business Idea”

Wednesday, Feb. 11: “Testing Your Business Idea and Getting it to Market”

Wednesday, Feb. 18: “Accounting for Your Business”

Wednesday, Feb. 25: “Financing Your Business”

Wednesday, March 4 “Final Pitch Dress Rehearsal”

Business plan due

Wednesday, March 11: FINAL PITCHES

Town hall, time and order of presentations to be determined

**All seminars will be instructed by Kathy Keller, Director,
Small Business Development Center at Rhodes State College, Lima, Ohio**

Rules and Regulations

- 1) Only start-up (not yet operational) and emerging businesses (less than three years old) may apply. Award winners previous business plan competitions may not apply.
- 2) Residency Requirement: existing business location, or start-up company’s intended location, must be in one of the following four counties Allen, Hancock, Hardin, and Putnam.
- 3) Your business concept must be original work that you are able to fully disclose to the judges.

4) Your business plan must disclose how you will use the award to launch or grow your business. The prize money will be disbursed as reimbursements for legitimate business expenses or as payments of the business's vendor invoices.

5) The completed entry form with an attached overview of your concept and check for \$150.00 (payable to BCE), or \$75 for students, must be submitted to the BCE office or postmarked by Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2015.

6) Three copies of completed business plan must be received by the BCE staff on or before Wednesday, March 11, 2015.

Judging Criteria

- Judging the written plan (50 points)
 - The business plan concept and products
 - The market
 - Operations
 - Marketing
 - Non-financial resource requirements
 - Economics of the business
 - Financials
 - Overall document
- Judging the presentation (50 possible points)
 - Ability to capture audience attention
 - Completeness of the presentation
 - Mastery of facts and material related to venture
 - Professionalism of the presentation
 - Handling of questions

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will there be a confidentiality agreement?

A: No. The nature of the competition and involvement of staff, reviewers, judges, and other participants prevents BCE from guaranteeing confidentiality. However, we will limit distribution of the final business plans to judges and the BCE Executive Director.

Q: Are there restrictions on the type of business or service I provide?

A: No. We will accept business plans in any legal business category.