



Case Competition

Description

A case competition is a great way to promote cross-faculty collaboration and create thoughtful dialogue and action around important sustainability topics. Additionally, it will assist your organization in gaining recognition on campus and expanding its network. This PDF covers information regarding topic selection, design considerations, juries, logistics, participant supports such as pre-competition workshops and more.

Acknowledgements

This guide was created with the help of knowledge and experience obtained from:

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 - Founder & Co-Director, Bridge Sustainability Case Competition
 - McGill University, Mechanical Engineering
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About Re_Generation

[Re_Generation](#) is a Canadian youth movement that seeks to build a regenerative, sustainable, and just economy. We aim to reimagine our schools, repurpose our careers, and remodel our companies to be aligned with regenerative principles. In particular, we provide resources for individuals to launch impact-driven careers and advocate for change within their companies and schools. We also aim to advance public policies that promote regenerative and sustainable business practices.

Our successful 'Our Future, Our Business' Manifesto campaign received the support of 65 youth organizations, 130 high-level executives, and 100 civil society organizations recognizing the need for reform in business education on sustainability. After three years of existence as the Canadian Business Youth Council for Sustainable Development, we have changed our name to Re_Generation to become more inclusive of all youth, not just business youth.

We believe that the ideal society is a [regenerative](#) one. Regeneration to us means putting human and ecological [well-being](#) at the centre of every decision. It means restoring relationships, both within nature and within society, while helping all communities to thrive. Read more about our history and vision at our [About Us](#) page.

Potential Topics

A good theme should be general but also specific enough to be able to build a case on, which could be achieved through brainstorming sessions as a committee. The broader the scope of the theme, the better it will be for students coming from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Example Themes:

- Bioremediation
- Sustainable Housing
- Net Zero Housing Energy
- Green energy (has social, financial, political and technical considerations so great for interdisciplinarity)

Another important thing to keep in mind is that the theme will determine a lot of what is to come so make sure your team is passionate about it and engaged with the topic! But also have a backup in case you can't get all of the resources you need for a specific topic.

Multi-Disciplines Format

In order to have the best outcomes and simulate the real world, you should make your case competition open to participants from all academic backgrounds. In order to do this there are a few things to keep in mind when designing the event:

- Choose a topic that allows input from various disciplines.
- Make it public to participants that sustainability issues are not isolated within a certain discipline and will require interdisciplinary problem solving.
- Encourage participants from varying academic backgrounds to sign up and explain the support that you provide related to technical sustainability topics that they may not know, such as workshops.
- Think about if you are asking everyone to sign up only in full teams or individuals. To make it easier, create a forum where people can advertise that they are looking for teams and are open to having people join their team. Individual participants can be paired with complimentary backgrounds.

Design Considerations

For the delivery of the case competition, you should ask yourself:

- Will they have access to the internet and how much time do they have to crack the case?
- How technical is it going to be?
- Are we going to give them all of the resources they need or make it more of a research case?

Other considerations and components to develop are:

- Introduction to the competition
- Context of the theme
- Deliverables
- Stakeholders overview
- Engineering technical requirements (relating to the theme)

- Management technical requirements (finances, legislation, other things that can be sprinkled in throughout)

Make sure to provide enough background context that students have a foothold on the subject matter and know how to get started.

Involvement of Companies and Organizations

Many companies are looking for sustainability students since the market is leading that way. Some key approaches to ensuring that they realize the value that your event can bring are:

- Market the event to interested professionals from the angle that these students are the future business professionals and leaders (or other profession related to your event such as engineering)
- Emphasize that participation would allow them to have the opportunity to observe problem solving and strategy skills through case presentations
- Promote how the event would allow business networking with other firms in an organic setting

Case competitions can result in companies finding great interns to hire, which is a benefit to both the company and the participants!

Juries

Choosing great juries are important for attracting participants and ensuring that your case competition runs smoothly and thoughtfully. The best types of juries consist of 4 – 5 judges from a variety of backgrounds in each room and align well with the case topic. You can follow these steps to select and obtain a jury:

1. Once the case topic and theme is decided upon, compile a list of industries according to their fit with the case topic
2. Identify key people in the industries that could be involved (look on LinkedIn and Google searches)
3. Assign team member to the outreach efforts and create a file to keep track of everyone's progress
4. Reach out to them via LinkedIn or email
5. Send them a brief package about your event and try to set up a meeting with them to go over the value of their potential involvement
6. Once you get some individuals onboard, ask them to refer you to anyone else they know that may be a good fit (leverage those networks!)

To demonstrate this, here is an example from the BRIDGE Case Competition:

The 2020 - 2021 case focused on renewable energy in off grid Indigenous communities. Therefore an appropriate list of professionals to reach out to moving forward entailed those in the following industries: renewable energy, engineering and management consulting, research, along with individuals conducting research with Indigenous communities, Indigenous leaders. Professionals were mapped out in the following way:

Name	Job title/position	Company
X	Assistant Professor	UBC
EF	Senior Policy Analyst	Gov. of BC
DE	Director, Sustainability, Indigenous Partnerships & Gov. Affairs	Evolugen
DH	Senior Analyst, Community Energy	Ecotrust

The outreach was done by members of the academics team and the directors of the case competition, and tracked in the following way:

Contact	First contact date	Responded?	Follow up date	Status	Notes
name1@email.com	07/11/2020	Yes	20/11/2020	Interested	
name2@email.com	17/10/2020	Yes	30/10/2020	Not suited	

For more information and tips regarding outreach, read our [Stakeholder Relationships Guide](#)

Support for Participants

A panel is a great way for participants to hear from experts and become more engaged with the topic in an interactive way. A panel should consist of 3-5 professionals, depending on the amount of time you have, and have an executive team member as the moderator. The panelists should have varying backgrounds and be able to bring diverse perspectives to the topic of discussion. An example of a panel discussion led by the BRIDGE case competition was:

- The growing importance of sustainability in the workplace
 - The aim of this panel discussion was to understand how sustainability professionals approach the challenges which they encounter in their day-to-day activities, which also served as inspiration for how to approach the sustainability challenge teams were faced with.

Pre-event workshops are a great way to help prepare the participants for the case competition. These workshops can include overviews of the sustainability-related topics that will be addressed in the competition or general case competition knowledge and skills development. Some examples of pre-event workshops led by the BRIDGE case competition that were successful include:

- Case Cracking
 - Set up to give first years, non management students, as well as less experienced students an overview of what cracking a case entails
- Energy in off Grid Communities
 - Led by an individual from Barkley Group, project managers that work on bringing clean energy, economic development and jobs to some of the most remote communities

- What their projects entailed and an overview of their projects, which related to case study well and aimed to give participants more working knowledge
- Sustainability in Business
 - Delivered by the Director of Environmental Risk and Compliance at Ivanhoe Cambridge
 - Covered some of the main aspects and considerations that come into play when businesses integrate sustainability into their projects and operations

Event Logistics

For all logistics ahead of and during the event, it is easier to deal with when there are designated portfolios to manage each element. For example, one portfolio is designated to manage communication, registration, and FAQs with participants, while another portfolio should be in charge of communications with the panelists and judges, etc.

For registration, [Eventbrite](#) has many benefits for ticketing with an event like this, including:

- Export participant lists
- Send mass emails to participants
- Integrate payment
- Function: set capacity on tickets as well as set holds with special codes if you want to reserve tickets
- Paid Tickets: has a fee which you can absorb or have participants absorb
- Google Form: manually register participants with the option of "no payment required"

For event facilitation, you should ensure that your team is organized and all participating parties are prepared with all of the information that they need beforehand. Some tips include:

- Ensure all of the important logistics information and schedule is sent to participants well ahead of the event

What you should consider for your design and tell the panelists ahead of time:

- Consider joining 5 minutes early to allow the coordinators of the event to properly introduce themselves and answer any last-minute question you may have, and provide a brief message about the student clubs organizing this event and outline how we are going to proceed.
 - Each speaker will have 5 minutes to give an introduction and the opportunity to answer 5 - 6 questions. Initial speaker will be allowed to have the final word on the question being asked to them.
 - The moderator will be going back and forth between questions. For each question, you will have a maximum 4 minutes to give your response.
 - Each speaker will have the option to add a rebuttal to the other speaker's answer for a maximum of 30 seconds.
 - Speakers will be given a similar "difficulty" and scope of questions.
- Set aside 30 - 40 minutes for a Q&A session
- At the end of the event, you can arrange for participants and guests to network with each other. You can:
 - Advertise this in the schedule
 - Create self-selecting breakout rooms and title them with the names of the professionals who are there
 - Activate the breakout rooms after the winners are announced

For presentations and judging, the logistics depend on the size and scope of your competition and topic

depth. You can find some examples of judging processes and criterias from Enactus competitions on their [team resources](#) page. Some considerations to take into account are:

- How long do teams have to prepare their presentations?
- What are the judging criteria?
- How will these criteria be evaluated by the judges?
- How long do teams have to present?
- How long do the judges have to deliberate?
- When will the winners be announced?

Marketing Tips

- Create a brand for the case competition and stick to it, using the same colour scheme and logos
- In order to maximize the benefits of marketing, create an excel spreadsheet for pre-planned posts and keep track of all content creation and posting schedules
- Spend a day or so planning posts for the week and have them made a day or more before posting
- Stick to the posting schedule and preplan all the graphics and captions so that you don't forget to do so
- Be consistent with posting
- Months prior to the competition try to post 1 – 2 times per week and then transition to almost every day in the few weeks prior to the event to attract participants
- Sync your posts to be added on Facebook and Instagram at the same time
- Post all of the professional content on LinkedIn:
 - Bio's of the executive committee
 - Timeline of the event
 - Bio's of judges and panelists
- Create an information package for potential judges or panelists that includes all of the general information on the competition, plus some demographics on the participants and the value that participation would bring to them
- Create an information package for participants that includes:
 - Information on what the competition is
 - Who is eligible to participate
 - What the registration will look like
 - Format of the event (with a timeline graphic)
 - Workshops, prizes, sponsors/judges/panelists
 - Contact information

For more information on marketing, read our [Marketing guide. \(insert link\)](#)

Resources

- [BRIDGE Sustainability Case Competition website](#)
- [BRIDGE Sustainability Case Competition Facebook event page](#)
- [Enactus Competition Guides](#)
- [Eventbrite for registration](#)