

Start-up Report Scoring Guidelines

Scoring

Assign score in the range 1-5 where 1 is a minimum (poor) and 5 is a maximum (excellent) score. If you are not comfortable with only 5 options, feel free to use decimals (e.g. 3.5).

Executive Summary

To score maximum, it must be Clear, Exciting and Effective as a stand-alone overview of the proposal, and meet the (sub) criteria below.

- Help the **potential investor** know all important information in the investment proposal without reading the whole document.
- Explain what the purpose of the business idea is, offer a value proposition, present benefits (instead of features), and tries to sell the solution.
- Explain what the investment proposal's main topic, theme, or idea is (or explain what this investment proposal is about).
- Recommend which sections or appendices/supporting materials are the most important, or most crucial, to an understanding of the document.
- Recommend a course of action and explain the benefits and consequences of that course of action.

Company report showing understanding of:

- Company structure & strengths
- Strategy & Business Model
- Options appraisal
- Marketing and sales
- Affordability & Financial forecasts
- Achievability

To score maximum, this section should provide details and evidence that help the judges understand the value proposition of the company.

Formal questions for each point:

Company structure & strengths

Does the report contains a well presented organisational overview (People & roles)? Is the team balanced and have domain expertise they need?

Strategy & Business Model

To which degree is the team in their report able to relate to the essential elements of a successful business? (such as Innovation, Marketing, Sale, Customers, Product/Service, Economy and financing, Teamwork, Communication, Administration, Strategy etc.) . Is the Value Proposition of the business clearly explained? Does the business model tell complete story how the company will be successful and shows go to market strategy?

Options Appraisal

Have a wide range of options been explored? Have innovative approaches been considered and/or collaboration with others? Has the optimum balance of cost, benefit and risk been identified? If not,

what trade-offs need to be made e.g. foregoing some of the benefits in order to keep costs within budget; taking carefully considered risks to achieve more substantial benefits?

Market Analysis and Commercial Aspects

Have the students identified a target market and clearly addressed it in the proposal? Does product/service target a market with growth potential? To which degree have the students analysed budgets and booked costs for complex activities and made efficient choices on the basis of price calculations? How realistic is this, and have the students made decisions about sales on the basis of the price calculation?

Affordability & Financial forecast

Has the company defined financial/performance indicators? (financial or behavioural). Has the company created budget/financial forecast? Are the assumptions behind the forecast clearly explained, realistic and well documented? Does the company have basic accounting documents such as bookkeeping records, profit+loss statement and balance sheet) (in case company has turnover).

Achievability

To which degree have the students, on the basis of budget analysis and accounts, operationalised concrete actions in relation to sales? Presented a high-level plan for achieving the desired outcome, with key milestones and major dependencies?

To which degree have the students analysed, evaluated and acted on IPR opportunities for the idea?

Formal Criteria

Judges are requested to assign score in the range 1-5 where 1 is a minimum score (meeting no or only few formal criteria, which makes it difficult to read and understand the investment proposal) and 5 is a maximum score (meeting all criteria, the proposal is easy to understand). If you are not comfortable with only 5 options, feel free to use decimals (e.g. 3.5).

Content of the Investment Proposal (mandatory!):

- The **Coversheet** filled in in all sections with the information about the company and the investment venture. The Coversheet blank form is included in the Investment Proposal Judging Criteria as Appendix A.
- The executive summary may not exceed one page and should provide the essential information related to the five key aspects that are expected to be addressed in the investment proposal. The executive summary is the most important part of a business document. It is the first (and sometimes the only) thing others will read and the last thing you should write. It is simply a brief summary of the document(s), given so that the busy people who will read your document(s) know at a glance how much to read and what actions will probably be needed. It should tell the reader why your business is special. There are many online resources about how to write an effective executive summary – search/find/use them.
- The financial forecast (profit and loss forecast; cash flow forecast; and comments) may not exceed one page and should provide sufficient information about investment potential as well as reflect the five key aspects.
- The remaining pages of the investment proposal provide supporting information to the executive summary and financial forecast.

Additional Formal Criteria

- Language – English

- Maximum 15 pages of A4 (or less - not more). Any appendices must be included within the 15 pages. The 15 pages exclude the Front and Back cover; and the Coversheet. Minimum font size to be used is 12.
- The Front Cover should include:
 - Company Name
 - Year of Operation
 - Name of Adviser(s)
 - Country the Company Represents
- Coversheet to be filled in in all sections
- Disclaimers (if appropriate)
- Presence of a strong executive summary
- Presence of a strong financial forecast (profit and loss forecast; cash flow forecast; and comments)
- Quality of supporting information in the text and attachments

Investment Consideration

Judges are requested to answer **Yes** or **No** to the question: “Would you consider making an investment in this company? Or co-owning the company?”