



The Cube – Business Creation & Growth Service is excited to offer this competition.

Entrepreneurs have the opportunity to pitch their business ventures (includes freelance) to a panel of experts competing to win a share of **£10,000!**

This competition offers you an opportunity as students or graduates of the University of Plymouth, individually or working as a team, to grow an enterprise and to have the experience of 'pitching' your business. It is also a route through which trading businesses looking to scale up, can obtain funding to support their growth.

It is an excellent learning experience and also a bit of fun.

**based on 'Dragons' Den' on TV ('Shark Tank' in the USA), just go to YouTube*

The competition is open to undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD students as well as graduates.

Sponsorship for this competition comes from [Santander Universities](#).

Either individually, or as a team, you are invited to develop and present a business in one of the two categories:

1) a commercial/business

2) a social enterprise

Proposals that specifically seek to address an aspect of the environmental crisis are especially welcomed. All proposals must be shown to operate in a way that is fully consistent with environmental sustainability

The final competition involves making 10-minute oral 'pitches', with Q&A's from the panel and does not require you to submit a detailed written business plan. However, to support your business case you will obviously need to have investigated key aspects of your proposed business - e.g. The product or service, likely size of market, the competition, cost and financial projections, environmental sustainability, and your 'business model' – which are normally elements of any business plan.

The competition process

1. An independent Panel will consider outlines of the business submitted as **Expressions of Interest by Friday 5th February 2021**
2. A list of ten businesses to be invited to work up their business plans or model and present these to a small panel of entrepreneurs and business professionals – The 'Dragons', at the **Dragons' Den Semi-Finals** held on **4th March 2021**

3. **The finalists** will be chosen to go forward to the **Dragons' Den Final** held on **24th March 2021**

4. At the Final, each business will present a **6-minute pitch**, followed by questions from the **Dragons**, who will determine the winners and prize money winners, which can be drawn down to help develop the business or the skills of individual / team members.

*Please note that the '**Dragons**' are people with practical entrepreneurship experience. Unlike the famous TV Dragons, they provide constructive feedback, not insults!

The process

- Complete an **Expression of Interest form** and send this to the Competition Coordinators at thecube@plymouth.ac.uk by **6.00 pm, Friday 5th February 2021**
- Businesses can consist of 1-5 students or graduates of the University. The competition is open to undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD students as well as graduates.
- Each business going forward will be assigned a **business mentor**, to advise and support them through the process.
- Business proposals selected for the semi-final stage can also meet to work on their business pitch through **support** provided by The Cube via sessions between **2.00-4.00pm on 10th March, 17th March and 23th March 2021**.
- These sessions will also be supported with Dragons' Den general guidance and advice.
- All are welcome to the session on **dates TBC**. To make a **support appointment on any other dates**, contact thecube@plymouth.ac.uk
- A Dragons' Den Judging Committee will assess entries and select a long-list of **ten** businesses to be invited to work up their proposals and present these to a small panel of entrepreneurs and business professionals – The 'Dragons' - at the Semi-Finals
- At the **Dragons' Den Semi-Finals (4th March 2021)**, from 10 semi-finalists, **4-5** businesses will be selected to go forward to the Final.
- The **Dragons' Den Final** will be held in **venue TBC** on **24th March 2021**. Each business will give a 6-minute pitch, followed by questions from the Dragons.
- The best business(s) at the Final, judged by the Dragons' Panel, will be presented with **prizes (money and in-kind business support)**
- **Certificates** will be presented for participation in the Semi-final and Final, duly recognising performance ('semi-finalist', 'finalist', 'winner', 'runner-up')

What next?

- Businesses should submit their downloaded [Expression of Interest form](#) by **6.00 pm on Friday 5th February 2021**, providing the following information:
- Names and degree programme/department of each member
- Email address of each member
- The main point of contact
- Venture title
- Venture type (i.e. business enterprise or social enterprise)
- Short description of business (250-400 words) **Important:** You need to state clearly what the business is, why is it important (i.e. any social benefits), any strengths you feel you have in terms of growing the business / market/taking it forward, etc.).
- Submissions will be assessed on the strength of: (1) creativity, (2) preparation/research, (3) business viability, and (4) overall appeal of the product or service
- Confirmation is needed that you are available for the Dragons' Den Semi-final **on 4th march 2021** and the Final on **24th March 2021**.

Dates for the diary

- **5th February 2021 - Deadline for Expressions of Interest**
- **4th March 2021 - Semi-Finals Competition**
- **24th March 2021 - Finals**