DUT
DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
WHERE KNOWLEDGE CHALLENGES

Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities

CALL FOR ENTRIES

2025 URBAN INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETITION

"FURTHER PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT"

ABOUT

The sixth annual Urban Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition will be held from March to November 2025. This competition is for members and affiliate members of the Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities. The theme of the 2025 Competition is "Further Promoting Sustainable Urban Development" focusing on the United Nations Sustainability Goals to Transform Our World.

The Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities (GISU) currently includes 27 members and affiliate members, 7 continents, 22 countries, 25 cities, accombined approximate population of almost 60 million, 659,000 students and 70,000 faculty and staff.

Supported by the Guangzhou Municipality, GISU's mission is to attract and leverage the academic resources of its members in close collaboration for the sustainable development of our cities.

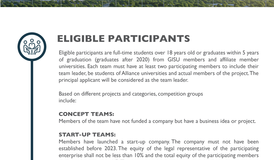
CURRENT GISU MEMBERS AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS INCLUDE

- Belarusian State University of Physical Culture
- Charles Darwin University
- Chang Mai University
- Covenant University
- Duffindi International University*
- Durban University of Technology
- Gorgan University of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
- Guangzhou Maritime University
- Guangzhou Medical University
- Guangzhou University
- Incheon National University
- Linkoping University
- Middle East Technical University
- National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute"
- Polytechnic University of Valencia
- Stellenbosch University
- Tampere University
- Tomas Bata University
- Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology
- Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana
- University of Coimbra
- University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City
- University of Padova
- University of Quebec at Montreal
- University of the West of England
- University of Zaragoza
- Western Sydney University

2025 COMPETITION THEME

The theme of the 2025 Competition is "FurtherPromoting Sustainable Urban Development" focusing on the United Nations Sustainability Goals to Transform Our World. Competition Finalists will be judged by the following criteria but not limited to:

- Innovation
- Team
- Commerciality
- Social Benefits
- Communication



ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Eligible participants are full-time students over 18 years old or graduates within 5 years of graduation (graduates after 2020) from GISU members and affiliate member universities. Each team must have at least two participating members to include their team leader, be students of Alliance universities and actual members of the prospect. The principal applicant will be considered as the team leader.

Based on different projects and categories, competition groups include:

CONCEPT TEAMS:
Members of the team have not funded a company but have a business idea or project.

START-UP TEAMS:
Members have launched a start-up company The company must not have been established before 2023. The equity of the legal representative of the participating enterprise shall not be less than 10% and the total equity of the participating members shall not be less than 1/3. The corporate legal representative shall not be allowed to make changes after the announcement of the contest.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Registration for the competition must come as a team. Multi-disciplinary, interprofessional, inter-university, and multi-national teams are encouraged. Each team must have at least two participating members to include their team leader, be students of the Alliance universities and actual members of the project. The principal applicant will be considered as the team leader

The GISU member university where the project leader is currently enrolled will be taken as the home university of the project.

The entries must be real, legal, and in good standing without any negative records. Plagiarism, misappropriation, provision of false materials, or violation of relevant laws and regulations shall result in the project team immediately losing rights to participate and will bear all legal responsibilities.

For start-up projects that have completed company registration, the company profile and legal representative status, shareholding structure, and copies of other relevant certification documents must be provided during the in-school competition to the relevant university.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

1 IN-SCHOOL PRELIMINARY COMPETITIONS
The application submission portal will open on 16 June 2025. The final deadline for submission is 20 June 2025, after which no further applications will be accepted.

2 ONLINE SEMI-FINAL COMPETITION
Expert judges plan to select 12 teams per category to compete in the final. The finalists will be announced by 18 July 2025

3 FINAL COMPETITION
The final competition will be held both virtually and in-person in Durban, South Africa on 30 - 31 October 2025.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Project demonstration video
- Project presentation power point
- Business plan
- Brief summary of the project (about 300 words the team approves to be used as advertisement material on promotional websites

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The upload portal for submission of entries for the 2025 Urban Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition will officially open on **Friday, 06 June 2025** and close on **Friday, 20 June 2025** via the DUT website.

Participants are required to submit the following materials in the specified formats:

Project Demonstration Video
Format: MP4
Duration: Maximum of 5 minutes
File Size: Must not exceed platform limits
Encoding: H.264 video with AAC audio
Resolution: 800 × 600

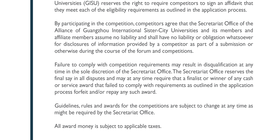
Project Presentation (PowerPoint)
Format: .ppt or .pptx
Duration: Equivalent to a 5-minute presentation
File Size: Not to exceed 20MB

Business Plan
Format: PDF

Project Summary
Word count: Approximately 300 words
Purpose: To be published on the promotional competition website hosted by Guangzhou University

Please label each of your files as follows:
TEAMNAME_PROJECT_VIDEO
TEAMNAME_PROJECT_PPT
TEAMNAME_BUSINESS_PLAN
TEAMNAME_PROJECT_SUMMARY

Ensure all submissions meet the required specifications to avoid disqualification.



COMPETITION AWARDS AND BONUSES

Concept and Start-Up Teams

GOLD	R 130 000,00
SILVER	R65 000,00
BRONZE	R 26 000,00
OUTSTANDING MENTOR	R 6 500,00

IMPORTANT DATES

Information session:
30 April 2025

Entries open:
06 June 2025

Entries close:
20 June 2025

Initial screening and shortlisting:
30 June 2025

Semi-final competition:
18 July 2025

Final Competition:
30 - 31 October 2025

COMPETITION DISCLAIMER

The Secretariat Office of the Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities (GISU) reserves the right to require competitors to sign an affidavit that they meet each of the eligibility requirements as outlined in the application process.

By participating in the competition, competitors agree that the Secretariat Office of the Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities and its members and affiliate members assume no liability and shall have no liability or obligation whatsoever for disclosures of information provided by a competitor as part of a submission or otherwise during the course of the forum and competitions.

Failure to comply with competition requirements may result in disqualification at any time in the sole discretion of the Secretariat Office. The Secretariat Office reserves the final say in all disputes and may at any time require that a finalist or winner of any cash or service award that failed to comply with requirements as outlined in the application process forfeit and/or repay such award.

Guidelines, rules and awards for the competitions are subject to change at any time as might be required by the Secretariat Office.

All award money is subject to applicable taxes.

JUDGES AND CREDITING RULES

Judges of the in-school preliminary competition are selected by each Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities member or affiliate member university.

Judges of the online semi-final competitionand the final competition will be selected by the Secretariat Office of the Alliance of Guangzhou International Sister-City Universities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The primary contact for Durban University of Technology for the 2025 competition is:

Dr Pinkie Nicola
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