



VETERANS
BUSINESS BATTLE

**APPLICANT
INFORMATION**

**USE YOUR BATTLE-TESTED SKILLS
IN THE BOARDROOM**



April 13-14, 2018

Rice University

www.vetbizbattle.com

WHAT IS VETERANS BUSINESS BATTLE?

Veterans Business Battle began in 2015 with a goal of inspiring and encouraging our nation's military heroes to become successful entrepreneurs.

Each year, the two-day event gives military veterans an opportunity to pitch business ideas to investors for a chance to raise capital from investors and lenders. During the competition, finalists attend workshops geared toward businesses in early stages of development, have the opportunity to perfect their pitch and receive feedback from professionals, network with potential investors and learn from other entrepreneurial success stories.

With more than \$2.3 million of investment offers extended thus far, it's the largest veteran business competition in the country.

VETERANS BUSINESS BATTLE 2018

Rice University, Houston, Texas



PARTNERS



The Veterans In Business Association (VIBA) at Rice University's Jones Graduate School of Business was founded in 2011. VIBA serves as an enduring mission for veterans in business to continue to serve and support their community. In a few short years, the number of veterans in Rice University's MBA program has grown from just a handful of veterans to 40 current veteran students enrolled in the MBA program.

In addition to managing logistics for the event, VIBA members serve as coaches to the finalists to provide guidance prior to the event. These coaches guide applicants in developing an effective pitch and offer advice on business balance sheets, proformas, profit statements and other financial information investors need. They also serve to offer guidance to applicants who may be taking on equity or debt for the first time.

INVESTORS

Each year, Veterans Business Battle partners with lending institutions, community members, business owners and investment groups to provide opportunities for our finalists. Past investors have included Amegy Bank, the Houston Angel Network, the U.S. Small Business Association and other private equity groups.

The success of Veterans Business Battle is largely dependent on the involvement of investors. Investors help to ensure mutual success by providing applicants with needed capital in return for an expected return on their investment. Capital can be provided in various forms of equity or debt and there are no set restrictions on the terms of investment proposals. Following the event, investors will conduct additional due diligence prior to issuing any funds.



WHY VETERANS BUSINESS BATTLE?

In a word— opportunity. Veterans Business Battle delivers ample opportunities for veterans who are growing their businesses or who are preparing to launch businesses including:

- »» Opportunity to pitch your ideas to a panel of investors and financial institutions eager to invest in veteran entrepreneurs
- »» Opportunity to develop impactful relationships with new and established entrepreneurs who are shaping the globe across an array of industries
- »» Opportunity to gain exposure through the significant amount of earned media Veterans Business Battle generates
- »» Opportunity for your team to experience a once-in-a-lifetime event



WHAT TO EXPECT

WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY

A business idea, new product or existing business. You'll need to develop a business plan that clearly articulates your vision and need for funding. We have teamed up with experts who can help you formalize a business plan if you haven't done so yet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

After you submit your application, a representative from VIBA will contact you within 10 business days to discuss your application and offer advice on how to best complete it. Then, our team of investors and entrepreneurs will evaluate it and determine if your idea is a good fit for our competition.

IF YOU'RE SELECTED

Businesses selected as a finalist will be invited to the event, where they can pitch their ideas to a panel of investors and participate in learning events and networking. Every finalist will also be paired with a member of Rice University's VIBA, who will act as your liaison as you prepare for the competition.

IF YOU AREN'T SELECTED

We still encourage all applicants to attend the event. During past events, applicants that weren't selected as finalists still walked away from the weekend with a significant investments. It's also a great opportunity to learn about funding, marketing, and hear success stories from successful veteran entrepreneurs.

WHAT KIND OF FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Several previous winning finalists have received 6-figure investments while others have entered into equity business partnerships. How much funding your business may be offered depends completely on your business and the terms you and lenders agree upon. Our experts will evaluate your ideas, business structure, what stage your business is in and work with you to develop a plan to help your business. We require all applicants to include a specific "ask" in their business plan.

In previous years, our competition also included a cash prize for a voted-upon crowd favorite based on a 1-minute elevator pitch. It is our goal in to continue and expand this.

Have questions? Email info@vetbizbattle.com

VETERAN BUSINESS BATTLE EVENTS

The Pitches *Friday & Saturday*

The opportunity to pitch your business idea and listen to other applicants' pitches is the core of Veterans Business Battle. On Day 1, each contestant presents their full business plan along with a one-minute elevator pitch. Both are delivered to a group of investors in a classroom setting. Applicants have up to 10 minutes to deliver their full presentations. Judges will select four finalists to refine their full presentations and deliver them again at the awards reception on Saturday.

All teams will compete again on Saturday evening in the Elevator Pitch competition, where each contestant delivers a 1 minute summary of their business plan. The winner receives a cash prize.

Workshops *Saturday*

Workshops will cover different aspects of entrepreneurship and business ownership, including a panel of past Veterans Business Battle winners.

Business Showcase *Saturday*

This event gives veteran entrepreneurs the opportunity to set up a booth to present their businesses to the public and potential investors.

Networking Lunch *Saturday*

In addition to a formal presentation, this extended lunch offers an excellent networking opportunity with investors, business owners, and community partners.

Awards Reception and Final Battle *Saturday*

At the culmination of the event Saturday evening, all contestants will present for the the Elevator Pitch Competition and the four finalists will repeat their full presentations for the Final Battle. VIBA will honor The Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year. The event will conclude with the presentation of an investment check to the winner of the 2018 Veterans Business Battle.

SUCCESS STORIES

Sarah Ford, Ranch Road Boots



Ford pitched her idea for a classic, quality lifestyle brand inspired by her grandfather's boots at the first-ever Veterans Business Battle in 2015. Her investment offers stemming from the event from both the EO-Houston investment group and Main Street Capital totaled \$350,000. With that investment and through relationships formed with mentors at Veterans Business Battle, Ranch Road Boots transitioned from a small custom line of boots to a ready-to-wear collection. Since the competition, Ford has been set up mobile retail stations, held regular trunk shows, and established a presence in retail stores. "I wouldn't be where I am now without Veterans Business Battle," she said. "I wouldn't have had inventory to sell." Ford is a former U.S. Marine and a graduate of Harvard Business School. You can shop her boots at www.ranchroadboots.com.

JR & Dyan Gibbens, Trumbull Unmanned

Trumbull Unmanned deploys drones to map, monitor, and inspect operations across the energy sector to make operations better, faster, and safer. Since presenting its business plan at the 2015 Veterans Business Battle, and as the first unmanned aircraft company approved for operations by several of the largest oil and gas companies, Trumbull has performed operations in the Arctic and Pacific, shoreline mapping during oil spill response events, and continues to operate across the globe. Veteran owned and led, each teammate is a veteran, pilot, engineer, and UAV operator. "Trumbull Unmanned also launched Trumbull Technologies to bring to market several advancements for drones in oil and gas. Trumbull has been named in the Top 25 Veteran-Founded Startups in America by Forbes and has served on White House round tables to discuss small business.



SUCCESS STORIES

Nicole Baldwin, BIAO

Nicole Baldwin was inspired while serving in the military and seeing the harsh effects of sun, wind and sand on her skin to create a skincare line that's not only all-natural, but fights environmental causes of aging like nothing else on the market. She received a combined \$150,000 of investment offers at the 2016 Veterans Business Battle and was named the crowd favorite after her 1-minute elevator pitch during the awards ceremony, earning her a \$5,000 cash prize.



William Gibbons & Michael Hlozek, Veterans Manufacturing

Veterans Manufacturing came to 2017's competition with a line of body armor and other protective gear highly sought after by law enforcement and other government agencies, but in need of capital to increase production.

After a \$350,000 investment from the EO Houston investment group and another \$350,000 investment from other sources stemming from the company's involvement in Veterans Business Battle, Veterans Manufacturing has moved into a proper manufacturing facility, won many contracts include one from the Texas Department of Public Safety, doubled the number of retailers, expanded to international retailers, represented small business at both the U.S. Congress and the White House and hired two new full time employees.

Air Armor Tech

Founded by three Air Force veterans, Air Armor Tech created a revolutionary inflatable gun case that deflates for easy storage when not in use. The product line also includes cases for helmets, cameras and other sensitive equipment. The company received a \$400,000 investment offer after competing in the Veterans Business Battle in 2016.



VETERANS BUSINESS BATTLE APPLICANT CHECKLIST

CREATE YOUR APPLICATION

www.vetbizbattle.com

Applications open Nov. 11, 2017

FINALIZE YOUR BUSINESS PLAN AND SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

Need help? Email info@vetbizbattle.com

A VIBA representative will contact you within 10 business days of submission to discuss application

APPLICATION DEADLINE

MARCH 1, 2018

FINALISTS NOTIFIED

FEBRUARY 16, 2017

COMPETITION

APRIL 13-14, 2018

Rice University in Houston, Texas

QUESTIONS?

info@vetbizbattle.com

TO QUALIFY:

- Either the individual, controlling business owner (51 percent) or the majority of equally-shared partnership members must be honorably discharged from a branch of the U.S. Military (U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard) Form DDF214 is required to be submitted.
- Limited to residents of the United States
- You must complete the online application and attach your business idea in PDF format
- The business plan can apply to all industries, notwithstanding any illegal business practice.
- You must consent to a background check if selected as a finalist for the purpose of prequalifying the business for funding

GENERAL NOTICES

Use of Conference Materials: Veterans Business Battle/ Veterans in Business Association reserves the right to use any material prepared for the competition in publicizing and promoting the event and may use these materials in any printed materials and any videotape or other medium that it may produce. Veterans in Business Association may videotape any portion of the competition and utilize these tapes in any way that it sees fit. Entry Fees: Veterans Business Battle does not have an entry fee. Changes to Competition Rules: While not anticipated, these rules and prizes are subject to change at the discretion of Veterans in Business Association at any time and has the right to interpret these rules according to its own judgment. Decisions regarding the competition and the winners: All decisions regarding the competition rules, procedures, and processes are at the sole discretion of Veterans in Business Association. Changes and/or interpretations of these rules may be made by Veterans in Business Association at any time, even though they may be (or may appear to be) in conflict some previously published information. The selection of the teams to compete and the decision of the winners are at the sole discretion of the judges and Veterans in Business Association. Best efforts will be made to make decisions in accordance with the Official Rules document.