Women Entrepreneurs Pitch Competition Application Guidance

Advice and insight into how to answer the application questions can be found below. Should you need further support, please email Fran, Policy and Projects Coordinator at GBCC.

What is the company's registered name?

Please provide your company's registered legal name exactly as it appears on Companies House. Ensure this matches your pitch deck, website and any supporting documents.

Where is the registered office/location?

Provide your registered office address. If your business operates from a different location (for example, a university, innovation centre or manufacturing facility), you can mention this elsewhere in your application where relevant.

When was the company registered?

Provide your incorporation date. This helps us understand the maturity of your business. If the company has only recently been incorporated but the founders have been developing the idea for some time, consider highlighting that elsewhere in your application (see question relating to your company's team).

Contact email address

Provide the most appropriate email address for investment enquiries and communication regarding your application.

Telephone number

Provide a contact number for the primary founder or main company contact.

Website

Provide your company website link if you have one. If your website is still under development, ensure any available content accurately reflects your business and proposition.

What is your business 'one liner' or 'elevator pitch'?

This is often the first thing investors will read, so first impressions matter. Keep your answer concise, clear and free from technical jargon. A good elevator pitch should explain what your business does, who it helps and the value it creates in one or two sentences.

Imagine explaining your business to someone with no knowledge of your industry. If they can understand it within 30 seconds, you're probably on the right track.

What problem does your business solve?

This is one of the most important questions in the application. If you can't clearly explain the problem, investors will question whether there's a genuine commercial opportunity.

Avoid jumping straight into your solution. Instead, explain why the problem matters, who experiences it and what impact it has. Help investors understand why they should care and why customers are willing to pay to solve this problem.

Support your answer with evidence wherever possible. This could include customer interviews, market research, industry statistics, case studies or examples of where existing solutions fall short. If you're pre-commercial, consider using a realistic customer persona to illustrate the problem.

The strongest answers demonstrate that the problem is real, meaningful and worth solving.

Outline the names and experience of the founding team.

At the earliest stages of investment, investors are often backing the team as much as the idea. Markets change, products evolve and business models pivot, but strong founders can adapt.

Rather than listing CVs, explain why your team is uniquely positioned to support your business and solve this problem. Highlight relevant industry expertise, previous startup or scale-up experience, complementary skill sets, commercial achievements, technical expertise, patents, exits or previous fundraising experience.

If you've worked together previously, explain for how long and in what capacity. Investors gain confidence from teams that have demonstrated they can work well together.

Don't be afraid to mention previous startup failures if you've learned valuable lessons from them. Investors generally value experience over perfection.

Where relevant, explain whether founders are working full-time on the business and mention any advisors or strategic supporters that strengthen your ability to execute.

Which of these founders will be able to attend and pitch at the event?

Please indicate which founder(s) will attend. Wherever possible, the CEO or lead founder should present the business. For highly technical businesses, it can also be valuable to have the technical founder available to answer questions.

For the final event, one female founder will be required to pitch. However, it may be valuable to have your team attend to support you and answer our judges questions.

Outline your business highlights or achievements to date.

This is your opportunity to demonstrate momentum.

Commercial traction is usually the strongest evidence of progress, including revenue, customers, repeat business or contracts. However, if you're pre-revenue, there are many other ways to demonstrate traction.

Examples include:

- Customer interviews
- Pilot projects
- Beta users
- Letters of Intent (LOIs)
- Pre-orders
- Strategic partnerships
- Product validation
- Grants
- Awards
- Accelerator programmes
- Patents
- Regulatory approvals

Wherever possible, quantify your achievements using numbers rather than general statements.

Investors want to see evidence that you've actively reduced risk and validated your business.

Is the company revenue generating?

Please answer Yes or No.

If you are not yet generating revenue, don't worry. Many successful early-stage businesses are pre-revenue. However, ensure other parts of your application demonstrate commercial validation through customer engagement, pilots or market demand.

If yes, what was the date of first trade and what is total revenue generated to date?

Provide the date of your first commercial sale together with total revenue generated to date.

Where appropriate, provide context around these figures, such as the number of customers, contracts or growth achieved since first trading.

How much investment is the company seeking in this round?

State the amount you are raising and explain what it will enable the business to achieve.

Avoid generic statements such as "to help us grow." Instead, explain how the funding will be allocated, the milestones it will deliver, the expected runway and why the amount is appropriate for your stage of development.

A clear use of proceeds demonstrates good planning and increases investor confidence.

[Whilst this event does not offer financial investment, it is important for our judges (and investors) to understand the financial requirements of your business at this stage and to fully understand the position of your business at the time of application. Due to the nature of this competition you can leave this blank, however we strongly suggest giving some insight into the financial requirements at this stage.]

Are there any existing soft or hard commitments to invest in this round? If yes, from whom?

If you already have investors interested in the round, please explain:

- Whether commitments are soft or legally committed.
- The value committed.

- The type of investor (angel, VC, family office, strategic investor etc.).

Existing commitments demonstrate third-party validation, create confidence for other investors and help indicate how much of the funding round remains available.

Has the company raised any investment before?

If yes, please provide details of previous investment rounds, including the amount raised, investor type and whether the investment qualified for SEIS or EIS.

Previous investment helps investors understand your funding journey, capital structure and business maturity.

Has the company received any grants, subsidies or funding?

Please provide details of any grants or public funding received, including the funding body, programme and amount awarded.

Competitive grant funding can demonstrate technical credibility and external validation. If relevant, briefly explain what milestones or outcomes the funding enabled.

Grants, subsidy or funding that might qualify as "de minimis state aid"

Please provide details where applicable. This information is required for compliance purposes and helps determine eligibility for certain investment tax relief schemes.

Please upload your company pitch deck.

Your pitch deck should reinforce the information provided throughout your

application. A strong investor deck typically explains:

- The problem
- Your solution
- Market opportunity
- Commercial traction
- Business model

- Competition
- Team
- Financial projections
- Funding ask
- Use of proceeds

Keep your presentation concise, visual and evidence-based, focus on demonstrating why this represents an attractive investment opportunity rather than simply describing your product.