

Randolph County United

Open for Business Pitch Competition

Randolph County United is proud to launch the 'Open for Business Pitch Competition' to support and celebrate entrepreneurs, small businesses, and nonprofits in our community. This initiative is designed to foster business growth and innovation by offering guidance, exposure, and the opportunity to earn funding to help carry out business goals. In partnership with the Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC), this program includes workshops, coaching, and a live pitch event styled after 'Shark Tank.'

Eligibility

- Individuals or groups interested in starting a new business
- Existing businesses seeking to expand
- Nonprofits planning expansion or launching a new project (minimum of 3 nonprofit applicants required for award eligibility)
- Applicants must reside in Randolph County OR have a business physically based in Randolph County

What Can Be Funded

Eligible uses of funds include, but are not limited to:

- Business start-up expenses
- Permits
- Supplies, materials, and equipment
- Rent or mortgage down payment for a business location
- Marketing and advertising
- Professional services (e.g., legal, accounting)
- Renovations or infrastructure improvements
- Other Operational Expenses

Application Process

Applicants will:

1. Submit business information, including a business plan, financial projections, and other materials for review.
2. Attend a minimum of four out of five workshops led by ISBDC (Zoom available).
3. Meet with an ISBDC advisor at least twice during the competition timeline (once before the 19th of August, and once after the 26th of August)
4. Submit a final business plan two weeks before pitch night.
5. Deliver a live pitch at the public forum on September 25 at 6 PM.
6. Winners must submit a final project proposal packet to Randolph County United by January 1, 2026.

7. Awarded projects must be completed within 12 months of pitch night, or funding may be forfeited.

Workshops & Key Dates

Informational Meeting:

- July 24, 2025 at 6 PM

Workshop Series (All at 6 PM in the RCU Boardroom, 123 W. Franklin St. Suite 201, Winchester, IN 47394):

- August 5: Introduction & Guide to Starting a Business
- August 12: Financial Projections & Management
- August 19: Business Plan Development/Workday
- August 26: Marketing Strategy
- September 2: How to Pitch Your Idea
- September 16: Preliminary Pitches & Finalist Determination

Pitch Presentation Event:

- September 25, 2025 at 6 PM

Application Deadline:

- August 4, 2025 by 5 PM

Awards

Cash prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

- Top Three Contestants
- Audience Choice Award
- Junior Judges Award
- Nonprofit Award (if three or more nonprofits participate)

Additional Rules & Guidelines

- Participants must attend at least 5 out of 6 workshops.
- Final business plans are due two weeks before pitch night.
- Participants must act professionally throughout the process.
- Randolph County United reserves the right to inspect work/equipment purchased with award funds.
- Award funds are reimbursed with proper invoice submission, not given in advance.