



**January 3, 2013**

**Media Contact:** Bob Loeb, 585.214.2424  
[bob.loeb@htr.org](mailto:bob.loeb@htr.org)

**The 2013 Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest is open for business and accepting entries**

*Area for-profit start-ups and early-stage enterprises are encouraged to enter, registration opens on January 3rd*

The goal of the Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest is to encourage entrepreneurship among all who enter while recognizing and rewarding the most promising new ventures and start-up companies.

The contest accomplishes this goal as early stage companies prepare, refine and then present their business plans and investor pitches to a panel of judges; as they go through the process, company leaders gain valuable insights into what makes a viable business plan and then how to best present that plan to potential investors.

The winner of the annual Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest receives a \$25,000 cash prize and a variety of marketing and business incubator services; the value of the contest process, which includes a series of workshops taught by experienced entrepreneurs, is priceless.

Workshops begin in February and finalists will be determined and announced by the end of March. The winners will be announced on April 18, 2013 at the 5th Annual Celebration of Entrepreneurship Luncheon.

The Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest is open to for-profit companies headquartered in the nine-county Finger Lakes Region: Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties. Students currently enrolled in a college or university within the region are also eligible to enter. Prior first prize winners of the Contest are not eligible to compete.

Registration opens on Thursday, January 3, 2013 and goes thru Thursday, January 31, 2013. The registration fee is \$150 per company and includes participation of two company representatives in a series of preparatory workshops. Go to [www.htr.org](http://www.htr.org)

“If innovation is the lifeblood of economic growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, then the Rochester region is poised for great health and long life,” says James Senall, president of High Tech Rochester, the local organization that coordinates the contest. “Over the past few years, we’ve had tremendous interest in the Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest, both from the new companies that enter and from the business community leaders who attend the Celebration of Entrepreneurship Luncheon when we award the prizes.”

**Who Should Enter**

Companies interested in entering should have a scalable business concept with high growth potential. Companies must be early-stage, as defined at the time of application by having less than \$250,000 of outside cash investment and less than \$500,000 in cumulative revenue (excluding research grants).



### **Not Ready for Prime Time?**

As an extra to benefit budding entrepreneurs who want to learn more about business plans and investor presentations but who are not quite ready for a contest, individuals can attend the four workshops on how to plan, write and present a business plan for only \$100. Go to [www.htr.org](http://www.htr.org) for details.

### **Judging Criteria**

Throughout the contest – from the initial evaluation of the entries to the selection of the finalists and then the first, second and third-place winners and the two runners-up - the panels of reviewers and judges base their decisions on criteria that includes the probability of success of the business plan coupled with the size of its potential economic impact (the larger the impact, the better).

An independent panel of distinguished area entrepreneurs and investors serve as judges and will select five finalists from what typically is a field of more than 30 entrants. The five finalists will present their business plans and investor pitches immediately prior to the Celebration of Entrepreneurship Luncheon. The presentations are open to the public.

The first place winner receives a \$25,000 cash prize plus marketing and business incubation services. Second and third-place winners receive smaller amounts of cash and marketing services. The runners-up receive marketing and business services.

Any cash prize winner of the contest agrees to operate their business in the Finger Lakes Region for at least 12 months beyond April 18, 2013.

###

The Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest is a collaborative initiative aimed at stimulating more entrepreneurial activity in the nine-county Finger Lakes region. The planning committee comprises High Tech Rochester, Inc. ([www.htr.org](http://www.htr.org)), Digital Rochester ([www.digitalrochester.com](http://www.digitalrochester.com)), The Entrepreneurs Network ([www.ten-ny.org](http://www.ten-ny.org)), Excell Partners (<http://www.excellny.com>), Greater Rochester Enterprise ([www.RochesterBiz.com](http://www.RochesterBiz.com)), Rochester Institute of Technology ([www.rit.edu](http://www.rit.edu)), Nazareth College School of Management ([www.naz.edu](http://www.naz.edu)) and the University of Rochester Simon Graduate School of Business ([www.simon.rochester.edu](http://www.simon.rochester.edu)).