

## Frequently Asked Questions

### When are applications due?

- Applications for the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge are due June 9, 2025 by 11:59 PM.
- You can start the application and finish it later; just make sure you click Save Draft before exiting.
- Once you click Submit on the application, no changes can be made.  
Apply here: [go.illinois.edu/25getscapply](https://go.illinois.edu/25getscapply)

### What's in the application?

- There are about 20 questions and team applicant is required to submit a video.
- Once you set up an account and start the application, you can save your work and return to it later.

### Do startups have to be student run?

- Startups must be student-driven, student-created and/or student-managed to compete at the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge.
- Requires a minimum of two students (founders or management team members), with at least one being a graduate student. These students can be either current or recently graduated. At least one of those students must be a current graduate degree-seeking student.
  - "Current" is defined as enrolled between August 16, 2024 to August 15, 2025.
  - "Recently graduated" is defined as graduated after August 16, 2024.
- If your startup is selected to compete at the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge, at least two of your team members (one of whom is a graduate student) must attend and complete.

### My startup is looking for capital or funding. Am I eligible to compete?

- Yes. All startups that compete in the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge will be judged based on their potential investability. To be eligible to compete, you should be seeking funding or capital (currently or in the next 12 months).

### Is the competition open to any student startup?

- If you meet the eligibility requirements, yes! The 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge is a global competition with startups competing from universities all over the world.

### Will the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge be held in-person?

- The 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge will take place at the [TechChicago Capital Summit](#), an event that is part of [TechChicago Week](#).
- The competition is in-person and, to compete and be eligible for prizes, you must attend in-person.

### How many startup team members participate in each round of the competition?

- The pitching and presenting startups that compete at the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup Challenge must contain at least two team members who will travel to Chicago to compete. Each startup can have up to four team members at the 2025 Grainger Engineering Tech Startup

# Tech Startup Challenge

Challenge, but all must be current students, and at least one must be a current graduate-level student.

- The startup may divide speaking time in their pitch presentations between at least two students and up to four students. If only two students pitch, the minimum time that one student can participate is 40%. This means at least two students on the team must share pitching and Q&A duties.

## **Are there limits on funding a startup receives before the competition?**

- Startups can't have raised more than \$250,000 in equity capital prior to December 31, 2024 (unless the equity funding was awarded as part of an accelerator/incubator program)
- Startups can't have generated revenue of more than \$100,000 in any 12-month period prior to December 31, 2024
- But startups may have raised ANY level of equity funding AFTER December 31, 2024 or generated at any level of revenue AFTER December 31, 2024 (i.e. within the current academic year).
- Startups CAN have raised an unlimited amount of non-equity funding (research and other grants; competition winnings; traditional loans; friends & family funding)