VetSmallBiz Growth Challenge Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q:** Who is eligible to compete?

**A:** To be eligible you must be a controlling business owner (51 percent) or the majority of an equally-shared partnership. You must have an honorable discharge from the U.S. Military. You must be a resident of the United States. Your business must be operating for at least one year by the application deadline of Dec 18th, 2016. So your business must have started by at least Dec 18th, 2015. Example: I started my business on May 26th of 2016; so I am ineligible to apply. Example 2: I started my business on October 15, 2015; so I am eligible to apply.

**Q:** Why do I have to be in business for at least one year?

**A:** The purpose of this challenge is help veteran owned business in the GROWTH stage of their venture. It is not to be confused with start-up or seed capital to start a business.

**Q:** When is my application due?

**A:** Your application is due NLT Dec 18th, 2016. Go to the [application site](https://syracuse2017.startupcompete.co/) to submit your application.

**Q:** When do I know if I’ve made it to the next round of the competition?

**A:** We will announce each round of winners on the [VetSmallBiz page](https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/veteran-and-family-resources/vetsmallbiz-growth-challenge/) and via email. Announcements for Phase I is January 8th, 2017. Phase II is January 23rd. The final winners will be announced in Atlanta, GA on March 3rd.

**Q:** How many prizes can I win?

A: Applicants are eligible for first, second or third place prizes as well as the Most Innovative Venture, Best Social Venture, and Best Venture Impacting Veterans. Example: An awardee could win 1st Place for $50,000 and the Best Social Venture for $5,000. Please check the [VetSmallBiz page](https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/veteran-and-family-resources/vetsmallbiz-growth-challenge/) under Capital Finale (Phase III) for more details.

**Q:** How does the competition work?

**A:** There are three phases. Phase I is the initial application submitted online by Dec 18th, 2016. Phase II is the pitch coaching and video pitch submission by twenty semi-finalists who are selected. Phase III is the final round of judging for ten finalists, taking place in Atlanta, GA on March 3rd, 2017. Winners receive prize money and business growth coaching until June 3rd, 2017.

**Q:** What are the judges evaluating in Phase I (online submission) and Phase II (Pitch Video)?

**A:** Each phase has different judging criteria. Please view the link [here](https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/VetSMALLBIZ-Word-Doc-Judging-Criteria.pdf) to find out more. Phase III (Capital Finale) will take place on March 3rd, 2017 in Atlanta, GA. We will provide you the judging criteria when you make it to the final round.

**Q:** Who do I contact with a question?

**A:** First and foremost, we ask that you review the [VetSmallBiz page](https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/veteran-and-family-resources/vetsmallbiz-growth-challenge/) and the [application site](https://syracuse2017.startupcompete.co/) before reaching out. A lot of your questions will be answered there. Feel free to reach us at 315.443.9512 or email kmstreet@syr.edu if you need assistance.