



WOMEN  
FOUNDERS  
NETWORK

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## FAST PITCH APPLICATION GUIDELINES

**Application Deadline: June 1, 2022**

Women Founders Network (WFN) hosts an annual Fast Pitch Competition exclusively for women entrepreneurs. We invite all qualified applicants to participate by completing the online application with the requested supporting documentation. This guide provides an overview of the application requirements, process, tips and judging criteria.

There are two tracks this year with separate applications – you may only apply for one track:

**1**

### Tech/Tech-enabled

This category is for a B2B or B2C company that relies on significant development of technology to deliver the product or service.

**-OR-**

**2**

### Consumer/CPG/Other Non-Tech

Includes any products that are sold to consumers as physical units (e.g., food and beverage, apparel) as well as consumer focused media/content, e-commerce sites, or services provided to consumers.\*

\*Consumer products or services that rely heavily on technology (such as Nest or Oura Ring) should apply in the Tech category. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [info@womenfoundersnetwork.org](mailto:info@womenfoundersnetwork.org).

## CRITERIA FOR APPLYING

Founder/Co-Founder/  
CEO must be a woman or  
business must be  
majority-owned  
by a woman

Business must  
be based in  
the United States

Must participate in the  
annual Fast Pitch Event  
on October 25th\*

Must have raised no more  
than \$750K in outside  
funding, including  
personal cash funds\*\*

Pre -revenue plans  
welcome (*but need to  
show some proof of  
concept, such as customer  
sign-ups, surveys, LOI's,  
etc.*)

We cannot accept  
applications from Life  
Sciences, nonprofit, or  
cannabis/CBD companies

\*Exact format will be determined by health and safety standards. Live event takes place in Los Angeles, CA and travel expenses are the responsibility of the founder.

\*\*Research grants or other non-recourse, non-dilutive grants, and PPP loans do not count towards the \$750K maximum.

## APPLICATION

You will be able to edit/update your application through the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. **IMPORTANT:** See submission form instructions and questions on page 4 of this guide.

There is no fee to apply.

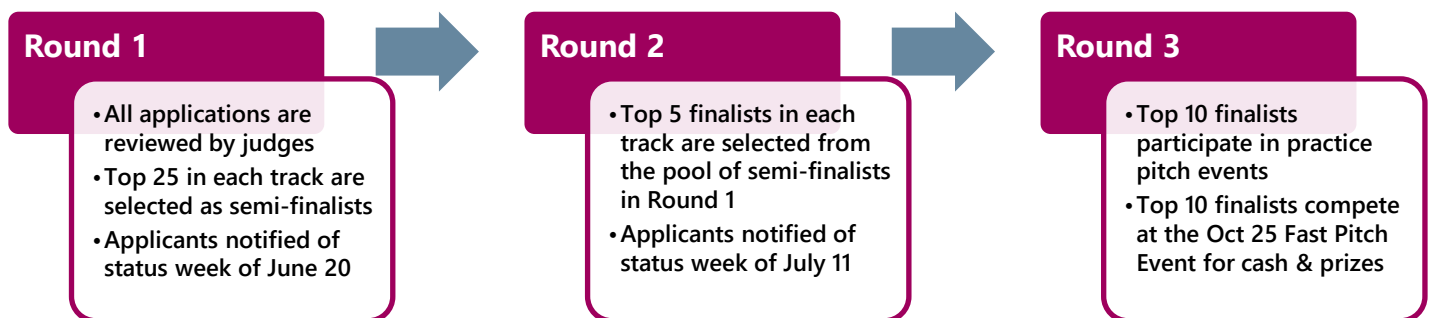
## FAST PITCH CASH PRIZES

\$55,000 in cash grants: \$25k to the first-place winner in each track + \$5K to one Junior Judge winner

## TOP 10 FINALIST BENEFITS

- Receive one-on-one pitch coaching to prepare for the Fast Pitch Event
- Matched with a Financial Mentor to get your financials in order
- Get friendly feedback on your pitch by participating in the Dolphin Tank<sup>®</sup> with our partner, Springboard Enterprises, and WFN
- Participate in VIP Private Pitch Event to get even more great feedback and opportunities to connect with high-value contacts
- Free professional services based on your needs (such as legal, marketing, etc.), worth thousands of dollars
- Discounted services through the Spark Collective Perks program, including: Airtable, Amazon Web Services (AWS), Carta, DataDog, DocSend, DocuSign, Expensify, Klaviyo, Stripe, Twilio, ZenDesk, and Zoom and many others.
- Become part of our Fast Pitch Alumni Network online community

## VOTING ROUNDS



Judges include the WFN Board Directors, Angel investors/VCs, and qualified professionals by invitation.

Our Junior Judges program for young women in grades 9-12 includes education on entrepreneurship and investing over the summer and a pre-pitch workshop in September to review and discuss the Top 10 companies with program facilitators. The girls participate in the Fast Pitch event as “venture capitalists for a day” and select their winning company, which they present with a \$5,000 sponsored cash award.

WFN also runs a Fellows program for college and university women, providing real-world experience in performing due diligence on startups. The Fellows will meet with the finalists after the Dolphin Tank event for Q&A and will present their final reports in October to the Fast Pitch judges and Junior Judges.



## IMPORTANT DATES

- **June 1** – Application deadline date (midnight Pacific Time)
- **Week of June 20** – Applicants notified of status from Round 1 Judging. Semi-finalists in each track advance to Round 2 and answer follow-up questions from judges.
- **Week of July 11** – Semi-finalists notified of status from Round 2 Judging. Top 10 companies (5 in each track) are our Fast Pitch finalists.
- **July TBD** – Finalists will attend virtual onboarding meeting
- **August 10** – Finalists participate in Springboard Enterprises Dolphin Tank® with WFN for friendly feedback
- **August** – Finalists are matched with pitch coaches and financial mentors
- **September 20** – VIP Private Pitch Event with WFN judges, board members, sponsors, and investors
- **October 25** – WFN 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Fast Pitch Event at UCLA, Los Angeles



## MUST-HAVE CRITERIA

The criteria below are must-haves. If you cannot answer 'yes' to all of these, it will be difficult to succeed.

- Addresses a **sizeable market opportunity**. Of course, sizeable is relative, but generally hundreds of millions or billions of dollars. Could address a smaller niche if the capital required is very limited.
- Solving a **real market need** – there is a problem that customers will pay to have solved. It is a must-have, not just a nice-to-have.
- Business has a potential **sustainable source of differentiation** – cannot be easily copied either because of patents or some other unique quality.
- Business has a clear path to making money (**business model**).



## HIGH-LEVEL JUDGING GUIDELINES

1. Concept & Revenue - Business concept and revenue model are clearly articulated and meet customers' needs
2. Competitive Advantage - Company's solution is better than anything offered by competitors and is defensible
3. Team Members - Existing or planned team can credibly implement the business plan
4. Marketing & Sales - Marketing and sales approaches are appropriate for acquiring customers
5. Financial Plan - Reasonable financial plan with supporting documents

## CONFIDENTIALITY

WFN is committed to keeping all application data strictly confidential. Only our internal staff and Fast Pitch judges will have access to your data in our application form. Your application data will not be shared by WFN outside this group without your permission.

We are hosting our application on the Spark xyz platform this year. You will have the option of making your Venture Profile **PUBLIC OR PRIVATE**. If you choose **PUBLIC**, the profile will be visible to other programs that you choose to apply to within the Spark platform. You can also provide the link to others who are outside the platform (such as potential investors). Alternatively, you can opt to keep your profile **PRIVATE** —but you **must select that option**. Note that some items within your profile can be made **PRIVATE**, even if you choose to make the profile **PUBLIC**.

Questions? Please contact [kim@womenfoundersnetwork.org](mailto:kim@womenfoundersnetwork.org) for assistance.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

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Please note:

- Required questions in the Venture Profile appear in red text - you may skip or select NA for the others.
- After you complete the profile questions, you will be asked to complete a few additional questions from WFN.
- You may save and edit/complete your application through the June 1st deadline.

### **Venture Profile Questions:**

1. Categories: Define your venture category!
2. What is your elevator pitch?
3. Team: Who else is on your team? Add them here
4. Stage: Where are you currently?
5. Raising: How much have you raised or are you raising?
6. Problem: What need is your venture solving? What pain is your customer feeling? Define it now
7. About Us: How are you solving that problem? Tell us a bit more about your solution here
8. TAM SAM SOM: How big is your market? Let us know!
9. Competitive Advantage: What makes you special? Why would someone want to invest or work for you? Tell us!
10. Competitive Analysis: Who are your biggest competitors? Not someone like FB or Amazon
11. Business Model: Walk the audience through how you make money
12. Go to Market: How are you getting your product to market? What have you seen to be successful? Add it here
13. Users: Tell us about your user base!
14. Revenue: The most important piece! Add your numbers here
15. Metrics: Time for the numbers! What is your Customer Acquisition Cost, Lifetime value of that customer, and how long are they staying with you?
16. Upload your pitch deck [FILE UPLOAD]

### **WFN Additional Questions (will NOT be part of your stored profile):**

17. How did you hear about the WFN Fast Pitch?
18. In what year was your company founded?
19. What percentage of your company do you own personally and what percentage is women-owned (including you)?
20. Why are you applying to WFN? If you win, what do you hope to get from participating and what will you do with the money?
21. Upload your financial model. It should include Historic and Projected numbers (5 years), including Revenue, COGS, major expense categories, staffing, and key metrics. [FILE UPLOAD]
22. Upload anything else that you think is important to understanding your product or service (i.e., video, diagrams, images, etc.)
23. Please specify your ethnicity [optional]