Sprott Competes | SBSS Sprott Business Students' Society

Sprott Fall 2026
Internal Case Competition

Rules and Guidelines

Version 1.2 – October 2026

AT A GLANCE

Item	Working rule
Eligibility	Students enrolled in Sprott BCom, BIB, or BAcc programs; all years eligible
Categories	Junior: all members in Years 1-2 | Senior: any member in Year 3 or above
Team size	3 or 4 students
Field size	Expected 12 teams; may expand to a maximum of 16 overall
Case	One common case
Preparation	3 hours
Presentation	15 minutes + 10 minutes Q&A
Technology	30-minute device-free start; AI permitted thereafter; case distributed in print only
Advancement	Preliminary group winners advance to Junior or Senior Championship Finals; if a category has only one group, the top two advance
Finalist revision	30 minutes to revise any aspect of the solution and presentation before the Final

AI permitted after a 30-minute Independent Analysis Period

Teams must complete the first 30 minutes of case preparation without electronic devices. After this Independent Analysis Period, teams may use generative AI and other permitted digital tools to support their analysis, calculations, critique, drafting, and presentation development.

The case will be distributed in print only and may not be photographed, scanned, uploaded, or otherwise digitized. Teams may manually enter relevant case information into permitted tools and remain fully responsible for the accuracy, quality, and defensibility of everything they present.

1. About the competition

The Sprott Internal Case Competition aims to give students an opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills in business analysis, decision-making, teamwork, implementation planning, persuasive communication, and performance under time pressure.

The competition is developmental as well as competitive. Teams will be evaluated on the quality, coherence, feasibility, and communication of their analysis and recommendations. There is no single correct solution.

The competition may also help Sprott Competes identify students with strong interest or potential in case competition. However, participation or performance in this event will not determine selection for external competition teams or the Sprott Competes Development Squad.

2. Eligibility and team composition

Eligible students must be currently enrolled in a Sprott undergraduate program: Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), Bachelor of International Business (BIB), or Bachelor of Accounting (BAcc). Students in all years of study are eligible to compete.

Teams may register with either three or four eligible students (team of four recommended). Mixed-program teams are permitted. Mixed-year teams are permitted, subject to the Junior/Senior classification rules below.

Junior and Senior categories

The competition will include Junior and Senior categories where registration numbers permit. The intent of offering separate categories is to give less-experienced students a meaningful competitive pathway while preserving a challenging environment for more experienced students.

- Junior teams must be composed *entirely* of students in the first or second year of their Sprott undergraduate program.
- Senior teams include any team with *at least one* student in the third year or higher of their Sprott undergraduate program. A mixed-year team containing a third-year-or-higher student is required to compete in the Senior category.

Where a student's year standing is unclear because of transfer credit, co-op sequencing, reduced course load, or another circumstance, the organizers will determine the appropriate category prior to the competition.

Withdrawal of a team member

A team must have at least three eligible students available to compete. A team that registers with four students may continue with three if one member becomes unavailable because of illness or another exceptional circumstance approved by the organizers. A team that registers with three students will not be permitted to compete if one member becomes unavailable.

3. Registration, capacity, and competition structure

The competition is expected to accommodate 12 teams overall and may expand to a maximum of 16 teams if registrations, facilities, judge availability, and event support permit.

The organizers may reserve a reasonable number of places in each category to preserve viable Junior and Senior competition. If registrations exceed available capacity, places will be assigned by random draw after the registration deadline, with excess teams placed on a randomly ordered wait-list.

Category and field-size contingency plan

Teams in a category	Competition structure for that category
1	No championship awarded. Organizers will adjust the structure before competition day; no team will be declared champion without competition.
2	One preliminary-round group. Both teams present; both advance to the Final after the 30-minute revision period.
3-5	One preliminary-round group. Top 2 teams advance to the category Final.
6-8	2 preliminary-round groups of 3-4 teams; each group winner advances to a 2-team category Final.
9-12	3 preliminary-round groups of 3-4 teams; each group winner advances to a 3-team category Final.
13-16	4 preliminary-round groups of 3-4 teams; each group winner advances to a 4-team category Final.

This contingency table applies within each category and remains subject to the overall event cap of 16 teams. The organizers may make minor adjustments where registration is unusually uneven between Junior and Senior teams, provided the structure remains transparent and developmentally appropriate.

The number of preliminary-round groups will be determined separately within the Junior and Senior categories. Teams will be assigned randomly to groups within their category, and group sizes will be balanced as evenly as possible. Presentation order within each group will also be determined randomly.

Every team in a preliminary-round group will present the same case to the same judging panel. The panel will rank the teams after all presentations in that group are complete. Where a category has two or more preliminary-round groups, the first-place team in each group advances to that category's Championship Final. Where a category has only one preliminary-round group, the top two teams advance so that the Final remains a distinct competitive and developmental stage.

Since panels may use scoring scales differently, numerical scores will not be compared across preliminary-round groups. Advancement is determined within each group. Junior and Senior teams will be ranked only within their own category; there is no overall Junior-versus-Senior championship.

4. Case preparation and permitted resources

All teams will receive the same case at the same scheduled start time and will have three continuous hours to analyze the case and prepare their presentation. Any break taken by a team counts toward the preparation period.

- During the first 30 minutes of preparation, teams may not use laptop computers or other electronic devices. See the Independent Analysis Period below.
- After the Independent Analysis Period, each team may use up to four personal laptop computers and may connect them to the Internet.

- Teams may use ordinary productivity and cloud-based software, generative-AI tools, and AI functionality embedded within otherwise permitted software, subject to the rules below.
- Teams may use a pre-existing PowerPoint template for formatting and visual design, provided it contains no case-specific content, pre-written analysis, calculations, recommendations, or other substantive material.
- Each team member will receive a printed copy of the case. No electronic copy will be provided. The organizers may also provide paper, markers, whiteboards or flipcharts, and other basic materials.

Independent Analysis Period

For the first 30 minutes of case preparation, teams may use only the printed case materials and non-electronic working materials such as paper, pens, markers, and whiteboards. Laptops, phones, tablets, smart watches, and other electronic devices may not be used during this period. The purpose is to ensure that teams engage directly with the case and begin developing their own analysis before using technology or AI tools.

After the Independent Analysis Period, teams may use their permitted laptops for the remainder of preparation. Mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, and similar devices must remain switched off and stored as directed by the organizers during case preparation and any finalist revision period.

The printed case may not be photographed, scanned, processed through OCR, uploaded, or otherwise converted into a substantially complete digital copy. This restriction applies to all devices, including laptop cameras. Teams may manually enter relevant facts, figures, excerpts, summaries, or other case information into permitted software or AI tools as part of their analysis.

Compliance will rely primarily on participant integrity, supported by participant declarations, visible proctoring, and reasonable spot checks. Competition officials may intervene where there is a reasonable concern that the Independent Analysis Period, device restrictions, case-digitization rules, or other protected-work-period rules are not being followed.

Use of AI

After the Independent Analysis Period, teams may use generative AI broadly as a tool for analysis, brainstorming, critique, calculations, drafting, slide development, and other competition work. Teams may use any generally available AI tool or account to which they have lawful access. The organizers do not guarantee access to any particular tool, subscription level, network service, or account.

Teams remain fully responsible for every claim, calculation, recommendation, slide, and argument they present. AI output should be treated as an input to the team's work rather than as an authoritative source, and teams should be prepared to explain and defend their analysis during Q&A.

Case as the common information base

The case materials provide the common factual basis for the competition. Teams are expected to analyze the situation presented, exercise judgment where information is incomplete, and make reasonable assumptions where necessary.

External research is outside the intended task and will not receive additional credit. Searching for information about the organization, industry, competitors, or events described in the case consumes limited preparation time, may introduce information from a different time period or context, and can make a team's analysis less comparable with the work of other teams. Teams should therefore work from the factual information provided in the case rather than attempting to build a different information base.

Generative AI may sometimes introduce factual information from outside the case even when a team has not asked it to conduct research. Teams remain responsible for ensuring that factual claims central to their analysis are grounded in the case materials or are clearly identified as reasonable assumptions rather than treated as verified case facts.

Outside assistance and AI-use disclosure

Teams may not communicate about the case with professors, coaches, other students, or any other external person while they remain eligible to advance in the competition. Communication about the case is limited to registered team members and authorized competition officials until the team has either been eliminated or completed its Championship Final presentation.

At the time of initial submission, each team will complete a short AI-use disclosure identifying any generative-AI tools used and the broad purposes for which they were used. Prompt logs or transcripts are not required. Finalists will update the disclosure at final submission if their use of AI changes materially during the revision period.

Technology problems

Teams are responsible for the working condition of their own laptops. Where a problem involves organizer-provided equipment or a broader facility failure, the organizers may pause or extend time as necessary to preserve fairness. Problems confined to a team's personal equipment will not normally result in additional preparation time.

5. Preliminary round

At the end of the three-hour preparation period, every team must submit its preliminary presentation file in the manner specified by the organizers. The submitted version will be the version used in the preliminary presentation.

Following submission, teams may not make further changes to their case analysis or presentation unless and until they are announced as finalists and the official finalist revision period begins. This rule is based primarily on the honour system and may be supported by reasonable spot checks.

Presentation format

- 15 minutes for the formal presentation.
- 10 minutes for questions from the judging panel.
- There is no cap on the number of slides that may be used. Teams are responsible for determining their content and managing within the presentation time.
- Appendix or backup slides may be used during Q&A if they were included in the submitted presentation file. Q&A time must not be used to continue an unfinished formal presentation.
- All team members are expected to participate meaningfully in the presentation and Q&A session.
- A timekeeper will provide warnings and will end the formal presentation when time expires.

Competitor access to presentations

Competing students may not observe other preliminary-round presentations while their team remains eligible to advance. Teams that have been eliminated may observe subsequent presentations where space and logistics permit. Organizers may impose waiting-room or movement restrictions needed to preserve the integrity of the common case.

Preliminary judging and advancement

Each preliminary-round group will normally be evaluated by a panel of judges, ideally consisting of three members. The same panel must see all teams in that group.

Judges will use the evaluation framework in Section 7 as a structured decision aid. After all teams in the group have presented, the panel will deliberate and rank the teams from first to last. The panel should work toward consensus rather than mechanically averaging individual numerical scores.

Advancement follows the category structure set out in Section 3. Ordinarily, the winner of each preliminary-round group advances. Where a category has only one preliminary-round group, the top two teams advance. Numerical rubric scores will not be compared across groups.

No team will receive judges' feedback before the Championship Final is complete.

6. Championship Finals and finalist revision period

Once all preliminary groups are complete, the Junior and Senior finalists will be announced together where both categories are operating. All finalists will then begin a simultaneous 30-minute revision period.

About the revision period

The finalist revision period is intended to make the Championship Final more than a repeat presentation. Finalists are encouraged to reflect on what they learned from the preliminary experience and improve their work before presenting again.

During the 30 minutes, teams may change any aspect of their analysis, recommendation, implementation plan, calculations, storyline, slides, or presentation strategy. Laptops, Internet access, and AI tools may be used throughout the revision period; there is no second Independent Analysis Period. The print-only case, no-digitization, common-information-base, device, and no-outside-assistance rules remain in force.

Finalists may draw on their own experience of the preliminary presentation, including the questions judges asked, but may not seek or receive judges' feedback, coaching, or external advice before the Final.

At the end of the 30-minute revision period, each finalist must submit a final presentation file. The Final will be presented from the submitted file. Changes made to any personal copy after the deadline will not be used in the Championship Final.

Presentation order in the Final will be determined randomly within each category. Finalists may not observe any Championship Final presentation before completing their own presentation. After presenting, a team may observe later final presentations if space and logistics permit.

Each category Final will be assessed by a common panel of three to five judges, ideally using judges who did not assess those teams in the preliminary round. The Junior and Senior Finals may use the same panel or separate panels, depending on judge availability and scheduling. Judges will rank finalists only within the relevant category, using the same evaluation criteria used in the preliminary round.

Each Championship Final will use the same 15-minute presentation and 10-minute Q&A format.

7. Judging framework

Judging is comparative and judgment-based. The rubric provides structure and consistency, but the outcome is determined by panel deliberation and ranking rather than by a mechanical average of numerical scores.

Judges will be reminded that there may be several defensible approaches to the case; that models are useful only when appropriately applied; that recommendations must be supported and feasible; and that substance is more important than presentation polish alone.

AI use is not a separate judging criterion. Judges should evaluate the quality of the analysis, judgment, implementation plan, communication, and command demonstrated by the team. Externally researched facts should not, in themselves, be treated as evidence of stronger preparation, and teams should not receive additional credit for information that falls outside the common case information base.

Criterion	What judges consider	Points
Problem / situation analysis	Identifies and understands the central issue; analyzes relevant company, industry, market, financial, and contextual evidence; distinguishes symptoms from root problems.	**20**
Options considered and evaluation	Develops a sensible set of alternatives; uses appropriate criteria; compares options rather than jumping directly to a preferred answer.	**10**
Recommended solution	States a clear recommendation; supports it with evidence and reasoning; shows judgment and, where appropriate, creativity.	**15**
Implementation and feasibility	Provides a realistic action plan, including priorities, timeline, financial and operational implications, risks, controls, and contingencies where relevant.	**25**
Quality of presentation and delivery	Communicates with a clear structure and storyline; uses slides effectively; demonstrates professionalism, teamwork, audience engagement, and persuasive delivery.	**15**
Q&A / defense of recommendation	Responds clearly and directly; demonstrates command of the analysis; defends assumptions and recommendations thoughtfully; balances participation across the team.	**15**
TOTAL		**100**

Consensus and tie-breaking

Panels will first seek a consensus ranking. If consensus cannot be reached within the available deliberation period, each judge will privately rank the teams from first to last. The rankings will be aggregated, with the lowest total rank receiving the higher placement.

If two teams remain tied after aggregate ranking, the team preferred by a majority of judges in a direct comparison between the tied teams will be ranked higher. The decision of the judging panel is final.

Numerical rubric scores may be retained for feedback and internal evaluation but will not be published and will not override the panel's final ranking.

8. Feedback

Developmental feedback is a central objective of the competition. Judges will be asked to identify the principal strengths of each team and the most important opportunities for improvement.

To preserve equivalent conditions for finalists, no judges' feedback will be provided to any team until the Championship Final has concluded. Written feedback will be shared after the competition, and organizers may supplement this with an oral debrief where practical.

9. Judges, conflicts of interest, and judge preparation

Where possible, judging panels will include a mix of professional and academic perspectives, including alumni, business/community representatives, and faculty members. Former case competitors are encouraged as judges where appropriate.

Judges must disclose any relationship with a participating student or team that could reasonably be perceived as affecting impartiality. Organizers may reassign judges where appropriate.

Judges will receive the case, evaluation criteria, and judging guidance in advance or at an organizer briefing. Judges are expected to evaluate the work presented, not whether a team reached the same conclusion the judge personally would have chosen.

10. Participant conduct and rule violations

Participants are expected to act in a professional, collegial, and academically responsible manner and to respect both the letter and the purpose of the competition rules.

Participants will be required to affirm compliance with the Independent Analysis Period, print-only and no-digitization rules, device restrictions, no-outside-assistance requirements, AI-use disclosure, and other protected-work-period rules, including at check-in and presentation submission where required.

Where a suspected violation arises, organizers may investigate using proportionate measures, including speaking with the team, reviewing visible screens or application state, or consulting room monitors. The competition is not intended to operate as a forensic examination environment; reasonable participant trust remains central to the model, and prompt histories or personal AI-account records will not be routinely inspected.

Depending on the seriousness of a violation, the organizers may impose a warning, ranking or scoring penalty, loss of eligibility to advance, or disqualification.

Questions about rule interpretation or alleged violations must be brought promptly to the competition organizers. The Academic Director of Sprott Competes, or a designated competition official, will make the final decision on rule interpretation, penalties, eligibility, and other competition matters.

11. Case confidentiality, audiences, and recording

Teams must follow any confidentiality, copyright, or use restrictions attached to the case. Subject to the permitted use of case information in AI tools under Section 4, case materials and team solutions may not be distributed beyond the competition except as authorized by the organizers. Any case-specific restriction communicated by the organizers will take precedence over the general AI permissions in these rules.

Preliminary presentations will normally be closed to competing students while their team remains eligible to advance. The Championship Final may be opened to an audience at the discretion of the organizers, provided finalist isolation and presentation-order integrity are maintained.

Photography, audio recording, or video recording may be restricted by the organizers or by case-specific requirements. Where organizers record presentations for educational or promotional purposes, participants will be informed of the applicable consent process.

12. Awards and recognition

- Where both categories are offered, the first-place teams will be named Junior Champion and Senior Champion. There is no overall championship between the category winners.
- The second-place team in each category Final will be recognized as Runner-up.
- Any additional teams in a category Final will be recognized as Finalists. Where appropriate, organizers may distinguish third place.
- The organizers may also recognize one or more outstanding individual presenters or other achievements, but individual awards remain secondary to the team competition.

13. Organizer discretion and schedule changes

The organizers may adjust preliminary groups, presentation order, judging assignments, rooms, timing, or other logistics as needed because of registrations, withdrawals, technical problems, judge availability, or other unforeseen circumstances. This will seek to preserve fairness, transparency, and the developmental purpose of the competition. Material format changes will be communicated in advance where feasible.

Appendix A. Participant integrity declaration

Participants will sign the Participant Declaration at check-in. The Submission Certification and AI-Use Disclosure will be completed when the team's presentation is submitted.

Team name / number	Category	Preliminary-round group
_____	**Junior** or **Senior** (circle one)	_____

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Program (BCom, BIB, BAcc)	Year of Study	Signature

Participant declaration

I understand and agree that: (1) the first 30 minutes are an Independent Analysis Period during which no electronic devices may be used; (2) the printed case may not be photographed, scanned, uploaded, or otherwise digitized; (3) phones, tablets, smart watches, and similar devices must remain stored during protected work periods; (4) outside human assistance is not permitted while my team remains eligible to advance; and (5) after the Independent Analysis Period, laptops, Internet access, and generative AI may be used only as permitted in Section 4. My team remains responsible for the work it presents and for respecting the case as the common factual basis for the competition.

SUBMISSION CERTIFICATION AND AI-USE DISCLOSURE

We certify that our team complied with the applicable competition rules during case preparation and, if applicable, the finalist revision period.

AI-use disclosure
AI used: [ ] No [ ] Yes Tool(s): _____
Primary use(s): [ ] idea generation [ ] analysis / critique [ ] calculations / data work
[ ] drafting / slide development [ ] other: _____
Prompt logs or transcripts are not required. Finalists should update this disclosure at final submission if their AI use changes materially.

Team representative: _____ Signature: _____ Time: _____