

# US IMAGINE CUP RULES & REGULATIONS - 2014 season

[Last reviewed: November 1, 2013]

## OVERVIEW

The US Imagine Cup Rules & Regulations govern how US students are selected for the World Semifinals of the 2014 Imagine Cup Competition. These rules apply only to student startups/teams who are accepted into the winter funding cycle of the Microsoft Imagine Fund. Students applying for and are accepted into the summer funding cycle are not eligible to participate in the 2014 Imagine Cup competition through the Microsoft Imagine Fund.

## WHAT ARE THE START AND END DATES?

You can apply for acceptance into the Microsoft Imagine Fund 2013 winter funding cycle starting October 15, 2013 at 00:01 PST time.

Application period opens	Application period closes
November 1, 2013 (00:01 AM PST)	February 1, 2014 (11:59 PM PST)

## CAN I PARTICIPATE?

If you have been accepted into the Microsoft Imagine Fund 2014 winter funding cycle and are actively participating in the program you will automatically be considered for the 2014 Imagine Cup World Semifinals (actively participating means that you participate in regular meetings with mentors, learning sessions etc.)

See the [Microsoft Imagine Fund](#) terms and conditions on eligibility criteria and how to apply.

If you are selected as a World Semifinalist you and your co-founders are subject to the eligibility criteria described in the sections “Can I enter?” and “Teams, Associates, and Mentors” in the [2014 Imagine Cup Official Rules & Regulations](#) for full details.

## HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

To be considered for the 2014 Imagine Cup World Semifinals and World Finals you must apply for acceptance into the [Microsoft Imagine Fund](#). If you are accepted into the winter funding cycle you will also be considered for the 2014 Imagine Cup World Semifinals and finals.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

At the end of the Microsoft Imagine Fund Program winter cycle you and the other student startups accepted into the program will be pitching your company and app/product to a panel of industry expert judges during Pitch Day.

The judges will evaluate and score your presentation and app/product based on the criteria described in the section below.

At the end of the day the judges will select the three best startups/teams who will represent the US in the 2014 Imagine Cup World Semifinals.

The 2014 Imagine Cup World Semifinals take place in May 2014 and World Semifinalist projects from across the world are evaluated and scored through an online process by a panel of global judges. At the

conclusion of the judging one of the three US Semifinalist student startups/teams will be selected to represent the US at the World Finals Event in Seattle, WA in July 2014.

## HOW WILL MY PRESENTATION BE JUDGED?

During Pitch Day the judges will evaluate and score your presentation on the below criteria

Criteria	Judges will evaluate...	Weight
Concept	Does the product/app have a clear target market or audience? Does the product/app address a clear need, problem, or opportunity and is the solution clearly explained? Is the product/app's purpose and basic functionality easily understood?	15%
Innovation and Impact*	Does the product/app create a new category of product or service? If there are similar products or services on the market, does the product/app clearly and meaningfully innovate beyond those existing products or services? Does the product/app present a new and meaningfully improved way of accomplishing something? Does the product/app include innovations in user experience? Does the product/app include innovations in technical design and/or implementation?	50%
Execution	Is the product/software easy to use? Does the product/app/software have a professional degree of production in terms of user interface, visuals, and audio? Does the software perform well and respond crisply to input? Does the product/app make effective and appropriate use of the major features of its chosen platform(s)? Were there significant platform features or even platforms the product/app could have benefitted from but failed to utilize?	20%
Feasibility	Does the team have a credible plan for getting their product/app to market in terms of business model, any required partnerships, or other factors? Does the team have any form of external validation for their product/app such as customer surveys, focus group tests, an active beta-test program, recommendations from subject matter experts, or potential investors? Does the product/app have a reasonable chance of success in its appropriate market given the team's existing plan?	15%

If your product/app is a Game the judges will also look at the "Fun" factor and look at whether the game is exciting to play, if it offers good player feedback, is appropriately challenging, and if this is a game

that leaves the player wanting to keep coming back for more. The judges will look at whether the game delivers appealing innovation in gameplay, storytelling, art direction, or other areas.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I MAKE IT TO THE WORLD SEMIFINALS?**

If your startup is selected to represent the US at the Imagine Cup World Semifinals you will be subject to the rules describing the World Semifinals in the [Imagine Cup Official Rules & Regulations](#)

### **WHAT ARE THE DELIVERABLES?**

If you are selected as a World Semifinalist you must submit the materials outlined in the [Imagine Cup Official Rules & Regulations](#) within one week of being selected as a World Semifinalist.

You must submit the required entry materials by registering your team and uploading these through the registration tool on [www.imaginecup.com](http://www.imaginecup.com):

- Presentation Video of your project in which your entire team appears on camera to deliver the presentation as if to a panel of judges.
- Project Proposal that explains your project and your team: Who your team is; what your app/product does; who your product is for; and how you will bring it to market. App/Product usable by the judges.
- App/Product Instructions document explaining how to use it.

For more details about the required entry materials see [Imagine Cup Official Rules & Regulations](#).

### **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

The technical requirements for your app/product as a Semifinalist are the same as for the Microsoft Imagine Fund Pitch Day:

Your company's product/app must be developed using at least one product in the Visual Studio family and must be built to require any one or more of the following platforms:

- Windows 8
- Windows Phone
- Windows Azure

In addition to one or more of the above, you may also use other Microsoft platforms such as Kinect for Windows SDK, .NET Framework, XNA, Bing maps API, etc., as well as third-party game engines, libraries, and middleware provided you obey their licenses, but none of these are required. As long as your project requires Windows, Windows Phone, or Windows Azure to operate your project meets this requirement.

You can get free tools and software at [DreamSpark](#)

In addition, all entries must meet the "General Standards for Entries" outlined in the [Imagine Cup Official Rules & Regulations](#) if you advance to the world Semifinals.

### **HOW WILL MY ENTRY BE JUDGED?**

For the purpose of the 2014 Imagine Cup competition structure your app/product will be categorized within one of the three categories; Games, Innovation, or World Citizenship. The judging criteria will differ somewhat based on which category your entry falls into. You can explore the judging criteria for the three different categories here:

[World Citizenship Competition](#)

[Innovation Competition](#)

[Games Competition](#)

### **WHAT ARE THE PRIZES?**

Of the three US Semifinalist teams one team will be chosen to represent the US at the 2014 Imagine Cup World Finals.

If you and your startup are chosen you and your co-founders (up to 4 people) will receive a trip to the Imagine Cup 2014 World Finals Event in Seattle, Washington, USA in July 2014 where you will compete against student teams from all over the world. The trip includes round trip coach airfare from a major airport closest to each competitor's home, standard hotel accommodations, and select meals and activities. More information regarding transportation and meals can be found in the [Imagine Cup Official Rules & Regulations](#) in the "Travel Prize Conditions" section.

### **WHAT OTHER CONDITIONS AM I AGREEING TO BY ENTERING?**

By entering this Contest you agree:

- To abide by these Official Rules; **and**
- To release and hold harmless Microsoft and its respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, employees and agents from any and all liability or any injury, loss or damage of any kind arising from or in connection with this Contest, or any prize won; **and**
- That Microsoft's decisions will be final and binding on all matters related to this Contest; **and**
- That, by accepting a prize, Microsoft may use of your proper name and state of residence online and in print, or in any other media, in connection with this Contest, without payment or compensation to you, except where prohibited by law.

### **WHAT LAWS GOVERN THE WAY THIS CONTEST IS EXECUTED AND ADMINISTRATED?**

This Contest will be governed by the laws of the State of Washington, and you consent to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of the courts of the State of Washington for any disputes arising out of this Contest.

### **WHAT IF SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENS AND THE CONTEST CAN'T RUN AS PLANNED?**

If someone cheats, or a virus, bug, catastrophic event, or any other unforeseen or unexpected event that cannot be reasonably anticipated or controlled, (also referred to as force majeure) affects the fairness and / or integrity of this Contest, we reserve the right to cancel, change or suspend this Contest. This right is reserved whether the event is due to human or technical error. If a solution cannot be found to restore

the integrity of the Contest, we reserve the right to select winners from among all eligible entries received before we had to cancel, change or suspend the Contest.

If you attempt to compromise the integrity or the legitimate operation of this Contest by hacking or by cheating or committing fraud in ANY way, we may seek damages from you to the fullest extent permitted by law. Further, we may ban you from participating in any of our future Contest, so please play fairly.

**HOW CAN I FIND OUT WHO WON?**

A list of winners will be posted online at <http://microsoftimaginefund.com/>

**WHO IS SPONSORING THIS CONTEST?**

Microsoft Corporation  
One Microsoft Way  
Redmond, WA 98052