

Region 9 IEEE Entrepreneurship Ambassadors' Program

Your first step to organize your entrepreneurship event

Welcome Message

On behalf of the IEEE R9 Entrepreneurship Committee, we welcome you to our community and your Entrepreneurship Event Organization journey! The program foundations incorporate various backgrounds of industry, academia, and entrepreneurial domains sourced across different IEEE Region 9 subunits by experienced professionals such as CEOs, senior managers, startup initiators and founders, professors, and more.

We understand that local entrepreneurship ecosystems broadly vary on many factors. Therefore, the local ecosystem participants are often the only ones to have deeper insights into how these ecosystems work and how to approach them. Knowing this, we are starting a call for Ambassadors in 2024 for the first time in R9 and asking you to join us. Throughout the events you will organize between July and September, you will have the guidance of an experienced mentor. In October and November, events and ambassadors are evaluated by an IEEE committee, and awards are presented later on.

At this point, please review the document below, wonder about your motivation to join, and stay open to learning. Applications for 2024 are open until July 31st, 2024. However, apply promptly (first in, first out).

Benefits of being an Entrepreneurship Ambassador

Among the several reasons for you to participate, we would like to highlight some:

- Build your essential skills, such as negotiation, networking, and organizing skills, such as event planning and execution.
- Contribute to instilling the entrepreneurship spirit among your local and IEEE community and growing local entrepreneurship activities.
- Create, encourage, and support local (country and regional) entrepreneurship communities within IEEE.
- Strengthen your entrepreneurship knowledge and skills by creating learning opportunities for aspiring or early-stage entrepreneurs within the IEEE community to pursue their business project journey.
- Nurture mentorship opportunities by connecting aspiring or early-stage entrepreneurs within your IEEE community to IEEE and non-IEEE mentors in entrepreneurship.
- Create and grow your network by creating a local (country and regional) entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment network, which the R9 Entrepreneurship Committee can support you in extending and reaching to aspiring or early-stage entrepreneurs within the IEEE community.

- Push to action through competition by creating your local competition platform/pitching to identify and encourage new ideas and startups to emerge from within the IEEE community.

Program Overview

The Region 9 IEEE Entrepreneurship Ambassadors Program was launched in March 2024 during the Region 9 meeting, with the call for ambassadors, students, and young professionals from different countries.

Applications to become ambassadors are open year-round until June 30th, last day to apply, with approvals on a rolling basis, ensuring that programs are executed before October.

Applicants must be IEEE members associated with an affinity group, chapter, or student branch. Selected ambassadors receive a single gate approval for events within 1-2 weeks, along with guidelines, responsibilities, and resources.

Ambassadors can update their event applications as needed.

Each ambassador or ambassador group is assigned a mentor from the R9 Entrepreneurship team for guidance and support in planning and executing events, with progress monitored through calls and emails. Events may be reported using Vtools.

In October and November, events and ambassadors are evaluated by an IEEE committee based on organization, scale, and impact. Awards include recognition within IEEE, and monetary rewards are presented later on.

You became an ambassador because...

- You are an IEEE member and affiliated with an IEEE affinity group, chapter, or student branch.
- You will send regular information on event-related contacts to the IEEE R9 Entrepreneurship Committee, whether participants, incubators, companies, investors, tech transfer officers, etc., for future local or regional events and program continuity.
- You are interested in organizing entrepreneurship events without being an entrepreneur.
- You are willing to network and connect with the startup community.

Timeline:

Date	
March 9th, 2024	IEEE Entrepreneurship Ambassador Launch
April 3rd, 2024	First Informative Session (Webex)
June 30th, 2024	Last day to send applications to become ambassadors
May 1st - September 30th, 2024	Entrepreneurship events carry on
October 20th	Last day to submit reporting to apply to for the best event award Last day to submit letter to apply to become the best ambassador Last day to submit startups (inducing the winner) (Reporting can be done as soon as the event is completed through the event reporting link. Vtool reporting is also encouraged)
October 21st - November	Regional Pitch Competition (Virtual or on-site depending on the timeline)
November 30th	Last day to announce winners. Announcement on the website, social media an email to all ambassadors.
December 1st 2024 - 2025	Awards given to the winners. Travel to the Summits occurs.

Ambassador Responsibilities

Ambassadors are representatives of the R9 Entrepreneurship committee on the ground. Your aim is to strengthen and expand the entrepreneurship community in your IEEE section and community. Therefore we would like your help in the following responsibilities

- Bring together IEEE and non IEEE members who are interested in entrepreneurship, as fellow ambassadors or volunteers
- Organize one or multiple entrepreneurship focused events in your country
- Organize one pitch competition in your country with the aim of promoting early stage entrepreneurship and recruiting startups
- Ensure continuity of the entrepreneurship spirit by creating a local interest group in entrepreneurship and recruiting future ambassadors for the next year
- Report the activities in Vtools, ambassadors must reach out to their OU (Section, Student Branch, Affinity Group, etc) for support to learn how to upload the event in Vtools.
- Ambassadors must report the winning startups and also request the startups to fill the form "Startup Submissions", so IEEE Entrepreneurship can promote and send them useful information.

Ambassadors need to work with an IEEE organizational unit in your section, e.g., Student Branches, Young Professional Affinity Groups or parts of the section such as Professional Activities, society chapters or more. Bear in mind that this could also be a good source for organization support and funding.

Ambassadors need to update us with any new materials for your event to help you in promoting the event regionally and have more exposure (agenda, speakers list, investors list, partners and more). Each group of ambassadors will have a mentor from our team to follow up and support.

You will have access to the “Event report form” where you can give us a final update on your event including photos, videos and statistics. Submitting an event report is necessary if you want to be eligible for the ambassador awards detailed below.

In the same event report form, you will be able to submit the contacts and name of the startups, indicating the three winners from your pitching competition.

How to carry out events and activities

Events can be anything from a panel discussion to an innovation challenge. The IEEE R9 Entrepreneurship Committee regards an innovation challenge as an event providing a rounded opportunity for the Ambassadors.

The event itself:

- Duration: At least one-day event
- Content: talks, panel discussions, success stories about tech entrepreneurship
- Pitch competition:
 - a local pitching competition that can be in person or hybrid
 - topic should be linked to sustainability and the IEEE mission to advance technology for humanity (e.g., renewable energy, smart cities, energy and resource efficiency, recycling, smart agriculture)
- Pitch Competition criteria
 - Startup team should have at least one IEEE member (encouraged, but not required)
 - Startup should showcase traction, i.e., have an MVP, dummy / demo app, business plan, initial market interest or any source of traction and commitment to their venture
 - When applying to your pitch competition, startups should submit a pitch video in English. The reason for that is to make sure we have a clear and understandable pitch video for all startups that will be used in the next phase of the Entrepreneurship week, where the top 3 startups from each event will compete on a regional level. In this phase, initial judging takes place virtually and we have faced issues in the past with unclear video submissions. We want to avoid these issues this year and make sure all startups have equal chances.

- Promotion: the local event should promote the regional Pitch competition finals that typically take place in October/November, during IEEE congresses (e.g., Student and Young Professional Congress) or other Entrepreneurship Summits.
- Some of the suggested topics for talks:
 - Ideation
 - How to build an MVP
 - Branding and Marketing
 - Business model canvas
 - Feasibility study and assessing product - market fit
 - Financing a startup
 - Fundraising and how to attract investors
 - Pitching techniques
 - Success stories
 - Management Skills for startups
- Local partners are highly encouraged for extending collaboration outside IEEE, also from the financial part perspective. Global Entrepreneurship Week is a beneficial thing to draw funds, attention or other in-kind support.

The event to be organized must follow the following guidelines:

- Be an IEEE member and be affiliated with an affinity group, chapter, or student branch.
- Include an innovation challenge.
- Send regular information on event-related contacts to the IEEE R9 Entrepreneurship Committee, whether participants, incubators, companies, investors, tech transfer officers, etc., for future local or regional events and program continuity.
- Be interested in organizing entrepreneurship events without being an entrepreneur.
- A plus is if the applicant has previous experience in coordinating events and entrepreneurship, whether a course or has attended an existing program or workshop. However, prior experience is optional.
- Be willing to network and connect with the startup community.
- Submitting post-event records, such as video pitches and pictures, is desirable.
- Winners of the local pitch competition may have the opportunity to showcase their one-pagers or pitch deck on the IEEE Entrepreneurship website, participate in future pitch competitions, and be offered a place to participate in an IEEE Entrepreneurship Summit or IEEE flagship event.

In case you decide to organize an INNOVATION CHALLENGE; these are some specific guidelines:

- Innovation challenges provided by a company, an incubator/accelerator, a non-profit, or a local government that can provide sponsorship are better.
- Innovation challenges must tackle a pressing problem confronted by the company, an incubator/accelerator, a non-profit, or a local government.

Pitch evaluations - we value:

- Innovative: The startup brings forward a new technology, adds to an existing technology, or uses a new application for an existing technology
- Scalability: The startup has room to grow its value proposition (i.e. additional applications) or its market (e.g. geographically, sector wise, industry wise, etc.)
- Impact: The startup creates positive impact for its community, clients, and users, and champions sustainable engineering
- Market feasibility: The startup has the potential to, or has demonstrated its ability to enter the market and gain market share
- Business potential: The startup has the potential to, or has demonstrated its ability to sustain a profitable business operation

Awards

You are eligible for two awards when you submit the event report form

- **Best Entrepreneurship Event award** - up to 500 USD will be granted to the local IEEE Organizational Unit associated with the ambassadors that hosted the best local competition and ambassadors will receive a certificate and public recognition on our online platforms
- **Best Ambassador award** - ambassadors of events winning the Best Event Award will have the chance to receive a sponsorship to attend the Pitch Finals or an Entrepreneurship Summit. You will have to submit a cover letter where you tell us why you are the best ambassador. We will select one winner based on the cover letter submissions.
- **Best pitching teams** –one to three best teams from each section will be selected to compete in the regional pitch competition semi-finals. Their recorded pitch videos will be shared with a global panel of judges, from the entrepreneurship ecosystem, industry, academic and IEEE Region 9 volunteers.

To submit your event: [Event Reporting](#)

To Submit the startups:

We will provide the media kit to encourage your startups to submit their information [here](#).

About the mentorship program

Each ambassador will be paired with a mentor who will be available for guidance and to address any questions. Mentors will dedicate up to 15 hours to the program.

Responsibilities of a Mentor:

1. Initial Kickoff Meeting:

- a. Evaluate the ambassador's capabilities and understand their goals.
 - b. Establish a framework for the mentoring relationship and set clear expectations.
2. Ongoing Meetings:
 - a. Schedule regular follow-ups to discuss progress and challenges.
 - b. Ambassadors are expected to arrive at meetings prepared with specific questions or issues to discuss. This preparation is crucial as mentors are experienced business professionals with extensive networks. Ambassadors should seek to fully leverage this opportunity for professional growth.
3. Event Proposal Review:
 - a. Provide feedback on the ambassador's event proposals, offering insights on effective event organization and identifying potential resources for sponsorships and support.
4. Support for New Entrepreneurs:
 - If an ambassador is new to entrepreneurship, the mentor will recommend foundational resources to help them understand the basics. For example, online courses like those available on edX's entrepreneurship programs:
<https://www.edx.org/learn/entrepreneurship>