



QØ CUP

2020 Competition Brief



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# OVERVIEW

## The QØ Cup

At Quarter Zero, we envision a world where all young people are equipped to build lives designed to achieve their fullest potential.

We are building this world by offering entrepreneurial experiences for high school students in the real-world who want to create, disrupt, and thrive.

Check out our summer experiences [here](#).

We are building this world by providing trusted guidance and community to high school AND university students who want to align their vision and goals with their core values, and exponentially multiply their locus of impact in the world.

Check out our coaching options [here](#).

**And now, we want to learn from YOU.**



# THE BIG QUESTION

**How can we power the potential  
of young people?**

Today, the world is rapidly changing in terms of the challenges we face, the solutions available to us, the scale of people being impacted, the level of connectivity across regions, and the uncertainty about the future that comes with global affairs in such a constant state of flux.

The people impacted MOST by these issues are those whose education is disrupted, whose finances are unstable, whose future environment is under threat, and who are not yet considered ready to take responsibility for the state of the world—**that's you.**

Over the course of **four weeks and three distinct phases**, the QO Cup contenders will **grow their ideas from an informal summary into a fully developed solution** that can be **prototyped and tested in the real world**.

Guided by direct feedback from QO specialists, contenders will work to rethink and redesign the way communities work by creating solutions that have a widespread and lasting positive impact.



# THE CHALLENGE

**QØ Cup contenders must form diverse teams of high-schoolers to collaboratively identify relevant problems within the given categories, as well as design and propose solutions that will, in turn, help power the potential of young people.**

**THE CHALLENGES** could be from the following categories:

- Mental Health and Wellness
- Energy & Environment
- College Search & Selection
- Education & Tutoring
- “Fix this problem at my school”

**POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS** could be, but are not limited to:

- Products and/or services
- For-profit or Not-for-profit organizations
- Brick-and-Mortar and/or web-based solutions



# THE PROCESS

## Round 1

### THE PROBLEM - Written Summary

Your first challenge is to investigate, incubate, and communicate the specific problem you want to work on.

Introduce your team, tell us where your interests lie, and develop a research plan that will help you delve deeper into the problem and ultimately help you develop your solution.

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**Deadline for Submission:** April 26, 2020

**Decision and Feedback:**

Teams that are selected to advance to the second round will receive rolling notification and feedback from QO experts by May 02, 2020.

**Submission Type:** Written summary as a form submission



# THE PROCESS

## Round 1

### THE PROBLEM - Written Summary

**Teams that will be moving forward will have considered:**

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**Core Problem** A major reason why startups fail is because their solution is not rooted in a problem that has a viable market, and often development time is biased toward the novelty of the idea instead of the detailed understanding of the problem. Provide information and insight to help us understand the conditions—economic, geographic, social, technological, etc.—surrounding the problem you’re proposing to solve.

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**Market Existence** Sometimes a problem clearly exists, but simply lacks a large enough market to be a viable business. Be as specific as possible about the exact market of users who experience this problem and who would adopt this solution.

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**Related Assumptions** All businesses make various assumptions about the problem, solution, pricing, distribution, supply chain, etc. Founders who are able to identify key assumptions in specific areas often have an advantage. List 3 key assumptions you are making about the core problem.

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**Next Steps** Assuming you were to start, or continue, your venture tomorrow, create a 7-day plan with a goal to prove your 3 core problem assumptions true or false. Be clear about how you will test each of the assumptions, including the data you will collect.

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**Tip:** You do not need to identify and defend a specific solution at this point. Keep your writing concise and focused on the big picture.



# THE PROCESS

## Round 2

### THE PROPOSAL - Video and Canvas Submission

Your next challenge is to consider the QØ feedback/coaching you received in Round 1 as you define your solution, talk to potential users, and propose a solution!

You'll communicate your solution through an informative and compelling 3-minute video, as well as a comprehensive and well-thought out adaptation of your proposal to QØ's Venture Canvas.

Given the constraints put in place across the country, due to COVID-19, we encourage you to record customer interviews over video calls and use clips from the internet.

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**Deadline for Submission:** May 10, 2020

**Decision and Feedback:**

Teams that are selected to advance to the Final Pitch round will receive rolling notification and feedback from QØ experts by May 19, 2020.

**Submission Type:** Video and Venture Canvas (framework provided by QØ upon selection)



# THE PROCESS

## Round 2

### THE PROPOSAL - Video and Canvas Submission

**Teams that will be moving forward will have considered:**

#### Core Problem Review

A major reason why startups fail is because their solution is not rooted in a problem that has a viable market and often development time is biased towards the novelty of the idea instead of the detailed understanding of the problem. Provide information and insight to help us understand the conditions—economic, geographic, social, technological, etc.—surrounding the problem you're proposing to solve.

#### Customer Story

Did you tell us a story? A clear singular story about how a user is experiencing their problem is often more effective in engaging investors and customers alike than using large stats and figures. Share a story about how one of your customers currently experiences the problem you are trying to solve and what a world would look like where they are using your product to remedy the situation.

#### Competition Analysis

All new ventures have either direct or indirect competitors. Please share who you consider to be your main competitor and key features/approaches they take to solve the existing problem. Additionally, draw comparisons and key differentiators between your approach and theirs.

#### Next Steps

Provide a clear and concise (2-3 sentence) summary of the solution your team is proposing, and detail any steps you've taken/will take in the next 7 days to begin prototyping your solution and testing it in a real-world context.

**Tip:** Make the video or voice over engaging... don't read from a script. Let your energy, enthusiasm, and conviction towards the problem you are solving shine through. This does not mean you should not spend time drafting an outline and script, we highly recommend that you do, just don't read from it. First impressions are important - Your hook is how you get your audience to pay attention to what you are about to say. Have a compelling hook. It could be a story, a statistic, a joke, etc.



# THE PROCESS

## Round 3

### THE PITCH - Live Presentation, Q&A

Your final challenge will focus on the progress and updates you have been able to make - including feedback incorporation, further research and customer discovery, as well as getting your first (paying) customer!

Final contending teams will select one member to present and defend the team's solution in its entirety over a 3-minute live virtual presentation to the other finalists, judges, and QØ's live stream audience, followed by 3 minutes of questions and answers with the entire team!

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**2-Day Live Pitch Event:** May 28-29, 2020

**Awards Decision:** June 02, 2020

**Submission Type:** Live Virtual Pitch via Zoom followed by questions



# THE PROCESS

## Round 3

### THE PITCH - Live Presentation, Q&A

**Teams that will be moving forward will have considered:**

#### Lessons Learned and Insights Gained:

Core Problem + Prototype - Assumptions and Testing

Share the insights and lessons gained since the beginning of your application, as they pertain to the exploration of your:

**Core Problem:** What incorrect assumptions did you have? How did that change your view of the problem and the customer?

**Proposed Solution:** What incorrect assumptions did you have about various solutions? How did that change your view of the problem and possible solutions to prototype the customer?

#### Finding that first customer

Building on the insights learned from customer discovery, prototyping, and market testing, create a 7-day plan for what you would do to get one (1) paying customer. It might seem like a small number, but getting your first paying customer is a monumental milestone in any business. How would you get your customer? What would you sell them? For how much?

#### Market Size Opportunity

Based on insights gained since your initial submission, if your market focus has shifted, which is likely, update this section to match your new market focus. Be as specific as possible about the exact market of users who experience this problem and who would adopt your solution.

#### Next Steps

If you were to continue with your venture, what's your plan in the next 7-days? Maybe you gained some key insights in trying to sell your product and came up unsuccessful in getting them to pay, but gained valuable insights that you want to incorporate into further Customer Discovery? Maybe you got your first paying customer and now you are hungry for more. Maybe it's time for a massive pivot to re-examine the core-problem from a new perspective. All of these possibilities are valid and valuable and will be judged on equal grounds. This is not a competition to make the most money or necessarily have the most promising venture problem or idea.

**Tip:** This is your chance to end your presentation strong. The experts reviewing your pitch have a network and resources that could be beneficial to your idea, and this is your chance to ask them for what you need most at this stage. Just a friendly suggestion, most early ventures are not ready for funding, so don't focus on that. Think short-term and most immediate—what would help you be most successful in the next 10-days with finding that first paying customer? Is it a strategic partnership? An introduction? A specific type of advisor who could help you develop a strategy for finding that first paying customer? Is it an email list of ideal prospective customers or access to a specific facebook group? It is acquiring marketing assets to deliver to prospective customers to be considered "legit" and to clearly outline the benefits and values that you'll be giving them as a customer if they sign up now. What is it for your venture?



2020 Competition Brief

# THE TIMELINE

## ROUND 1 THE PROBLEM

Submission by April 26, 2020

Decision: May 02, 2020

## ROUND 2 THE PROPOSAL

Submission by May 10, 2020

Decision: May 19, 2020

## ROUND 3 THE PITCH

Submission by May 28-29, 2020

Decision: June 02, 2020





# THE CONTENDERS

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## Eligibility

High-schoolers (or students in their gap year) ages 13 to 19 from across the United States can compete individually or in teams of up to 6.



# THE PRIZES

## THE OVERALL FAVORITE

Cash Prize of \$1500 per team, and full tuition scholarship to a QØ program of your choice including airfare.

## SUB-CATEGORIES

Members of winning teams will each receive \$100 and full tuition scholarship to a QØ program of your choice.

- **MOST INNOVATIVE:** The contenders with the most unique, specific solution prototype that excelled at its competitive analysis and user-focus.
- **MOST SOCIAL IMPACT:** The contenders with the highest potential for beneficial impact on society, including scalability and depth of impact.
- **BEST PITCH:** The contenders with the most compelling pitch - including an engaging narrative, impactful data presentation, and a visionary outlook.
- **MOST INVESTABLE:** The contenders with the highest likelihood of scalability, revenue generation and an overall high ROI multiple.



# QO RESOURCES

## RESOURCES

[The First 50 Days Toolkit](#)

[The Idea Board](#)

[Catapult Demo Day Pitches](#)



THANK YOU