

Are you aged 50 or over with a great business idea — or already trading and ready to grow?

Now is your time to shine with the Pitch Perfect Start-Up Competition 2025 — designed especially for aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs aged 50+. Whether you're at the concept stage or running a business under 18 months old, this competition is your chance to build skills, boost confidence, and win funding to take your idea to the next level.

This exciting opportunity is more than just a pitch — it's a transformative experience that will connect you with experts, equip you with the tools to succeed, and open the door to a vibrant community of like-minded entrepreneurs.

Delivered in partnership by:



CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHEATHARLOCHA



Carlow County
Development Partnership
Comhghairtíocht Fhorbartha Theoranta Chontae Cheatharlach


Difig Fiontair Áitiúil
Local Enterprise Office



Leabharlann
Chontae Cheatharlach
Carlow County Library



Age Friendly
CARLOW



Grow the skills you need at your local library



County Carlow
Chamber
Advancing business together

inCarlow

Carlow Community
Enterprise Centres CLG



Competition Structure Stage 1 – Apply Now

Submit your application by 30th September 2025

Apply online at Empowering Entrepreneurs 50+ Start Up Competition | Carlow County Council's Online Consultation Portal (<https://consult.carlow.ie/en/content/empowering-entrepreneurs-50-start-competition>) or email enterprise@carlowcoco.ie for a copy of the entry form or call **059-9129783**

Two categories are open for entry:

Start-Up Idea – for individuals with a business concept or plan



Start-Up Fund – for businesses trading less than 18 months

All applications will be reviewed, and **20 finalists** will be selected to take part in the Pitch Perfect Boot Camp.

Stage 2 – Boot Camp for Finalists

The top 20 applicants will be invited to attend an intensive, inspiring **Entrepreneurs Boot Camp**, taking place on **5th & 6th November 2025**.

This boot camp experience will be delivered by The Entrepreneurs Academy, Ireland's leading training and mentoring organisation for start-ups and small businesses. Known for empowering entrepreneurs of all backgrounds, The Entrepreneurs Academy brings a dynamic, practical, and supportive approach that turns ambition into action.

What You'll Gain at the Boot Camp

Whether you're shaping your first business idea or taking your fledgling business to the next level, the boot camp will help you:

- Identify and refine your business idea or strengthen your early-stage start-up
- Choose and understand the best-fit business model for your concept
- Explore market trends and how to position your offer effectively
- Build clarity and confidence in your value proposition
- Learn how to communicate your business clearly and persuasively
- Understand what makes a compelling pitch
- Practise your pitch and receive live feedback from experienced mentors
- Pitch to a panel of judges for real-world validation, recognition, and prizes

It's a supportive, energising space to connect with peers, learn from experts, and take meaningful steps toward launching or growing your business.

Competition Categories & Prizes Start-Up Idea Category

For entrepreneurs aged 50+ with a business idea or concept

Total Prize Fund: €1,000

1st Prize: €400

2nd Prize: €300

3rd Prize: €200

Merit Award: €100

This category is designed to support individuals with an idea they want to shape, validate, and bring to life.

Start-Up Fund Category

For entrepreneurs aged 50+ with a business trading for less than 18 months

Overall Prize: €1,000

This prize is designed to provide a valuable boost to early-stage businesses, helping them take the next step in their growth journey.

Why You Should Apply ?

- Gain expert guidance from The Entrepreneurs Academy
- Learn to shape and pitch your business idea or early-stage venture
- Build confidence and develop entrepreneurial skills
- Connect with like-minded entrepreneurs aged 50+
- Compete for a share of over €2,000 in prize funding
- Get real-world feedback and validation from business experts
- Celebrate your potential and unlock your next chapter