

**2012 Registration Packet**  
Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

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## **2012 Competition Objectives**

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

Economic Fuel is a business plan competition for local college students and recent graduates. The objectives of the competition are to:

- Create a climate of opportunity that provides students and recent graduates with the incentive to apply their education and talents locally.
- Nurture local economic development by inspiring and supporting students and recent graduates in entrepreneurial pursuits.
- Build bonds between local academic institutions, businesses, and the community.
- Support formal entrepreneurial education in Humboldt County.
- Provide seed capital to initiate and support student-managed entrepreneurial enterprises.

To further achieve these objectives Economic Fuel is coordinating with Humboldt State University, College of the Redwoods, The North Coast SBDC and the local business community to:

- Encourage the integration of entrepreneurial-based instruction into the curriculums of Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods.
- Encourage the creation of a network of academic and business professionals to advise and counsel student entrepreneurs.
- Promote lectures and events that support and educate students in small business development and planning.

Economic Fuel will culminate in a judged competition in Spring 2012 with a maximum of eight prizes, including up to:

**Four \$25,000 Grand Prize Winners**  
**One \$10,000 First Runner-Up**  
**One \$5,000 Second Runner-Up**  
**Two \$1,000 Honorable Mentions**

*Participation in Economic Fuel shall be subject to the Eligibility Criteria and Official Rules of the competition.*

## 2012 Registration Checklist

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

### \_\_\_\_\_ **Registration Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ Team name

\_\_\_\_\_ Business description

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-student member involvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Industry type

\_\_\_\_\_ **Complete contact information for all team members**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Eligibility Criteria** - All team members have completed and signed the Eligibility Certification

\_\_\_\_\_ **Official Rules and Entry Guidelines** - All team members have signed the Official Rules and Entry Guidelines Certification

\_\_\_\_\_ **Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans** - All team members have signed the Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans Certification

\_\_\_\_\_ **Advisor Program – Competitor Conduct Agreement** - All team members have signed the Advisor Program – Competitor Conduct Agreement Certification

\_\_\_\_\_ **Original Work Certification** - All team members have signed the Original Work Certification

### **Required Documents:**

**All student team members** have attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ Unofficial transcripts for the Fall 2011 semester and Winter 2012 session, when applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ Current class schedule for the Spring 2012 semester, when applicable

**All graduate student/PhD candidate team members** working on thesis/doctoral projects have attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ A letter from their faculty advisor confirming graduate student/PhD candidate status and stating that the student is making adequate progress on their thesis/doctoral project

**All recent graduate team members** have attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ Proof of graduation since December 1, 2009

\_\_\_\_\_ Proof of Humboldt County residency since September 1, 2011

## 2012 Registration Form

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

**Team name:**

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**Brief description of business:**

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**Brief statement of non-student member's involvement, role and proposed ownership:**

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**Industry Type:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biotech/Life Sciences       | <input type="checkbox"/> Media/Entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Products           | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution/Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Retail              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Services            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IT/ Internet                | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunication   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____          |

**Team Member Contact Information**

**Team Leader/Contact Person:**

**Team Leader must be a student or recent graduate member.** The contact information listed below will be used as the primary method of contact for all Economic Fuel notices. Participants must notify Economic Fuel of any changes made to this information. Economic Fuel will not be responsible for any missed notices.

**1. Team Leader Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Humboldt County Residency Since:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligibility Status (circle one):**      Student      Recent Graduate

**For Current Students: Unit Load Fall 2011** \_\_\_\_ **Winter 2012** \_\_\_\_ **Spring 2012** \_\_\_\_

**For Recent Graduates: Graduation Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you been convicted of, or plead no contest to, a misdemeanor or a felony?**    Yes    No

**Are you currently involved with any pending legal action?**    Yes    No

**If your answer is yes to either, please explain:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Team Member Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Humboldt County Residency Since:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligibility Status (circle one):**      **Student**      **Recent Graduate**

**For Current Students: Unit Load Fall 2011** \_\_\_\_ **Winter 2012** \_\_\_\_ **Spring 2012** \_\_\_\_

**For Recent Graduates: Graduation Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you been convicted of, or plead no contest to, a misdemeanor or a felony?**    **Yes**    **No**

**Are you currently involved with any pending legal action?**    **Yes**    **No**

**If your answer is yes to either, please explain:**

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Team Member Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Humboldt County Residency Since:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligibility Status (circle one):**      **Student**      **Recent Graduate**

**For Current Students: Unit Load Fall 2011** \_\_\_\_ **Winter 2012** \_\_\_\_ **Spring 2012** \_\_\_\_

**For Recent Graduates: Graduation Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you been convicted of, or plead no contest to, a misdemeanor or a felony?**    **Yes**    **No**

**Are you currently involved with any pending legal action?**    **Yes**    **No**

**If your answer is yes to either, please explain:**

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Team Member Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Humboldt County Residency Since:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligibility Status (circle one):**      **Student**      **Recent Graduate**

**For Current Students: Unit Load Fall 2011** \_\_\_\_ **Winter 2012** \_\_\_\_ **Spring 2012** \_\_\_\_

**For Recent Graduates: Graduation Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you been convicted of, or plead no contest to, a misdemeanor or a felony?**    **Yes**    **No**

**Are you currently involved with any pending legal action?**    **Yes**    **No**

**If your answer is yes to either, please explain:**

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Team Member Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Humboldt County Residency Since:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligibility Status (circle one):**      Student      Recent Graduate

**For Current Students: Unit Load Fall 2011** \_\_\_\_ **Winter 2012** \_\_\_\_ **Spring 2012** \_\_\_\_

**For Recent Graduates: Graduation Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you been convicted of, or plead no contest to, a misdemeanor or a felony?**    Yes    No

**Are you currently involved with any pending legal action?**    Yes    No

**If your answer is yes to either, please explain:**

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 2012 Eligibility Criteria

### Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

1. Economic Fuel is open to teams of one to five persons. As detailed below, each team must include at least one student or recent graduate. A “student or recent graduate” includes anyone within one of the following categories:
  - (a) *Current students* - a person who (throughout the Economic Fuel competition) has earned credits in classes worth at least twelve units in total during the 2011/2012 academic school year (Fall 2011 semester, Winter 2012 session, and Spring 2012 semester) at College of the Redwoods, Humboldt State University, or an accredited online university.

Units required during the 11/12 Academic school year	Fall 2011 + Winter 2012 + Spring 2012
12	Any combination of units that total 12 units or more

- b) *Graduate students/PhD candidates completing their coursework and working on their thesis/doctoral project* - a person who is close to completing their coursework and is actively working on their thesis/doctoral project. Graduate students/PhD candidates will be required to verify that they are progressing on their thesis/doctoral work. Verification must be in the form of a letter from the student's faculty advisor confirming their student status and that the student is making progress on their thesis/doctoral project.
    - c) *Recent graduates who reside locally* - a person who received an Associate Degree or a higher degree from College of the Redwoods, Humboldt State University or any college or university in the United States at any time since December 1, 2009, **AND** who has maintained his or her primary residence in Humboldt County since September 1, 2011.
2. Students from any department, discipline, major or minor are eligible to participate. Economic Fuel is not restricted to business students.
3. All non-cash prize-winning teams that submitted a business plan in a prior year Economic Fuel competition, and finalist teams from a prior year Economic Fuel competition who received the \$1,000 Honorable Mention, are eligible to participate in Economic Fuel 2012; given that all team members comply with the official rules and eligibility criteria for Economic Fuel 2012. A finalist team that wins the \$1,000 Honorable Mention may only compete in Economic Fuel one additional year.
4. Teams can have a minimum of one member, and a maximum of five. Teams with multiple members may include one or two individuals who are not students or recent graduates, depending on the size of the team, as specified in the chart below:

Number of team members	Student Members / Recent Graduate Members	Non-Student Members / Non-Recent Graduate Members
5	5	0
	4	1
	3	2
4	4	0
	3	1
	2	2
3	3	0
	2	1
2	2	0
	1	1
1	1	0

5. Team members can only participate on one team. Each team may submit only one business plan.
6. One team member must be designated as the team leader. The team leader must be a student or recent graduate member. The team leader will be the contact person for Economic Fuel throughout the competition.
7. The Official Rules and Entry Guidelines of the competition, which are published separately, will govern Economic Fuel and all entrants shall comply with the Official Rules and Entry Guidelines during the course of the competition.
8. Each participant must be at least 18 years of age at the time of registration, and must be either a U.S. citizen or a legal resident.

<p><b><u>Eligibility Certification</u></b></p> <p><b>I, the undersigned, have read the “<i>Eligibility Criteria</i>” and certify that I am eligible as a:</b></p>
<p>_____ <b>Student or Recent Graduate</b></p> <p>_____ <b>Other Team Member</b></p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____</p>
<p>_____ <b>Student or Recent Graduate</b></p> <p>_____ <b>Other Team Member</b></p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____</p>
<p>_____ <b>Student or Recent Graduate</b></p> <p>_____ <b>Other Team Member</b></p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____</p>
<p>_____ <b>Student or Recent Graduate</b></p> <p>_____ <b>Other Team Member</b></p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____</p>
<p>_____ <b>Student or Recent Graduate</b></p> <p>_____ <b>Other Team Member</b></p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____</p>

**2012 Official Rules and Entry Guidelines**  
Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

**Step 1: Competition Guidelines**

1. To qualify for the Business Challenge, a proposed venture must:
  - a. Plan to be profitable or at least financially sustainable;
  - b. Maintain its principal place of business in Humboldt County;
  - c. Base a majority of its employees in Humboldt County; and
  - d. Engage in a lawful activity.
2. Proposals for the acquisition of, or merger with, an existing company, corporation, or other business enterprise are ineligible. Likewise, business plans involving existing businesses, except as defined in Rule 3, or the acquisition of franchises, are ineligible. The proposed venture may not be a subsidiary of an existing entity (either for-profit or non-profit).
3. If all other eligibility criteria are satisfied, an existing business is only eligible if it has received less than \$25,000 in total funding from any source, other than owner equity, and has accrued/received less than \$50,000 in gross revenue prior to registration for Economic Fuel.
4. Team members understand and agree that their names, likenesses and business plans may be publicized in connection with Economic Fuel without the payment of any compensation. Each team member agrees to be interviewed and photographed by Economic Fuel, upon request, in connection with Economic Fuel.
5. Participating teams, and any business entities associated with them, release and discharge Economic Fuel, SN Servicing Corporation, the Judging Panel, and the owners, members, directors, officers, employees and agents of those entities (the “released parties”), from any and all liability associated with participation in Economic Fuel and with the start-up and operation of any businesses described in the business plans. The released parties shall not be deemed the principals, employers, supervisors, joint venturers or partners of any participating teams or team members. Winning teams, if any, will not be entitled to receive anything other than the prize money.
6. Teams shall not present any information to the Judging Panel, orally or in writing, which they deem to be confidential, proprietary or commercially sensitive. Information presented will not be kept secret. Teams grant permission to Economic Fuel, and to all others, to publish, broadcast, display, reproduce, record or summarize their oral and/or written presentations, in whole or in part. All submitted materials become the property of Economic Fuel, and will not be returned to the teams at the conclusion of Economic Fuel.
7. All determinations regarding (a) whether teams have satisfied the Eligibility Criteria and the Official Rules, (b) what constitutes a meritorious business plan and successful entry, (c) the allocation of prizes, and (d) the administration and conduct of Economic Fuel shall be made in the complete and absolute discretion of the Economic Fuel Team and the Judging Panel, and shall be final. The determinations of the Economic Fuel Team and the Judging Panel shall not be subject to any legal or equitable challenge in any court or other judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative forum. The Judging Panel’s evaluation of the business plans and oral presentations will be subjective in nature. There are no guarantees, representations, or express or implied warranties that any team entering Economic Fuel will prove successful or receive any prize.
8. There shall be a maximum of eight prizes, including up to four “Grand” prizes of \$25,000 per prize, up to one “First Runner Up” prize of \$10,000, up to one “Second Runner Up” prize of \$5,000, and up to two “Honorable Mentions” of \$1,000 per prize. As many as eight teams will be selected as finalists to compete for these prizes based on the quality of their written business plans and elevator pitch presentations. The finalists will make oral presentations. The teams will be evaluated based on both their written business plans and their oral presentations.

9. Any attempt to contact or communicate with any member of the judging panel before, during or after the competition, regarding an Economic Fuel submission, will result in disqualification from the current year competition and future competitions.
10. No costs or entry fees shall be assessed to any teams for participating in Economic Fuel.

## **Step 2: Assemble a Team**

1. Each team must meet the requirements stated in the Eligibility Criteria. All student or recent graduate team members must be actively involved in the development and presentation of the business plan as well as in the planned operation of the proposed venture.
2. Current and past employees of Economic Fuel, SN Servicing Corporation, all members of the Judging Panel, and all immediate family members of such persons are ineligible to compete in Economic Fuel. For purposes of the competition, "immediate family members" include a person's spouse, partner, parent, stepparent, child (biological, adopted and step), sibling, and stepsibling. Faculty at both College of the Redwoods and Humboldt State University are ineligible to compete in Economic Fuel. For purposes of the competition, "faculty" includes permanent, temporary, full time, part time and adjunct faculty. They may participate in an advisory capacity only.

## **Step 3: Team Registration**

1. Submit a completed Registration Form before **5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 27, 2012 at the College of the Redwoods Eureka Downtown Instructional Site, 605 K St, Eureka.**
2. **All team members must sign the following:**
  - Registration Form
  - Eligibility Criteria
  - Official Rules and Entry Guidelines
  - Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans
  - Advisor Program – Competitor Conduct Agreement
  - Original Work Certification

### **Each Student Team Member must submit, when applicable, the following:**

An unofficial transcript for the Fall 2011 semester and Winter 2012 session, and a class schedule for the Spring 2012 semester.

### **Each Graduate Student/PhD Candidate Team Member must submit the following:**

A letter from their faculty advisor confirming graduate student/PhD candidate status and stating that the student is making adequate progress on their thesis/doctoral project.

### **Each Recent Graduate Team Member must submit the following:**

Proof of Graduation since December 1, 2009 **AND** proof of Humboldt County residency since September 1, 2011. *Proof of residency can be established by submitting a billing statement from a Humboldt County Residence, in the Team Member's name, dated prior to September 1, 2011. For information regarding additional methods to establish residency contact [theteam@economicfuel.org](mailto:theteam@economicfuel.org) at least a week prior to the registration deadline.* Any registration form found to be incomplete may result in that team being disqualified.

3. Teams are allowed to add new team members until the registration deadline regardless of when the team officially submitted its registration packet. After the registration deadline, January 27, 2012, has passed; no new team members may be added.

## **Step 4: Submit a Business Plan**

1. Teams are required to submit a business plan for a start-up or early stage venture, in substantial conformity with the instructions in the Registration Packet, and no later than the specified deadline. **Business plans missing required major components will be immediately disqualified.**

## 2. Business Plan Requirements:

Teams are required to submit seven hard copies and one electronic copy of their business plan before **5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 19, 2012 at the College of the Redwoods Eureka Downtown Instructional Site, 605 K St, Eureka.** The electronic copy of the business plan must be submitted on CD with PDF file format preferred.

**The Business Plan, including the cover page, table of contents, body and the appendix, must be no longer than 40 pages in total.** The narrative portion of the plan must be typed, 11 pt. or larger Arial font, double-spaced, with one inch margins of text on 8 ½" x 11" paper. Financial statements, charts and diagrams must be typed on 8 ½" x 11" paper, but are not required to be double spaced, have one inch margins or be in Arial font. The font size for financial statements, charts and diagrams should not be smaller than size 10 font. **All required major components are included in the 40 page limit.**

\* It is highly recommended that teams use the resources available at [www.economicfuel.org](http://www.economicfuel.org)

## 3. All teams submitting written business plans must also submit a completed Competitor Media Release Form electronically to [theteam@economicfuel.org](mailto:theteam@economicfuel.org) before **5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 19, 2012.**

Teams failing to submit an electronic Competitor Media Release Form by 5:00 p.m. on the 19<sup>th</sup> will be disqualified. Competitor Media Release Forms are available on our website at [www.economicfuel.org](http://www.economicfuel.org).

4. Businesses with 2 or more **owners** must submit seven hardcopies and one electronic copy of a legally binding partnership agreement as a document separate from their business plan. The partnership agreement is required for businesses with more than one owner, even if one or more owners is not a member of the Economic Fuel team. The partnership agreement is due at the same time as the business plan but must be turned in as a separate document and is not included in the 40 page limit. The electronic copy of the partnership agreement may be submitted on the same CD as the business plan but must be a separate file on the CD.
5. Teams who are interested in displaying a tradeshow/showcase exhibit at the Elevator Pitch Presentations must sign up to reserve table space before **5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 19, 2012.** **You should only sign up to reserve a space if you know that you will have a display to set up.**
6. All submitted materials must be the original creative work of the participating team and generated specifically for Economic Fuel. Plagiarism, as determined by the Judging Panel, will result in disqualification.

## Step 5: Present an Elevator Pitch

1. Elevator Pitch Presentations will be held on **Thursday, March 22, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**
2. **The student team leader is required to present the team's Elevator Pitch.** Two minutes maximum (time limits will be strictly enforced). No visual aids may be carried on stage. Presenting samples or gifts, including business cards, to the judges is not allowed. Teams will present in alphabetical order.
3. Competitors who submit business plans are invited to display a tradeshow/showcase exhibit from **5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 22, 2012** at the location of the elevator pitch presentations. **These exhibits are not mandatory and will not be judged.** This is an opportunity for teams to display information about their products and/or services for public viewing. Exhibit Guidelines are available on our website at [www.economicfuel.org](http://www.economicfuel.org)

## Step 6: Interview with the Judges

1. Each member of each finalist team will submit a resume and answers to written interview questions by **8:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 14, 2012.**
2. Finalist teams will interview with the judges on **Monday, April 16, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

3. Each team will have 10 minutes for the interview with the judges. Time limits will be strictly enforced.
4. All team members should expect to answer questions at the interview.
5. **Using visuals aids and the presenting of samples or gifts to the judges, including business cards, is not allowed.**

### **Step 7: Present a Plan to the Panel of Judges**

1. Finalist teams will give formal presentations on **Monday, April 23 and Tuesday, April 24, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**
2. Eight finalist teams, four per night will be selected to present their business plans to the judging panel.
3. Each team will have 10 minutes to present with up to 20 minutes of questions from the judges (time limits will be strictly enforced).
4. Finalist teams must follow these established guidelines if they choose to use an electronic slideshow during their presentation:
  - \* Teams may only use a PDF slideshow or PowerPoint slideshow during their presentation.
  - \* All assets (photos, charts, etc...) associated with the presentation must be submitted with the slideshow.
  - \* Slideshow must be PC compatible and tested on a PC prior to submission.
  - \* Slideshow and assets combined file size may be no larger than 50 MB.
  - \* **Slideshow and assets must be ready for submission by 8:00 a.m. on Friday, April 20, 2012.**
5. Student or recent graduate team members should have a prominent role in the presentation. All team members should expect to answer questions from the Judging Panel. Finalist teams will present in random order.
6. **Using visuals aids and the presenting of samples or gifts to the judges, including business cards, is not allowed.**
7. The 2012 Judging Panel shall consist of 6 members from our pool of judges who shall be appointed by, and serve at the discretion of Economic Fuel. If any member of the Judging Panel is unable to serve, Economic Fuel may appoint a replacement.

### **Step 8: Awards**

1. The Awards Ceremony will be held during the last week of April, details to be announced.
2. The Judging Panel may choose to award fewer than the authorized number of prizes or no prizes at all, to the extent that the entries, in the complete and absolute discretion of the Judging Panel, are insufficiently meritorious. While the Judging Panel may award up to four \$25,000 grand prizes, it may award fewer such prizes, or no such prizes, depending on its view of the quality of the submissions.
3. **Prize recipients are responsible for any and all tax consequences associated with the receipt of prize money.**

### **For questions, please contact:**

Kathy Miller  
Economic Fuel Coordinator  
[theteam@economicfuel.org](mailto:theteam@economicfuel.org)  
707-476-2628

Official Rules and Entry Guidelines Certification

I/we, the undersigned, certify that I/we have read the Official Rules and Entry Guidelines of The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge. I/we agree to all provisions in the Official Rules and Entry Guidelines.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2012 Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

***Business Plans missing required major components will be immediately disqualified as per Step 4, Item 1 of the Official Rules and Entry Guidelines.***

### 1. Executive Summary

Should deliver a concise and compelling description of the business.

### 2. Industry Analysis

Shows understanding of the state of the industry the business will operate in. Illustrates knowledge of trends within the industry, and explains how the business will take advantage of projected future developments.

- (a) *Target Market* - Demographic and psychographic analysis of the proposed customer base. Explains a verifiable amount of potential customers, with information including, but not limited to, income and spending habits.
- (b) *Competition* - Detailed analysis of potential competitors, with attention paid to how the business will compete in the market. Explains the differentiating factors that give the business a sustainable competitive advantage.

### 3. Marketing Plan

Displays workable strategies for informing target market of business' products or services. Details sales and promotion strategies.

### 4. Operations

Describes how the business is managed and produces products or services. Describes how the business will cope with growth, and the mechanisms that will allow the business to grow.

- (a) *Technology* - Shows a working knowledge of required technologies for running the business. Provides a plan for acquiring necessary equipment.
- (b) *Management* - Details ownership and management structure.

### 5. \$25,000 Spending Plan

Describes how the \$25,000 cash prize will impact your business' start up and/or growth.

### 6. Impact to Humboldt County Economy

Describes the economic impact that the business has on Humboldt County.

### 7. Financials

Includes multi-year financial outlook based upon assumptions made throughout plan. Financial documents should include: balance sheet, cash flow, profit and loss, detailed startup costs, financial assumptions and a break-even analysis.

### 8. Economic Fuel Cash Award Disbursement Plan

Economic Fuel teams with two or more **teammates** are required to include a legally binding Cash Award Disbursement Plan. The plan must be signed by all teammates and must outline how a cash award will be disbursed among the teammates and/or deposited into the business.

**The Business Plan, including the cover page, table of contents, body and the appendix, must be no longer than 40 pages in total.** The narrative portion of the plan must be typed, 11 pt. or larger Arial font, double-spaced, with one inch margins of text on 8 ½" x 11" paper. Financial statements, charts and diagrams must be typed on 8 ½" x 11" paper, but are not required to be double spaced, have one inch margins or be in Arial font. The font size for financial statements, charts and diagrams should not be smaller than size 10 font. **All required major components are included in the 40 page limit.** *As per Step 4, Item 2 of the Official Rules and Entry Guidelines.*

I have read and understand that this sheet describes the required major components of a submitted written business plan for the Economic Fuel competition. Submitted plans are not limited to containing only the components described, and there is no required order of individual components. If my team's submitted business plan does not contain the required major components detailed on this sheet, it will be immediately disqualified.

Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans Certification

I/we, the undersigned, certify that I/we have read the Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans. I/we agree to all provisions therein.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2012 Advisor Program – Competitor Conduct Agreement

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

The advisor program is designed to link Economic Fuel teams with business professionals that share a common interest and have skills, contacts and insight to help a team with their business plan. Our vision is to give Economic Fuel competitors an opportunity to learn from professionals who are successful in Humboldt County, while offering the business community the chance to interact with enthusiastic student entrepreneurs from Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods. A list of community advisors who have agreed to volunteer their time to work with Economic Fuel competitors can be found on our website at <http://www.economicfuel.org/advisors.html>.

### **We Encourage You to... USE AN ADVISOR!!!**

Please keep these things in mind when you embark on your advisor experience:

- The role of an advisor is to serve as a mentor, answer specific questions, and give input and advice on various aspects of a business plan. An advisor is not someone to consult for business ideas.
- Students should remember that advisors are business professionals with full time careers. It is important to contact advisors early in the competition, as advisors will need advance notice to schedule time to meet with student teams.
- Teams are expected to show up for a meeting with a focused objective and a set of fairly specific questions.
- Once an appointment is scheduled competitors are expected to provide advisors with 24 hour notice in the case of cancellation. By failing to appear for a scheduled appointment with a community volunteer, you may be taking that advisor away from time he or she could be spending with a paying customer.

It is extremely important that competitors are respectful of every advisor's time as their support of this competition is crucial to its success. **Advisors will have the opportunity to provide feedback to the judges regarding their meetings with competitors!**

### **Utilizing the Resources of the North Coast SBDC**

The North Coast Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is proud to continue its support of the Economic Fuel competition. Since the founding of Economic Fuel the SBDC has offered professional business counseling and workshops to competitors, both in the competition phase and in the business launch process. The staff and counselors look forward to working with this year's participants and to help them get their businesses launched.

In order to receive the greatest benefit from SBDC services please bear in mind a few things. The SBDC primary mission is to serve entrepreneurs who are already actively engaged in a business and those who are seriously committed to starting their own business. Economic Fuel is grateful to the SBDC for allowing us to use their services for this competition.

Creating an effective business plan is not a linear process and takes considerable time and effort. Because it is a process, the earlier you include the SBDC in that effort the better it will be for all concerned. **If you are going to use SBDC services, it is recommended that you make your first appointment with the SBDC no later than the week following the registration deadline.** It is further recommended that you establish and maintain a relationship with your SBDC counselor to provide depth and continuity to your planning process.

Competitors are discouraged from calling SBDC at the last moment before plans are due. There may not be time to schedule an appointment and there won't be enough time to integrate suggestions into your plan. Therefore, your final appointment with your SBDC counselor should be scheduled for a date 1-2 weeks prior to the March 19<sup>th</sup> business plan due date, in order to fully consider and incorporate their recommendations into your final plan.

**Remember that as Economic Fuel competitors, it is your ultimate responsibility to make sure that your business plan entry meets the Eligibility Criteria, Official Rules and Entry Guidelines, and includes all the Required Major Components of Submitted Business Plans. It is neither your advisor's nor your SBDC counselor's responsibility to make these determinations.**

Advisor Program – Competitor Conduct Agreement Certification

I/we, the undersigned, certify that I/we have read the Advisor Program – Competitor Conduct Agreement. I/we agree to all provisions therein.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2012 Original Work Certification

Economic Fuel: The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge

Original Work Certification - The ideas and concepts set forth in the business plan are the original creative work of the Team Members, generated specifically for the Humboldt County Student Business Challenge. The Team Members are not under any agreements or restrictions that prohibit or restrict their ability to disclose or submit such ideas or concepts to The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge. Any infringement of another's copy-written work and any form of plagiarism will be grounds for disqualification.

### Original Work Certification

I, the undersigned, have read the "Original Work Certification" and certify that all ideas and concepts set forth in the business plan constitute the original creative work of myself and/or my Team Members, generated specifically for The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge. I further certify that neither I, nor any of my Team Members, are under any agreements or restrictions that prohibit or restrict my/our ability to disclose or submit such ideas or concepts to The Humboldt County Student Business Challenge.

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