

AFI Global Idea Challenge 2025: Official Rules



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NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED OR RESTRICTED.

The **AFI Global Idea Challenge** (the "Competition") begins on **March 11, 2025** at 12:00 AM Korea Standard Time ("KST") and ends at the conclusion of the Final Live Pitch Event, currently scheduled to take place on **June 13 - 14, 2025** in **Seoul, South Korea** (the "Competition Period"). Submission of an entry into this Competition constitutes acceptance of these Official Rules and the decisions of the Sponsor, which shall be final and binding in all respects.

This Competition is sponsored by **Animal Free Initiative (AFI)** (the "Sponsor").

1. COMPETITION OBJECTIVE

The **AFI Global Idea Challenge** seeks groundbreaking ideas that significantly reduce or replace animal testing in scientific research and product development. This competition is open to early-stage innovators and thinkers who aim to push the boundaries of ethical and technological advancements in biosciences, pharmaceuticals, and consumer safety testing.

2. ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligibility Criteria

The Competition is open to individuals and teams from any country worldwide, provided they meet the following conditions:

1. **Idea-Stage Innovation Only:** The submitted idea should not have real-world applications yet. Only conceptual-stage ideas are eligible.
2. **Startup Age Limit:** If submitting as a company, the company must be **less than three (3) years old** as of March 2025.
3. **No Team Size Restrictions:** Individuals or teams of any size may apply.
4. **No Past Funding Limitations:** There are no restrictions based on prior funding received.
5. **No Location Restrictions:** This is a global competition; participants can apply from anywhere.

B. Ineligibility

The following individuals and entities are **not eligible** to participate:

- Startups that have been in operation for more than **three (3) years**
- Any idea that already has **real-world applications or commercial deployments**
- Employees or vendors affiliated with **AFI or competition sponsors**
- AI-generated submissions (AI-assisted ideas are **acceptable**, but AI-generated submissions will be **disqualified**)

3. HOW TO ENTER/PARTICIPATE

The Contest registration page and additional rules and instructions will be available through the official competition website (<https://afinitiative.org/challenge>).

A. Round 1: Online Submission

Participants must complete the following steps:

1. **Step One – Registration:**

- Complete the registration form, which requires demographic and basic applicant information (e.g., organization name, contact name, address).
- Accept these Official Rules, including the website's Terms & Conditions.

2. **Step Two – Online Entry Submission (March 11 - April 30, 2025):**

- Complete and submit the official **Application Form** on the competition website.
- Submit a **Pitch Deck (Maximum 5 Slides)**:

1. **Slide 1: The Big Idea & Problem**

- Introduce the core idea in a simple, engaging way.
- Define the problem this idea addresses, why it's important, and how it could reshape the current understanding or approach to that problem.

2. **Slide 2: Vision for Impact**

- Explain the transformative impact this idea could have, not just in terms of solving the problem but how it could change the status quo or benefit larger systems.
- Focus on how this idea could scale, not just in terms of users or revenue, but in terms of its broader societal, technological, or environmental influence.

3. **Slide 3: The Originality & Uniqueness**

- Dive deeper into why this idea is different, emphasizing its novelty and why it's not a "me-too" solution.
- Explain how the idea goes beyond the obvious, and why it hasn't been explored (or hasn't succeeded) in the past.

4. **Slide 4: Feasibility & Roadmap**

- Illustrate how the idea can actually be turned into something practical, even if it's just a concept at this stage. Provide a high-level roadmap of how it could come to life.
- Investors or collaborators want to know that the idea could be realized, so show them that you've thought through the practical steps, even if they are high-level.

5. **Slide 5: Long-Term Vision & Scalability**

- End with a vision of what the idea could become in the long run. Demonstrate that the idea has potential for scaling beyond its initial concept.
- Outline how this idea could evolve or expand over time, with the potential to grow in multiple dimensions (users, industries, geographies, etc.).

3. **Step Three – Review & Online Screening (May 1, 2025):**

- Once an entry is received, it will be reviewed for compliance with these Official Rules.
- Submissions that do not meet the eligibility criteria or formatting requirements may be disqualified.
- Judges will score all eligible submissions (see **Judging Criteria** below).
- **Top 5 Finalists** will be announced on **May 1, 2025**.

B. Round 2: Final Pitch Event (Offline)

1. **Step Four – Final Pitch Preparation (May 1 - June 13, 2025):**

- The 5 finalists will be required to refine their presentations and submit their final pitch materials to AFI by **June 10, 2025**.
- Additional mentorship and coaching may be provided to finalists.

2. **Step Five – Final Live Pitch Event (June 14, 2025):**

- Finalists will pitch their ideas at the **AFI Global Idea Challenge Finals** in **Seoul, South Korea**.
- Each finalist will have **8-10 minutes** to present their idea, followed by a **3-minute Q&A** with the judges.
- Winners will be selected based on **Judging Criteria** and **Public Voting** during the event.

4. JUDGING CRITERIA

A. Round 1: Online Submission

Each Round 1 Submission will be reviewed by **Online Judges** selected by the Sponsor. Judges may include **corporate leaders, industry experts, ethical research advocates, entrepreneurs, and investors** with expertise in biosciences, technology, and sustainability. Judging will take place through the Contest Site using the evaluation criteria listed in the table below.

Judging will occur on **May 1, 2025**. In the case of a **tie**, the Participant among tied Participants whose Submission received the highest score in the **Impact Potential** category from the Online Judges will be deemed the winner.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Official Rules, **the Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to advance a different number of Participants (i.e., either more or fewer than five) to Round 2 of the Contest.**

| Category | Evaluation Criteria | Weight (%) |
|--|---|------------|
| Impact Potential | Does the idea address a major challenge in animal testing? Can it significantly reduce or replace animal use? | 50% |
| Innovation & Originality | Is the idea unique and different from existing solutions? Does it leverage emerging trends in science and technology? | 30% |
| Practical Feasibility & Scalability | Can this idea be practically implemented with current resources? Does it have potential for widespread adoption? | 20% |

There will be a total of **five finalists (5)**, who will be invited to participate in the **Final Pitch Event (Offline)**.

B. Round 2: Final Pitch Event (Offline)

Each **Round 2 Final Live Pitch** from a **Round 2 Finalist** will be judged by a **panel of judges**. Live Pitch Judges may include corporate leaders, biotechnology experts, sustainability advocates, and ethical research pioneers.

Judging and scoring will take place on or about **June 13, 2025**, during the **Final Live Pitch Event in Seoul, Korea**.

- Up to **five (5) potential Prize Winners** will be announced live at the **Final Live Pitch Event** from among the Round 2 Finalists.
- Award of the prize to a **potential Prize Winner** is subject to verification of eligibility and compliance with these Official Rules.
- In the case of a **tie**, the Participant among tied Participants whose Submission received the highest score in the **Impact Potential** category from the Live Pitch Judges will be deemed the winner.

| Category | Evaluation Criteria | Weight (%) |
|--|---|-------------------|
| Impact Potential | Does the idea address a major challenge in animal testing? Can it significantly reduce or replace animal use? | 40% |
| Innovation & Originality | Is the idea unique and different from existing solutions? Does it leverage emerging trends in science and technology? | 20% |
| Practical Feasibility & Scalability | Can this idea be practically implemented with current resources? Does it have potential for widespread adoption? | 20% |

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| Presentation Delivery | How effectively does the presenter communicate the idea? | 20% |
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5. PRIZES

Subject to the terms of these Official Rules, and once eligibility and compliance with these Official Rules have been confirmed by the Sponsor, the following prizes will be awarded:

A. Finalist Prizes

Sponsor will award the following to the **five (5) Round 2 Finalists**:

- **Introductions to executives** at corporate partners and biotech industry leaders
- **Exclusive social media and press features** through Sponsor's official channels
- **Networking and business development support** before and after the Final Live Pitch Event
- **Opportunity to pitch at Asia's Largest Biotech Forum**

The Sponsor will endeavor to coordinate these introductions and promotional efforts with each **Round 2 Finalist** during and after the Final Live Pitch Event.

B. AFI Global Idea Challenge Prizes

Up to **three (3) top prizes** will be awarded to **Round 2 Finalists** as follows (subject to verification of eligibility and compliance with these Official Rules):

1. Cash Prizes:

- **First Place Prize: \$7,000 USD**
- **Second Place Prize: \$5,000 USD**
- **Third Place Prize: \$3,000 USD**
- **MVP Award (Public Voting Winner): \$1,000 USD**
- **AFI Special Award (Best Ethical Innovation): \$1,000 USD**

2. Additional Benefits for All Finalists:

- **Personalized mentorship sessions** with industry experts in biotech and ethical research
- **Business development and funding opportunities** through AFI and affiliated partners
- **Dedicated blog feature and media spotlight** on the AFI platform

The **MVP Award** will be determined by **public voting** at the Final Live Pitch Event.

C. Prize Conditions

- **Limit one (1) cash prize per Participant.**
- Prize will be awarded **in the name of the Participant (individual or Eligible Entity)** as recorded in Sponsor's records.
- **No substitutions, transfers, or cash redemption** of any prize is allowed by winners.
- **Sponsor reserves the right to substitute a prize** of equal or greater value if the advertised prize is unavailable.
- **Winners must complete and submit any required documentation (including a W9 or equivalent forms) to receive their prize.**
- If a **winner cannot participate or accept the prize**, the **Sponsor has no further obligation to award the prize** to that individual or entity.

Neither the **Sponsor nor any of its prize suppliers** will replace **lost or stolen prizes** once awarded.

D. Finalist Travel Reimbursement & Conditions

If a **confirmed and verified Finalist** resides **more than 250 miles** from **Seoul, South Korea** (and this distance is verified by the Sponsor in its sole discretion), then:

- **Sponsor will reimburse up to \$1,500 USD** in documented transportation (economy airfare, train tickets, or bus fare) and lodging expenses.
- **Expense reimbursement requests must be fully documented** with original receipts and submitted for approval.
- Finalists are responsible for **all other costs and expenses** not explicitly covered, including but not limited to:
 - Additional **team members' travel and accommodations**
 - Any **wireless service, food, or incidentals**

6. NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS

Sponsor will endeavor **in good faith** to notify potential **Prize winners in person** at the **Final Live Pitch Event**.

- The decisions of **Sponsor and Judges are final and binding** in all matters.
- Sponsor may also send potential winners a **declaration of eligibility / liability / publicity release** (“Release”).
- **Unless restricted by law**, potential winners receiving such a Release **must complete and return it** within the specified time period.

If a potential winner:

1. **Cannot be reached**
2. **Fails to obtain all required signatures on the Release**
3. **Fails to return the required documents on time**
4. **Cannot accept or receive the prize for any reason**

Then, at the **Sponsor’s discretion**, an **alternate winner may be selected** from the remaining Finalists **using the same judging criteria**.

Prizes will be sent to winners as quickly as practicable following notification and receipt of any necessary documentation.

7. CONTENT AND LICENSE TERMS

A. Originality

By participating in this Contest, each Participant warrants and represents that all of the content submitted by Participant to the Contest (including, without limitation, all Round 1 content and Round 2 Pitch Material content):

1. **Is original** and has been legally created, and that Participant **owns or has properly licensed all rights** to the content therein, including, without limitation, relevant copyrights.
2. **Does not infringe** the intellectual property, privacy, or publicity rights, or any other legal or moral rights of any third party.
3. **Complies** in all respects with the requirements set out in these Official Rules.

B. Third-Party Rights

All content submitted by Participants into any round or phase of the Contest **must not** depict recognizable third-party trademarks, copyrights, brands, or other property unless the Participant has **obtained all proper licenses and/or releases**. Any video content submitted **must not infringe on third-party rights** and **must not include** commercial content that disparages Sponsor, its affiliates, partners, customers, competitors, or any third party. Sponsor's determination as to whether any content **violates third-party rights** is final.

C. Permissions and Releases

Each Participant acknowledges that they are responsible for obtaining **all necessary permissions, authorizations, and releases** for any content submitted to the Contest. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Publicity releases**
- **Venue permissions**
- **Talent releases** for individuals appearing in any video submission
- **Parental/guardian consent** for any minors included in submitted content

Each Participant **must provide copies of these permissions upon request**.

D. Additional Content Limitations

Content submitted to the Contest **may not contain**:

1. **Nudity, lewd, or vulgar behavior**
2. **Hate speech, defamatory, slanderous, or libelous content**
3. **Material that promotes bigotry, racism, hatred, or discrimination**
4. **Malware, spyware, or any other harmful code**
5. **Material that disparages Sponsor or any other entity related to the Contest**

Failure to comply **will result in immediate disqualification**.

E. Grant of License

By submitting content to the Contest, Participants **retain full ownership** of their intellectual property **but grant the Sponsor a worldwide, royalty-free, irrevocable, and sublicensable license** to:

- **Use, copy, modify, distribute, and publicly display** Participant Content
- **Create derivative works** based on Participant Content
- **Feature Participant Content** in promotional materials, advertisements, and future events

This **license does not require additional compensation** and is intended **only for contest-related use**.

F. Failure to Comply

If a Participant **fails to comply** with the above rules, they will be **disqualified** from the Contest. Sponsor is **not responsible for lost, delayed, damaged, or mislaid entries** due to circumstances beyond its control.

Once a Contest Submission is submitted, **Participants cannot make alterations**.

8. MARKETING CONSENT

By entering the AFI Global Idea Challenge (the “Challenge”), participants agree that Animal Free Initiative (“AFI”) and the Organizing Committee of ODC (the “Final Live Pitch Event”) may use their submitted materials—including but not limited to written proposals, pitch decks, videos, and any other content provided during the competition—for marketing, promotional, and educational purposes.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Featuring participant content on AFI and ODC websites, social media, and newsletters.

- Showcasing selected ideas in press releases, industry reports, and promotional campaigns.
- Utilizing participant photos, videos, and testimonials for event-related marketing materials.

Participants acknowledge that their submission does not guarantee publication or promotion and that AFI and ODC reserve the right to edit or adapt materials for clarity and impact.

If a participant wishes to **opt out** of specific uses of their content, they must notify AFI in writing at **raccoon@afinitiative.org** before the submission deadline.

By submitting an entry, participants confirm that they have the right to grant this consent and that their content does not infringe on any third-party rights.