

## **Spark Manistee Guidelines**

### **What is it**

The Spark Manistee is a competition to encourage and incentivize entrepreneurs to open or grow their businesses in Downtown Manistee. Participants may submit their ideas for a business to the Manistee Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The Spark Manistee Committee will select the top 5 business ideas to compete. Each participant will have the opportunity to give a five-minute presentation to five judges. The judges then vote on the winning business idea. The winner will receive \$5,000 and other incentives including DDA low interest loans and professional services.

### **Eligibility**

The Manistee DDA is responsible for managing the Competition. The Competition is only open to legal residents of the United States, who can demonstrate that they are currently residing in the United States, and who are 18 years of age or older at the time of entry. Employees, officers, and directors of the Manistee DDA and employees, officers, and directors of any of the sponsors of the competition listed, and members of their immediate families (spouses, children, siblings, parents, and/or persons living in the same household as such persons, whether or not related), are not eligible to enter the Competition.

- a. This competition is for independent ventures in the business plan, start-up/ideation, early growth, or seed stages.
- b. The entrant may be a for-profit or non-profit venture.
- c. Previously existing businesses or organizations with sales or revenues at or below \$100,000 annually are eligible.
- d. Entrance to the Competition should be sent to the Manistee DDA.

### **How it will be awarded**

After the judges select the winner, a representative of Spark Manistee will announce the winner. Prize money will be granted to the winner upon submittal of a completed business registration from the city of Manistee to the DDA, a business plan, and invoices or other documentation demonstrating the funds will be expensed as presented within one year from date of the event.

### **Judges**

There will be five judges. Four judges will be comprised of representatives of sponsoring organizations of the Spark Manistee event. The community will participate as one judge with live voting results.

### **Legal**

Participation in the contest constitutes permission for Spark Manistee to use the participant's name, address (city and state), image, likeness, voice, biographical information, application, presentation, and/or video or audio recordings from the presentation or otherwise for public display and advertising and promotional purposes in any form or media now known or developed in the future without notice or additional compensation, except where prohibited by law.

Spark Manistee may temporarily or permanently suspend the contest, or modify the contest venues, structure, or rules at any time and without advance notice. Spark Manistee, sponsors, and judges reserve the right, in their sole and absolute discretion, to disqualify and reject any entries and participants for any reason.

By entering the contest, entrants fully and unconditionally agree to be bound by the rules and the decisions of Spark Manistee and the judges, which will be final and binding in all matters relating to the contest.

Any and all federal, state and local taxes and fees resulting from participation or receipt of any award are the sole responsibility of the participant. All federal, state, and local laws and rules apply. Participants must be legal residents of the United States.

By participating in the contest, all entrants and winners agree to release and hold harmless the Manistee DDA, Spark Manistee, the judges, and their respective affiliates, partners, representatives, agents, successors, assigns, employees, officers and directors, from any and all liability, for loss, harm, damage, injury, cost or expense whatsoever including without limitation, property damage or injury which may occur in connection with participation in contest, for any claims based on third party rights in the entry or arising out of the use of the entry as allowed by these rules including, but not limited to publicity rights, defamation, invasion of privacy, copyright infringement, trademark infringement or any other intellectual property-related cause of action.

Any attempted entry other than as set forth above is prohibited; no automatic, programmed, robotic or similar means of entry are permitted. Spark Manistee and its affiliates are not responsible for technology, hardware, software, or communications malfunctions, errors or failures of any kind, lost, congested, or unavailable network or internet connections, incomplete or inaccurate capture of entry information (regardless of cause) or failed, incomplete, garbled, or delayed computer transmissions which may limit one's ability to enter the contest or vote, including issues resulting from downloading any materials from the contest or Sponsor's website.

[The parties waive all rights to trial in any action or proceeding instituted in connection with these rules or the contest. Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to these rules or the contest shall be settled by binding arbitration in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. Any such controversy or claim shall be arbitrated on an individual basis, and shall not be consolidated in any arbitration with any claim or controversy of any other party.

[THESE OFFICIAL RULES AND THE INTERPRETATION OF ITS TERMS SHALL BE GOVERNED BY AND CONSTRUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN WITHOUT REGARD TO ITS

CONFLICTS OF LAWS RULES. For any matters that are not subject to arbitration, the parties irrevocably submit and consent to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of the state and federal courts located in or closest to Manistee County, Michigan.]