



GREAT BEND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DRIVING PROGRESS, CREATING OPPORTUNITY



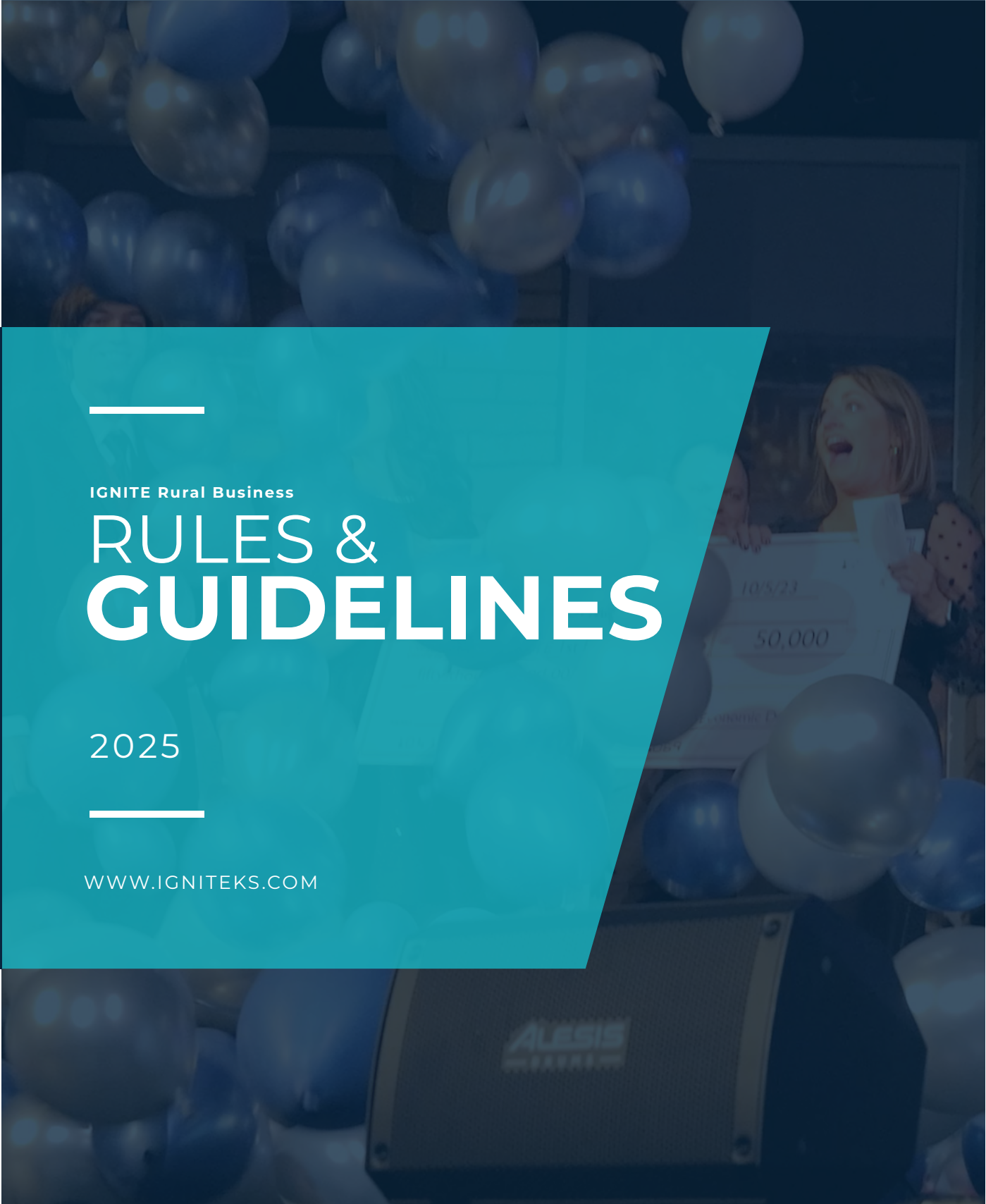
IGNITE Rural Business

RULES & GUIDELINES

2025



WWW.IGNITEKS.COM



IGNITE RURAL BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the IGNITE Rural Business contest rules (hereafter “the Contest rules”). It describes the terms and conditions related to the application and functioning of the IGNITE Rural Business contest (hereafter “the Contest”).

PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY

- a. Startups can enter the competition by applying online for free.
- b. Any startup throughout the US can apply and become an applicant (hereafter “the Applicant”).
- c. Applicant(s) must be legally documented citizens of the United States.
- d. The Startup (represented by the Applicant(s)) must be less than 5 years old (with 10 or less employees) at the date of the Grand Finale.
- e. The Applicant must be a minimum 18 years of age.
- f. If chosen as a contest winner, the Applicant agrees to locate their business within the Great Bend, Kansas area for a minimum of 5 years.
- g. Employees of the Organizer, its affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies, and suppliers, (collectively “the Employees”), and immediate family members and/or those living in the same household of the Employees are not eligible to participate in the Contest.
- h. By participating, the Applicant agrees to be fully and unconditionally bound by these rules, and represents and warrants that it meets the eligibility requirements. In addition, the Applicant agrees to accept the Organizer’s decisions relating to the Contest as final and binding.
- i. The Organizer has the right to verify the eligibility of each Applicant. Entries that are incomplete or do not adhere to the rules or specifications may be disqualified at the sole discretion of the Organizer.
- j. If the Applicant uses fraudulent methods or otherwise attempts to circumvent the rules, its submission may be removed from eligibility at the sole discretion of the Organizer.

APPLICATION PERIOD

- a. The application period deadline is July 1, 2025.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

- a. Applicants can register online for free by submitting the application components at www.igniteks.com
- b. The online application must include responses to all mandatory areas included in the application file, which also includes the acknowledgment of these Guidelines.

ORGANIZER

GREAT BEND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC., a private 501(c)6 non-profit organization, located at 3111 10th Street, Great Bend, KS 67530. Hereinafter referred to as “the Organizer”.

c. Applicants must complete the Application form in English; any part of the application that is not in English may not be taken into account.

PRE-SELECTION PROCESS

a. Up to 25 applicants will be selected to engage in a one-on-one meeting with a business planning professional.

**In this phase, the business planning professional will assist in strengthening the applicant's business plan. The business planning professional will then assess all of the businesses on innovation, creativity, and long-term business strategy and viability.*

b. The first round applicants will be responsible for covering their travel, food and accommodation costs should they incur them.

SEMI-FINALS & GRAND FINALE

a. Up to ten (10) applicants who are chosen after completing the pre-selection process will be deemed "Semi-Finalists" and will be paired with a business mentor and then asked to meet one-on-one with the IGNITE Rural Business Jury.

b. The Semi-finalists will be responsible for covering their travel, food and accommodation costs.

c. During the Semi-final interviews, the Semi-finalists will be provided ten (10) minutes to present their company and to convince the members of the jury of the merits of their business concept. Every pitch will be followed by up to ten (10) minutes of Q&A conducted by the jury.

d. Each Semi-final Winner (up to (5) hereafter "the Finalist(s)") will enter the Grand Finale (October 9, 2025). The Finalists will receive a formal invitation to pitch during the Grand Finale.

e. In the case of a winner of the Semi-final being disqualified for any reason, the next best Semi-finalist may be asked to enter the Grand Finale.

f. Potential Finalists must continue to comply with all the Guidelines of this Contest.

g. The Finalists will be responsible for covering their travel, food and accommodation costs.

h. During the Grand Finale, the Finalists will be provided ten (10) minutes to present their company and to convince the members of the Jury of the merits of their business concept. Every pitch will be followed by five (5) to eight (8) minutes of Q&A conducted by the Jury.

i. In case the winner of the Grand Finale (hereafter "the Winner") is disqualified for any reason, the Organizer may grant the Win of the Grand Finale to the next best Finalist. The Winner of the Grand Finale and this Contest needs to comply with any and all local laws and regulations.

COMPOSITION & MISSION OF THE JURY

a. There are separate juries for the different categories, the Semi-finals and the Grand Finale.

b. Every jury is composed of experts from the private and/or public sector with relevant business experience. The jury members will be selected amongst the companies and associations participating in the initiative.

c. The role of the category juries is:

- to evaluate and grade each Applicant's documentation
- to select Applicants for the Semi-finals.

“The IGNITE competition was exhilarating, scary, and so much fun all at the same time. We learned so much through the different phases of interviews, and the night of the finale was incredibly memorable for us.” Brittney Bailey, 10-39 Cafe

COMPOSITION & MISSION OF THE JURY CONT.

d. The role of the Semi-final juries is:

- to be present during the Semi-finalists' pitches and conduct the Q&A session following every pitch.
- to select the Semi-final Winners.

e. The role of the Grand Finale jury is:

- to be present during the Finalists' pitches and conduct the Q&A session following every pitch.
- to select the Winner of the Grand Finale.

f. The Grand Finale jury members will base their decisions on the following criteria:

- Innovation
- Creativity
- Long term business strategy and viability

PRIZES

a. The winners of the Semi-final round wins:

- one (1) place to pitch at the Grand Finale

b. The Winner(s) of the Grand Finale wins:

- \$50,000 – Grand Prize
- \$30,000 – Runner up
- \$10,000 – 3rd Place
- \$5,000 – People's Choice

PRIZES CONT.

c. In consideration of the payment of the Award, the Winner(s) shall:

- Provide the Organizer with quarterly financial updates regarding the key development of its business (the “Business Updates”) over a five-year period (hereafter “the Feedback period”);
- Meet with an agreed-upon business mentor semi-annually during the Feedback period;
- Provide the Organizer with the right to communicate positively through any communication means, internally and/or externally, concerning the Winner’s developments over the Feedback Period and/or to advocate positive impact of the Award in such respect. The Winner shall ensure its best efforts not to withhold unreasonably its consent to such public relationship communication(s) as long as not deemed contrary to the Winner’s business/prospects/interests;
- Inform the Organizer of any additional round of financing in the Winner and/or its parents as from the date hereof and during the whole duration of the Feedback Period.

d. More generally, the acceptance of the Award constitutes permission for the Organizer to use the Winner’s name, likeness, and entry for purposes of advertising and trade without further request.

PRIZES CONT.

e. The Winner is required to remain in continuous operation and based in the Great Bend area for a minimum of five (5) years following receipt of the prize monies. Should the Winner cease operations or relocate its primary place of business outside of the Great Bend area within this period, the Winner shall be required to repay the prize monies to the Organizer according to the following schedule:

- Less than two (2) years in operation – Full repayment (100%) of all prize monies to the Organizer.
- Two (2) years in operation – Seventy-five percent (75%) of all prize monies to the Organizer.
- Three (3) years in operation – Fifty percent (50%) of all prize monies to the Organizer.
- Four (4) years in operation – Fifty percent (50%) of all prize monies to the Organizer.
- Five (5) years or more in operation – No repayment required.

Failure to comply with these terms may result in legal action to recover the outstanding repayment amount. The Organizer reserves the right to enforce repayment in accordance with applicable laws.



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

a. The Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists understand and agree that the Organizer, anyone acting on behalf of the Organizer, and the Organizer's licensees, successors, and assigns, shall have the right, where permitted by law, to print, publish, broadcast, distribute, and use in any media now known or hereafter developed, in perpetuity and throughout the United States, without limitation, the Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists' entry, name, portrait, picture, voice, likeness, image, statements about the Contest, and biographical information for news, publicity, information, trade, advertising, public relations, and promotional purposes, without any further compensation, notice, review, or consent.

b. By submitting his/her application, any Applicant/Semi-finalist/Finalist represents and warrants that the content of the application is an original work of authorship, and does not violate any third party's proprietary or intellectual property rights. If an entry of any Applicant/Semi-finalist /Finalist infringes upon the intellectual property right of another, he/she will be disqualified at the sole discretion of the Organizer.

c. If the content of the entry is claimed to constitute infringement of any proprietary or intellectual proprietary rights of any third party, the Applicant/Semi-finalist /Finalist shall, at his/her sole expense, defend or settle against such claims. The Applicant/Semi-finalist /Finalist shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Organizer from and against any suit, proceeding, claims, liabilities, loss, damage, costs or expenses, which the Organizer may incur, suffer, or be required to pay arising out of such infringement or suspected infringement of any third party's right.

d. Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists are fully responsible at all times for the protection of their intellectual property within the framework within their participation in the Contest.

AMENDMENT

a. The Organizer reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the Contest should fraud, force majeure or other cause beyond the Organizer's control corrupt or affect the administration, security, fairness, or proper conduct of the Contest.

b. The Organizer reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any Applicant/Semi-finalist/Finalist who tampers or attempts to tamper with the entry process or the operation of the Contest or violates these Guidelines. The Organizer has the right, in its sole discretion, to maintain the integrity of the Contest. Any attempt by an Applicant/Semi-finalist/Finalist to deliberately damage or undermine the legitimate operation of the Contest may be a violation of criminal and civil laws. Should such attempt be made, the Organizer reserves the right to seek damages to the fullest extent permitted by law.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

By applying, the Applicant/Finalist agrees to release and hold harmless the Organizer and its subsidiaries, affiliates, advertising and promotion agencies, partners, representatives, agents, successors, assigns, employees, officers, and directors from any liability, illness, injury, death, loss, litigation, claim, or damage that may occur, directly or indirectly, whether caused by negligence or not, from: (i) the Applicant's/Semi-finalist's/Finalist's participation in the Contest and/or its acceptance, possession, use, or misuse of the Award or; (ii) technical failures of any kind, including but not limited to the malfunction of any computer, cable, network, hardware, or software, or other mechanical equipment; (iii) the unavailability or inaccessibility of any transmissions, telephone, or Internet service; (iv) unauthorized human intervention in any part of the entry process or the Promotion.

PERSONAL DATA

a. The Organizer does not collect personal data other than that which Applicants voluntarily provide on the website (hereafter "the Website") or in the Application (i.e. name, first name, contact details including email address, function and organization, texts, altogether the "Personal Data"), neither when they pre sign up for the Contest nor submit their application.

b. Personal Data collected on the Website or Application file will be processed by the Organizer for the following purposes:

- communicate with the Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists and provide them with the information requested;
- processing of access, rectification and opposition requests, and other rights with respect to Personal Data;
- claims and litigation management;
- contact the Applicants for marketing purposes to provide them with information about similar events organized by the Organizer or one of its partners.

c. The processing of the Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists' Personal Data is necessary for the Organizer to provide them with the services they requested, as well as to enable the Organizer to organize the Contest.

d. Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists' Personal Data will be processed internally by duly authorized persons, within the limits of their respective attributions.

e. Personal Data may also be communicated to the Organizer's data processors (including IT service providers) and external services providers such as web developers, marketing solutions providers, to the strictest extent necessary and subject to the existence of contractual guarantees to ensure the security and confidentiality of the data.

f. The Organizer undertakes to implement technical and organizational security measures to ensure the protection of Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists' Personal Data against the risks associated with the use of information systems.

g. The Organizer applies generally accepted security standards to help protect Applicants/Semi-finalists/Finalists' Personal Data. However, no method of transmission over the Internet, or of electronic storage, is 100% secure. Therefore, the Organizer cannot guarantee the absolute security of the Personal Data.

PERSONAL DATA CONT.

h. Personal Data is kept for a period of three (3) years from collection by the Organizer or the last contact from the Applicant or Participant.

i. The Applicant/Semi-finalist/Finalist (or, as the case may be, his beneficiaries) also has the right to rectify its personal data and a right to object to the collection and processing of such data, on the basis of compelling legitimate grounds.

m. The documents and information submitted with the application will only be submitted to the Juries solely in the context of the Contest and will be treated by them as confidential information.

COMMUNICATION

The official language of the Contest for the application, pitching, communication and reporting is English.

GUIDELINE UPDATES

The Organizer reserves the right to update the Guidelines at any time. All updates will be posted on the Organizer's website: www.igniteks.com

By signing below, the applicant acknowledges receipt of the terms of the contest and agrees to abide thereto.

SIGNATURES

Applicant(s):

Name (Printed):

Date:

Business Name:

Signature:



Thank You.

We look forward to being a part of your business journey.

ADDRESS

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E-MAIL

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www.igniteks.com