

Student Competition Custom/Small Home Builder Rules and Guidelines

Introduction

The NAHB Custom/Small Home Builder Student Competition challenges students to produce a complete proposal for a homebuilding project. Student teams submit a written proposal for judging by a panel of industry professionals then travel to the International Builders' Show (IBS) to present their proposals.

Mission

The mission of the NAHB Custom/Small Home Builder Student Competition is to expose students to a small scale residential construction project from concept to closing. Students compete with other schools as they display their problem solving abilities and learn more about homebuilding.

Eligibility

Any **NAHB Student Chapter*** at a four-year school that offers a bachelor's degree may compete. The Student Chapter must be in **good standing**** and every competition team member must be an undergraduate student and also be active members of the chapter. Undergraduate students who graduate in Fall 2024 may compete as team members. **No graduate students may participate.**

**For resources on [How To Start a Student Chapter](#)*

***If unsure of your Student Chapter's status, please reach out to Jontice Small (jsmall@nahb.org), or reach out to your local Home Builders Association.*

Location

International Builders' Show (IBS), Las Vegas, Nevada. www.buildersshow.com

Timeline

August 23, 2024
October 15, 2024
November 19, 2024
December 3, 2024
December 17, 2024
Feb. 24-25, 2025
February 26, 2025
February 26, 2025

Competition Problem Posted

Entry Form Due: (\$400) <https://awards.nahb.org/>
Team Member List Due: <https://awards.nahb.org/>
Last Day to Withdraw from Competition
Projects Due* <https://awards.nahb.org/>
Presentation Dates
Judges' Debriefing (morning, time tbd)
Awards Ceremony at IBS (afternoon, time tbd)

***After 11:59 PM EST, Tuesday, December 17, 2024, projects will not be accepted.**

COMPETITION GOALS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Goals

- Stretch student knowledge and force them to go and learn.
- Use a different geographic location each year.
- Foster innovative proposals that allow students to be creative.
- Develop student's written communication skills by creating a written proposal.
- Develop student's oral communication skills by delivering an oral presentation.
- Develop student's critical thinking and problem solving skills through the creation of a proposal that encompasses multiple disciplines.
- Facilitate student interaction with local HBAs.
- Get students excited about and committed to careers in homebuilding.

Learning Objectives

- Teams will identify a homebuilding opportunity in a specific geographic area, focusing on the best opportunity for a small builder to be successful and grow their business.
- Teams will perform an analysis to identify a specific location and product to build considering the local economy, consumer demographics, and any coding or zoning.
- Teams will create comprehensive preconstruction and construction management plans for their project.
- Teams will identify appropriate sales and marketing strategies based on their analysis
- Teams will create an analysis of financial information and project risk that includes risk mitigation strategies.
- Teams will synthesize the information to drive choices and decision making.
- Teams will create written and verbal presentations of their proposals

COMPETITION ENTRY

1. **August 23, 2024:** Project description, including local, budget, and other pertinent information, available online.
nahb.org/Competition
2. **October 15, 2024:** Entry Form due: <https://awards.nahb.org/>. Teams must register an NAHB Awards account through <https://awards.nahb.org/>. *From the drop menus select Student Chapters Awards- Competition Entry and corresponding program.*
 - a. \$400 Entry Fee (per team), paid with credit card at the time of registration through your NAHB Awards Competition Entry application.
 - b. ***The maximum number of teams able to compete is 30. This is a first-come-first-served registration policy.***
3. **November 19, 2024:** Team member list due: log into your NAHB Awards Competition Entry application on <https://awards.nahb.org/> and enter each team member's information.
 - a. Alternates and substitutes are permitted after this date, **but the names of these students will not appear in the Program Guide.** Contact Sarah Weber: 202-266-8654 / StudentChapters@nahb.org to make adjustments to team rosters.
4. **December 3, 2024:** Last day to withdraw from the competition.
5. Teams may spend as much time as they choose to prepare their proposal before the submission deadline.
6. Each chapter may enter up to two teams in the NAHB Student Competition as long as the maximum number of registrations has not been exceeded. Both teams representing the school must abide by the rules and guidelines of this competition. The two teams must register separately and submit complete and different proposals. Should the

proposals be deemed to be too similar by the judges, BOTH teams will be disqualified. The intent of the guidelines regarding two teams from the same school is that they function independently and that they compete to win against their classmates as keenly as they compete with all other teams. General assistance from companies could be given to both groups.

TEAM MAKE-UP

1. Each team member must be an active dues-paying member of the school's NAHB Student Chapter.
2. Each participant must be an undergraduate student at the university or college they represent at the time the competition problem statement is announced (August 23rd, 2024). Team composition is not limited to construction management majors.
3. Presentation teams will consist of no more than six (6) students. **This includes anyone handling the AV equipment for the presentation.** It is recommended that each member take an active role in the preparation of the proposal. In addition to the six presenters, up to six alternates can be named. Alternates can be substituted for presenters, if required. An unlimited number of undergraduate students are allowed to work on and contribute to the written proposal.
4. The team will assume the responsibility of a prequalified management team presenting to a bank to secure a line of credit.

COMPETITION REGISTRATION AND PROJECT SUBMISSION

1. The competition registration, team roster, and final project submission is tied to the individual/email address that registers the team. Please keep in mind that the individual (team coach/faculty advisor/student member) that registers to compete will be the only person with access to the competition portal. If you have any questions about the registration process you may contact Sarah Weber with additional questions.
2. Please ensure that every member of your competition team is a member of your NAHB Student Chapter in advance of project submission date (Dec. 17, 2024). Students who are NAHB student members will be able to register for their FREE expo+education pass. Please [download and submit a student chapter roster](#) if your chapter is adding new students. Reach out to Jontice Small (jsmall@nahb.org) for further assistance.
3. As many teams upload their final projects on Dec. 17, 2024, the submission portal may be overwhelmed. If your team is unsuccessful uploading your final project please contact Sarah Weber by email (sweber@nahb.org).

WRITTEN PROPOSAL

1. Each team will be given the same information from which to produce its proposal. NAHB Student Chapters will provide all competition elements online at nahb.org/Competition. No printed materials will be provided. Below you will find the list of software programs that the teams will need to review all of the electronic files.
 - a. Microsoft Office Products
 - i. Excel
 - ii. Word
 - iii. PowerPoint
 - b. Adobe Acrobat Reader
 - c. .DWG viewer

2. Teams should create and present a complete proposal to include:

- Analysis of Market
- Preconstruction Management Plan
- Construction Management Plan
- Sales & Marketing Strategy
- Financial and Risk Analysis
- Excellent grammar & appearance
- Additional related information deemed important by the team may be presented

3. Proposal Formatting

a. Proposal should be assembled as follows:

- Proposal must be submitted as a .pdf with a maximum of 20 pages total (Not including cover page and honor pledge). **Remember: Less is more.**
- Minimum** 10 point font and **minimum** one inch margins.
- All financials (schedules and estimates) should be formatted to print on 11 x 17 paper as a fold-out. It is recommended that all site plans be formatted to print on 11 X 17 paper. *All other pages in the proposal should be formatted as 8.5 x 11*
- Create a title page including your school name, which competition program (Custom Build), and year of competition. *Example: University of XYZ, Custom/Small Home Builder, 2025 NAHB Student Competition.*

4. **NOTE:** All proposals will be submitted electronically through your team's NAHB Awards Competition Entry application on <https://awards.nahb.org/>. **Points will be deducted if rules are not followed.** Ensure that **School Name, not Team Name**, is clear and visible on every page of the proposal. Insert header and/or footer in all documents, listing school name and program level. If a school has two teams participating, please clearly designate "Team One" and "Team Two" on each page of the proposal.

5. One (1) copy of the Honor Pledge form (found on page 7) must be included with the proposal. The form must be signed by each team member, including alternates (if any), and the coach certifying that the solution of the problem has been the work of only the team members, alternates and other qualified students. Failure to include this document as part of the solution will be grounds for disqualification.

6. **December 17, 2024, 11:59 PM EDT***: All proposals will be submitted electronically through your NAHB Awards Competition Entry application on <https://awards.nahb.org/>.

***Deadline will be strictly enforced. All submissions must be received by this deadline.**

7. Proposals arriving late will not be accepted and the team will be withdrawn from the competition. Additionally, no substitutions, corrections, or amendments to the written proposal will be allowed once submitted.

QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH

1. No one from your team or school may contact any of the trade/professional partners or any municipality or other governing agency that are affiliated with the project. You may however, contact surrounding jurisdictions as part of your market research. The use of information available on the internet, from these people/groups, is acceptable and appropriate.

2. Teams are encouraged to work within existing code and zoning requirements. Any assumptions of zoning/code changes/exceptions must be very well supported.

3. Teams are encouraged to seek feedback and advice from builders, but students on the team must create their own Custom/Small Home Builder Competition4

work. Under no circumstances may teams outsource work. All work submitted/presented must be the product of the team members.

a The one exception to this rule is that students may choose to use existing house plans as long as appropriate credit is given to their source.

4. All questions regarding the problem and competition logistics must be posted on the 2025 CUSTOM/SMALL HOME BUILDER Student Competition Question Board on Google Groups. Team members must follow the guidelines posted on the Google Groups discussion page.

5. Coaches are encouraged to assist the teams. A guide for the coach and other industry resources is to consider the competition a test in the classroom and direct the team accordingly. Do not provide answers, but lead the team and help the students gain the most from the competition by sharing knowledge and experience.
6. Teams are permitted to visit the competition market/region if they choose.
7. Although NAHB may provide additional resources and webinars, students are not required to use them. Teams will be notified and provided to such links via the email used to register the team.

PRESENTATION

1. **Feb. 24-25, 2025:** The 2025 Student Competition will be conducted in-person at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV. Each team will be required to make a maximum **ten-minute presentation** summarizing its proposal and management concept. A **ten-minute question and answer period** conducted by the judges will follow the proposal presentation.
2. The schedule of presentations will consider team preferences that were selected through your Competition Entry application at the time of team registration. Every effort will be made to schedule presentations according to the stated preference, but NAHB Student Chapters cannot guarantee a particular time slot. Teams will be notified of the preliminary schedule after the competition entry deadline.
3. Presentation schedules will be strictly followed. The schedule may continue to adjust and change until the date of the competition. NAHB Student Chapters will notify teams of changes as they occur via email.
4. A **ten-minute break** will occur between each presentation. The team that has just completed their presentation is to immediately remove their materials, allowing the next team most of the break time for set up.
5. 2025 National Association of Home Builders Student Competition – Permission to Use Video and Waiver of Liability. Following the submission of each team's written proposal, a permission to use video and waiver of liability will be emailed to each team. Please have each team member sign and return the form via the method communicated following the project submission.
7. Teams must bring to the competition at the International Builders' Show:
 - a. Laptop computer pre-loaded with presentation software
 - b. Adaptors for the projector if using a Mac.
 - c. All audio/visual materials
 - d. Teams may test equipment before the start and at the conclusion of the presentations for the day.
8. There will be practice rooms available in a room near the Student Chapters Club Room at the Las Vegas Convention Center beginning 3:00 PM of Sunday, February 23 until the final presentations for all competition levels on Tuesday, February 25. These rooms will have monitors and HDMI available.

9. Each team will be allowed to use its own additional audio/visual presentation equipment or aids such as charts, graphs, etc. for their oral presentations.
10. In the case of extreme circumstances (e.g. internet failure for virtual presentations, or travel delays), teams may appeal to Sarah Weber (sweber@nahb.org) for a second opportunity to present before the judges.

JUDGING

1. The panel will consist of up to five judges. Bios of judges will be posted online prior to the arrival at the International Builders' Show (December 17, 2024).
2. Judges will have different opinions and backgrounds but bring firsthand experience in the identified market.
3. Prior to the IBS the judges will have:
 - a. Reviewed the written proposals
 - b. Graded each team's proposal and assigned a preliminary score worth 80% of each team's overall score
 - c. Been given an overview of guidelines and expectations.
4. A sample of the judges rating form is attached. Please pay special attention to the importance of each category as it relates to the overall competition score. Note that grammar, spelling and appearance of the written proposal are included in the scoring.
5. **February 26, 2025:** A "Judges' Debriefing" session will take place during this morning (time tbd). The project sponsor will deliver remarks regarding the competition and project site, and answer questions from the audience.
6. Winners will be determined based on the cumulative judges' scores. Each judge shall rank the teams from the highest to the lowest scores. Because judges have different backgrounds and experiences, each judge's score in a section is likely to vary widely from another judge's score.
7. Each team's overall ranking will be provided following the Awards Ceremony. The grading summary reports and feedback from each judge will be collated and provided to the teams within two weeks following the Awards Ceremony.

AWARDS

1. Awards will be presented to the winners at the NAHB Student Chapters Awards Ceremony at the International Builders' Show.
2. Each participant will receive a Certificate of Participation and a t-shirt.
3. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams will receive a plaque.
4. Cash prizes will be awarded to top placing teams.

NAHB Student Competition Custom/Small Home Builder Honor Pledge

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the information used in my team's proposal for this competition adheres to the rules and guidelines of the Custom Home Builder Competition. On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance in the completion of this project.

Team (School) Name: _____

Team Members:

Print Name and Signature

Alternate Members (Optional):

Print Name and Signature

Faculty Advisor/Coach:

Print Name and Signature

This form is REQUIRED. Submit one (1) copy per team with solution package.

SAMPLE

Custom/Small Home Builder Student Competition Grading Summary Report

School Name: _____

	Comments	Score	Possible
Analysis of Market			15
Location			
Product selection			
Competition			
Sustainability			
Preconstruction Management			15
Estimate			
Schedule			
Permitting			
Sustainability			
Construction Management Plan			15
Trade partner procurement & management			
Material procurement, mgmt. & disposal			
Inspections			
SWPPPs			
Site Logistics Plan			
Sustainability			
Sales & Marketing			15
Product Design			
Plan/Projection			
Financial and Risk Analysis			15
Direct & Indirect costs			
Accurate numbers			
Reasonable Assumptions			
Risk Assessment & Mitigation			
Quality of the Written Proposal			10
Grammar, appearance, organization			
Quality of Oral Presentation			15
Professional Appearance, Language, & Organization			
TOTAL			100

Positive: _____

Constructive Criticism: _____



Student
Chapters

Highest total score awarded to any team: _____