

Small Business Institute® Project of the Year GUIDELINES

Sponsor

The Small Business Institute® (SBI) is the premier professional association of small business/entrepreneurship educators and researchers involved in student analysis projects. Its mission is to strengthen the small business/entrepreneurship sector of the free enterprise system. SBI enhances and improves entrepreneurship education through an extensive network of Small Business Institutes® at colleges and universities throughout the United States and Internationally.

Student Projects

SBI encourages its members and other college and university faculty to involve students in practical consulting projects. Consulting projects serve clients who own or operate local small businesses. Supervised by faculty, these projects provide students opportunities to help make lasting improvements in their clients' business operations. As a result, students learn about business, gain a sense of achievement, and earn respect. Student consulting projects culminate in a final written case report which is delivered to the client. The purpose of the Project of the Year competition is to recognize outstanding student work in consulting.

Requirements to Compete

Any college or university conducting student consulting projects may enter their projects in this competition, subject to the following limitations: (1) The work of the students submitted must be their own work without assistance from anyone except the supervising professor; (2) The competition has three categories of competition with awards given at both the graduate and undergraduate levels in all three categories. Category 1 – **Comprehensive** - deals with comprehensive business consulting analyses that analyze 3 or more functional areas of the business. Category 2 – **Specialized** - deals with specialized consulting analyses focusing in-depth on 1 or 2 areas such as marketing or accounting. Category 3 – **Feasibility Study/Business Plan** is the business plan consulting methodology in which a business plan is prepared for the business client (third party) by the students. This category does not include business plans done for the students. Hybrid designs may be rejected by the VP of Research & Publications if not specifically consulting projects for business clients.

Competition Period

The competition period covers the period from July 1 through June 30 previous to the submission. Entrants must deliver the original copy of the students' project to the client during this period.

Entry Deadline

The entry deadline for the SBI Consulting Project Competition is the second Monday in September – Monday, September 14, 2009. To qualify, the entry must be **received** by the designated SBI official on or before this date. In fairness, no exceptions will be made. For 2009, SBI will allow submissions to be made electronically. Please see Electronic Entry Requirements section below. Please note that electronic submissions must be sent by 6:00 pm PDT on September 14, 2009.

SBI encourages electronic submission of POY entries if possible.

Entry Fee

There is no entry fee for current members of SBI. The entry fee for non-SBI members is \$100. This \$100 covers the entry fee for a maximum of two reports for the current year's competition. In addition, the entry fee includes membership in SBI for the balance of the current membership year.

Entry Specifications

A maximum of two entries can be submitted from each university or college. Entries must be in different categories.

A signed Client Release on the Project of the Year Competition Entry Form eliminates the need to disguise the case. If your institution prefers its case to be disguised, that is optional.

Entry by Mail Requirements

All mailed entries must include the following:

Entry Form A separate Project of the Year Competition Entry Form must be completed for each consulting report submitted for competition (subject to limitations specified above in Entry Specifications).

Three Bound Copies The three submitted copies will not be returned.

One Self-Addressed Envelope

Entry Payment If you are not a current SBI member, a check for the \$100 entry fee must accompany the entry. Make your check payable to "SBI."

Submit All Mail Entries To:

Small Business Institute Project Competition
134 Fairmont Street, Suite B
Clinton, MS 39056

Electronic Entry Requirements

All electronic entries must include the following:

Entry Form A separate Project of the Year Competition Entry Form must be completed for each consulting report submitted for competition (subject to restrictions specified above in Entry Specifications). Please note that the signature section may include a photo representation of the Entrant's signature and Client's signature or a typed name will be accepted as an electronic signature. Each entry form should be in PDF format and accompany the PDF file of the case submitted. Each entry form should be named under the following format – School Submitting_Entrant's Last Name_Category (Categories are: Comprehensive, Specialized or Business Plan)_Classification (Undergraduate or Graduate_Submission Form. Example: ABC Univeristy_Smith_Comprehensive_Undgraduate_Submission Form.

Submitted Project The submitted case and all appendices should be submitted electronically as one PDF file including the release signed by the client eliminates the need to disguise the case. If your institution prefers its case to be disguised, that is optional. Submissions should be sent as an email attachment to info@smallbusinessinstitute.biz and accompanied with a PDF Entry Form as specified above. In order to manage transfer of electronic attachments, the PDF file size should not exceed 10 mg. If PDFs exceed acceptable attachment size, files may be compressed, zipped or a third party transfer site (such as transferbigfiles.com or yousendit.com). Each submitted case should be named under the following format – School Submitting_Entrant's Last Name_Category (Categories are: Comprehensive, Specialized or Business Plan)_Classification (Undergraduate or Graduate_Project. Example: ABC_Univeristy_Smith_Comprehensive_Undgraduate_Submission Project.

Submission Confirmation Each electronic POY submission will receive a return email confirmation of receipt within 48 business hours. If acknowledgement of receipt is not received in that time frame, it is imperative that Entrant contact SBI at 601-924-3489 to assure proper receipt of Entrant’s submission.

Entry Payment If you are not a current SBI member, a \$100 entry fee must be paid. The fee can be paid online at www.smallbusinessinstitute.biz under Student Competition tab and select [Pay for POY](#) Entry or pay by check make your check payable to “SBI” and mail to: SBI, 134 Fairmont Street, Suite B, Clinton, MS 39056.

Submit All Electronic Entries To:

info@smallbusinessinstitute.biz

For questions regarding electronic submission, call 601-924-3489.

Competition Levels

Entries for competition must have the proper classification checked on the entry form to specify how the project is to be judged. Please see the “Submission Standards” on the Evaluation Procedure document to better understand classification. A failure to correctly classify the report may result in the submission being disqualified. SBI reserves the right to not make awards if the quality or quantity of entries is deemed insufficient.

Judging Procedure

Judges for the competition are SBI Directors or former SBI Directors. College and university faculty members who serve as judges must be SBI members. Each judge completes and signs a Volunteer Judge Agreement attesting to his or her independence (objectivity) and agreeing to maintain client confidentiality. The goal of the program is to have each consulting report in the competition be reviewed by a minimum of three judges. All decisions of judges are final once approved by the VP of Research & Publication.