Thank you for mentoring student teams as they dive into the process of developing a business plan for this year’s HopStart: Hopkins New Venture Challenge. Please consult this guide for more information on the following:

- The role of mentors in the competition
- Important dates and deadlines
- Communicating with your teams
- Using LivePlan

### The Role of Mentor

HopStart mentors will review their mentees’ business plans and provide feedback regarding the viability of ideas and new technologies, the current market and target audiences, and marketing, financial, and operating strategies. For your reference, please see the instructions for competitors for more information on each round of the competition.

Mentors are encouraged to lean into their particular area of expertise when providing feedback and are not expected to provide guidance in all of the areas listed above. Each competing team will be assigned an average of 3 mentors in order to receive diverse feedback. Mentors will be asked to mentor an average of 3 teams, depending on the number of competing teams.

In Round 1, teams are asked to respond to three prompts both in writing and with a video pitch:

- Problem worth solving
- Proposed solution
- Target audience

Mentors should provide guidance on strengthening the ideas presented and asking key questions to prepare teams to complete their full business plans.

In Round 2, teams will apply mentors' feedback while developing their full business plans. During the second mentorship window, mentors will again be prompted via email to review each of their team's full business plans and provide feedback relevant to their expertise. During this window, it is also advisable to provide guidance on pitching ventures to judges in preparation for competition day.
**Mentorship Rounds**

Round 1 Mentorship: Wednesday, February 22 - Sunday, March 5  
Round 2 Mentorship: Friday, March 31 - Friday, April 14

**Communication**

At the start of the Round 1 mentorship window, mentors will receive an email introducing them to each of their student teams. We encourage mentors to respond to each team noting their preferred method of communication during the mentorship windows. Mentors are welcome to use any or all of the following methods to interact with their teams:

- Comment directly on teams' business plans
- Start an email conversation
- Phone calls or virtual meetings (Zoom, Skype, Teams, etc.)

On the first day of the first mentorship window, mentors will also receive an email invitation to LivePlan, the platform teams use to create and share their business plans. After logging in and creating an account, mentors will be able to view their teams' plans and can comment on the plans using the comment boxes beneath each entry.

**Using LivePlan**

At the start of the first mentorship window, mentors will receive an email invitation from LivePlan. The LivePlan invitation will ask mentors to create a password and log into LivePlan. Read more about accepting LivePlan invitations [here](#).

Please note the following:

- This email may go to spam folders, so make sure to check there if you can’t find it.
- LivePlan invitations will expire after seven days, so please find and accept the invite email quickly. If your invitation expires, email hopstart@jhu.edu to request a new one.

After logging in, mentors will be taken to the “Launchpad.” Select “go to account” next to the account name “HopStart 2023” to view your mentees' plans (see image below).
From there, you can select a plan to review and leave feedback. To switch to another team’s plan, click on the drop-down next to the LivePlan logo in the upper left-hand corner, select “View all companies,” and then select a team name to view their plan.

You will be reviewing the content within the “Plan” tab, which contains templates for each team to follow. You can find a LivePlan navigation guide here.

Liveplan’s technical support is available by phone at 888-498-6138, or you can access their Help Center by clicking the “Help” tab in the top, right-hand corner of their site.

Thank you again for dedicating your time and expertise to HopStart: Hopkins New Venture Challenge. Without mentors like you, this event would not be possible.