

RULES & REGULATIONS

Understanding the rules of the game



CANADIAN
MARKETING
LEAGUE

General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., (the “Learning Partner”), and McMaster University (the “University”) reserve the right to modify elements of the competition, rules, and regulations, and prizing during the course of the year.

Learning Partners / Program Sponsors and the University may change the dates and deadlines for any or all aspects of the competition in extreme circumstances. If any type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication will be given with explanation to all participants. It is the responsibility of the participants to check their email and the competition website/social media pages to make note of any changes.

By participating in this experiential learning program and competition, by registering, or by accepting the terms posted on this website, each participant hereby releases and holds harmless McMaster University, General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., and all other official learning partners or sponsors of the program / competition and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors from and against any and all liability, claims, damages, actions, and costs, arising out of or in connection with their participation in the Canadian Marketing League hosted by faculty and students of McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.

GRAND PRIZE

The winning team(s) will be awarded a maximum of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand) Canadian dollars as the grand prize. The final decision to declare one team as sole winners or declare a tie and split the top prize of \$20,000 between multiple teams, rests with the judging panel. The prize must be accepted as described in the rules and regulations and may not be transferred to another person or substituted for another prize. Prize substitution in whole or in part is at the sole discretion of program Learning Partners, the University, and the Canadian Marketing League.

Winner(s) must present adequate personal identification and validate status as FULL-TIME registered undergraduate, Masters, or MBA student at an accredited Canadian University and be a LEGAL RESIDENT of Canada at the time of all qualifying stages and the final to claim the prize(s). Winners are solely responsible for all taxes and expenses which are not specified above. The grand cash prize will be conditional on the execution by the winner(s) of a full release and any other legal document required by Learning Partners, the University and the Canadian Marketing League. The winners agree to collaborate with Learning Partners, the university and the Canadian Marketing League on media press coverage of their participation and the cash prize.

REGISTRATION DETAILS

- Registration to participate is as an INDIVIDUAL or as a TEAM OF TWO ONLY. Teams can be formed by students with eligible partners at other universities or between full-time undergraduate and full-time Masters or MBA students. Each student or team can only make one submission.
- Registration concludes on January 23rd, 2026, at 11:59 PM EST. Please carefully follow the submission guidelines on how to submit your solution for the Canadian Marketing League – the submission guidelines are available on the website canadianmarketingleague.ca
- If you have any questions concerning submission you can send an e-mail to query@cmljudging.ca
- The program is not responsible for any technical glitches that result in delayed upload of submissions.

COMPETITION DETAILS

1. Regular season submissions must be recorded as written and spoken in English or French.
2. Competition details and submission instructions can be found on the Canadian Marketing League's website: canadianmarketingleague.ca.
3. The submission briefing and instructions are intended to serve as suggested guidelines only, and as a result will not be the sole judging criteria utilized by the judging panel.
4. All teams must submit up to and no more than a 3-minute video presentation of their idea during the Regular Season stage. More information can be found at: canadianmarketingleague.ca. At the end of the Regular Season, up to and no more than the Top 25 teams will be selected by industry and academic judges to continue to the Playoffs.
5. Playoffs participants/teams will compete in February 2026 – March 2026 in TWO cases presented by Kraft Heinz Inc. and Environics Analytics Inc. and present LIVE ONLINE to a panel of industry leaders. The playoff rounds will start with teams with Top 25 scores and narrow to Top 15 scores within playoffs.
6. As an outcome of playoffs, the judges will shortlist up to a maximum of Top 10 participants/teams with the highest overall point value who will be announced as the Finalists and participate in the Finals in March 2026 – April 2026. The finals require IN-PERSON attendance for FOUR DAYS in Toronto or another selected location.
7. If a Finalist is deemed disqualified/ineligible to participate after he/she has been selected as a Finalist or as the winner of the grand prize, the Finalist closest in ranking will be chosen as the winner.
8. In the event of a tie, in any stage of the competition, a representative from the learning partner companies of the program - General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., will have final decision on which contestant/team will advance to the next round or in the case of the finals, which contestant/team will claim the final position.

Please Note: Point values will not be carried from one round to the next. At the start of a new stage and new round of the competition every contestant/team's scores will start at zero.

ELIGIBILITY FOR THE COMPETITION

1. You must be a current full-time student in the 2025/2026 academic year in one of the following programs at a fully accredited Canadian University to be eligible to compete:

- a. Undergraduate student in a Business or Commerce program.
- b. An undergraduate student completing a minor in business or commerce.
- c. An undergraduate engineering student completing a minor in business or management.
- d. MBA Student or Master's in Marketing, Marketing Research or any other relevant business master's program.
- e. If you are not enrolled in one of the aforementioned programs but are a full-time student at an accredited Canadian university and are still keen on participating, please explain in the questionnaire or send an e-mail to query@cmljudging.ca explain why you would like to compete in no more than 250 words. The program team working on query@cmljudging.ca will send you a confirmation email about your eligibility within 72 hours of receiving your email. A letter of support from a faculty member at your university may be requested.

Validation of current academic status will be requested by the CML Executive Team at any point during or after the competition.

2. If you are on a full-time Co-op or internship this year, you are eligible to compete as long as you are NOT working for one of the program's learning partners and are considered by your university to be a FULL-TIME student.

3. If you are on exchange studies at any point during the duration of the competition, you are not eligible to compete.

4. Past employees, past interns, current interns, current employees and immediate family members of General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., all other official sponsors of the competition and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors, are ineligible to compete.

5. Individuals involved in any way with the contest organizing team at McMaster University or employees of any of the official sponsors of the Canadian Marketing League competition are ineligible to participate in the competition. Please note that Campus Account Managers (CAMs) are not considered part of the organizing team at McMaster University and are therefore ELIGIBLE to compete in the competition.

6. Past winners of the Canadian Marketing League competition are ineligible to participate in the competition.

GROUNDS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

1. In the video submission, any reference to the university or program that you are attending is grounds for disqualification. This includes any images or photos of your school that appear in the video.
2. Any video that is over THREE minutes in length is grounds for disqualification.
3. Any video content that is abusive, inflammatory or deemed unprofessional will be disqualified.
4. Any video that is submitted after January 23, 2025, at 11:59 PM EST is grounds for disqualification.
5. You may use AI to help you in the process of creating your submission, but if you submit the AI output as your own work, then it is considered grounds for disqualification.

CONDITIONS

Upon entering the competition each participant:

1. Warrants that they are the sole owner of the submitted work and that the work does not impinge on the intellectual property rights of any another party.
2. Waives any rights to confidentiality of any submissions made with respect to the competition.
3. Warrants that all work subject to another party's copyrights have been properly acknowledged. Any use of AI in the creation of submissions must be acknowledged and explained.

FURTHER REGULATIONS

General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., McMaster University, all appointed judges and CML executive team reserve the right to disqualify any participant who violates the Rules and Regulations of the competition and reserve the right to refuse a submission of which the eligibility is questionable or has already been deemed ineligible.

RELEASE

Each participant agrees to release and hold harmless General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., McMaster University, CML Executive team and all other official sponsors of the competition, and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors from and against any and all liability, claims, damages, actions, and costs, arising out of or in connection with your participation in the Canadian Marketing League's competition.

SUBMISSIONS

Upon submission, all submissions shall automatically become the property of General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., McMaster University, and all other official sponsors of the competition and all of their respective affiliates and agencies. The sharing of submissions in any way is **forbidden and may result in disqualification**.

Employees, officers, and directors from the competitions sponsoring companies shall not be held responsible for the failure of any submissions to be received for any reason or to be considered ineligible due to incomplete, unclear or indecipherable information, or for any other problems, however caused.

McMaster University, General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., and all other official sponsors of the competition and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors shall not have any liability for lost, stolen, delayed, damaged or misdirected submissions.

Each participant agrees to waive any copyrights and moral rights in any material and information submitted to McMaster University and all official sponsors of the competition and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors and agrees that ownership of said material transfers to General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc.

Each participant warrants that they are the sole owner of the submitted work and that the work does not infringe on the intellectual property rights of another party. Each participant further warrants that all material used in the participant's submission, whose intellectual property rights belong to another party, has been properly acknowledged, and permission for use has been sought and granted.

RELEASE OF JUDGES

The judges' decisions shall be final and binding upon each participant and each participant hereby irrevocably acknowledges and agrees to release and hold harmless all the judges personally from and against any and all liability, claims, damages, actions, and costs, arising out of, or in connection with his or her participation in the Canadian Marketing League's competition, including but not limited to any such claims resulting from decisions issued by the judges.

In the event of a tie at any point in the competition, a representative of General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., shall be entitled to determine, at

his or her discretion, which competitor advances to the next stage of the competition, or, if the tie results at the end of the competition, which competitor shall be named the winner of the competition.

GENERATIVE AI/ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

You may use AI to help you in the process of creating your submission, but if you submit the AI output as your own work, then it is considered grounds for disqualification. You are also responsible for verifying all of the outputs. You are expected to use AI only as a guide and to work from there to develop a more tailored and accurate solution. Acting with integrity means that if you use any AI tools for idea generation (e.g. ChatGPT), research (e.g. ResearchRabbit), visualizing data (Neuralpit) or to improve your writing (e.g. a paraphrasing tool like Quilbot) then you must be transparent about what AI you used and how. Include this acknowledgement in your appendices: specifically, include the prompts you gave and the outputs you received. If you did NOT use AI tools, please state this in an appendix. You must also cite any parts of your submission that come from AI, just as you would cite any other research sources.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

McMaster University, General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., and all other official sponsors of the competition, all judges and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors shall not be liable to any participant and/or any third party for any damages of any kind arising out of or relating to the participation in the Canadian Marketing League's competition including, but not limited to, any lost profits, lost opportunities, special, incidental, indirect, consequential or punitive damages, regardless of the participant's advice to McMaster University to the contrary.

REPRODUCTION OF CONTENTS

The contents of the Canadian Marketing League website may be used and reproduced solely for non-commercial, personal, or educational purposes provided that it is not modified and that you retain all copyrights and other notices contained in the content. Such information may not otherwise be used, reproduced, broadcast, published or re-disseminated without the prior written permission of McMaster University.

REPRODUCTION OF IMAGE AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Each participant acknowledges that McMaster University, General Motors of Canada, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., Environics Analytics Inc., and all other official sponsors of the competition can use or publish without further consent or compensation each participant's likeness, materials, and city of origin for any purpose, whether each participant was successful in the competition or otherwise.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The materials located on the Canadian Marketing League's website are protected by copyright, trademark, and other forms or proprietary rights and are owned or controlled by McMaster University or the party credited as the provider of the information.

GOVERNING LAW

This agreement shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario and Canada where applicable.

ENTIRE AGREEMENT

The competition rules and regulations published on this website constitute the entire agreement between each participant, McMaster University, Kraft Heinz Inc., Microsoft Canada Inc., General Motors Company, Environics Analytics Inc., and all other official sponsors of the competition and all of their respective affiliates and agencies, employees, officers, and directors and this agreement supersedes any and all other agreements. No other representations or warranties are made, save for those contained within this Agreement.

TERMINATION OF THE CANADIAN MARKETING LEAGUE COMPETITION

McMaster University reserves the right to terminate or modify in any manner the Canadian Marketing League's competition and/or any part of the related terms, rules & regulations, conditions, and prizes. Such right of termination includes a force majeure arising from fire, flood, any act of God, the King or His enemies (whether foreign or domestic), war (whether or not declared), riot or other civil disturbance, labor dispute, or by any other causes similarly beyond the control of the organizers of the competition.