

『2025 Promising Student Start-up Team 300+』

To discover and nurture entrepreneurial talent with an entrepreneurial mindset, we would like to invite all students (of elementary, middle and high schools, students outside the schools, undergraduates (graduate students)) to participate in “Promising Student Start-up Team 300+”, focusing on entrepreneurial education by growth stage and we look forward to seeing your active interest and participation.

March 31, 2025

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education

I

Overview

Purpose

- To inspire the entrepreneurial spirit of students across the nation with innovative ideas and technologies, and to foster a nationwide entrepreneurial culture

Contents

- To identify promising student-led start-ups and provide them with tailored support at every stage of growth to create successful business models
 - Provide customized education and mentoring to start-up teams at different growth stages through three tracks (Value-Up Track, Grow-up Track)
 - To discover and nurture outstanding international student startup teams with domestic and foreign market-based business ideas, run a separate International Student Track within the Value-Up Track

- Select **37 promising student startup teams** for the Integrated Final of the interministerial start-up competition 『Challenge! K-Startup 2025』
- ※ The Value-up Track of 『2025 Promising Student Startup Team 300+』 serves as the preliminary round (Student League) of 『Challenge! K-Startup 2025』 and only teams selected from the Value-Up Track (General/International Students) will be eligible to advance to the Finals.

Hosted and Organized by

- (Hosted by) Ministry of Education
- (Organized by) National Research Foundation of Korea,
Korea Entrepreneurship Foundation

□ Application Overview

Category		Value-Up track		Grow-Up Track	
		International	General	A	B
Qualification	Representative	International Students	All Students	All Students	2-Year Junior College Student
	Student*	elementary, middle and high school students, out-of-school youth**, undergraduates (graduates)*** (students on leave/students completing coursework included)			
	Start-Up****	Preliminary startup teams or startup teams established within in 3 years (since February 4, 2022)			
	Team	Teams must consist of 3 to 5 members, including the representative.			
Deadline		April 30. 17:00		June 23. 17:00	
Number of Selected Teams		10	40	300	60
Opportunity to Advance to	Challenge! K-Startup 2025	5	32	-	-
	Student Start-Up Festival		10	30	10
Additional point for participate (Up to 3 Points) - 1st document evaluation - Duplicate extra points not allowed		-	participates in the “실험실 특화형 창업선도대학” applies.		
		completing OASIS program	-	participates in 2024 Preliminary Track	
		50% or more of the team members being international students (including the representative)	-	-	60% or more of the team members being College students (including the representative)

* All universities and junior colleges in Korea (including the schools subject to the university information disclosure under the Ministry of Education) including Science & Technology specialized universities (KAIST*, GIST, DIGIST, UNIST)

** “Out-of-school youth (under 19 years old)” as defined in Article 2(2) of the “Out-of-School Youth Support Act”

*** In the case of college (graduate school) students, enrolled students, students on leave of absence, and students who completed the coursework can all apply, but graduates cannot apply.

**** Start-up founder is defined with the start-up scope and business start date in accordance with Article 2, Paragraph 2 of the Small and Medium Business Startup Support Act.

□ Disqualifications

- If it falls upon any of the disqualification criteria, the team will not be able to participate in the competition.

< Disqualifications >

- ① A person(company) or item that has infringed on intellectual property rights such as patents and utility models of others, or is in the process of trial, such as litigation related to the infringement
- ② Entrepreneurship items of antisocial nature, such as raising speculative behavior or environmental pollution, and industries excluded from entrepreneurship under Article 4 of the Enforcement Decree of Korea's 「SUPPORT FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE ESTABLISHMENT ACT」
- ③ Award winners (including team members) or items (excluding special prize winners) at inter-ministerial start-up competition "Challenge! K-Startup Final 2016-2024, 'King of Kings'
- ④ A person (team) who has received more than KRW 30 million in accumulated prize money in other start-up competition
 - ※ The award winning records will be checked for 'Team Representative (excluding team members) for prospective start-ups, and the award winning records will be checked for the 'representative' and 'start-ups' for the existing founders.
- ⑤ Teams (companies) with a cumulative investment attraction that has exceeded the amount of KRW 3 billion as of the announcement date
- ⑥ For the teams participating in Value-Up Track, multiple participation in the league of other ministries in 『Challenge! K-Startup 2025』 is not allowed (Ministry of SMEs and Startups, Ministry of Science and ITC, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, etc.)
 - ※ For Value-Up Track, those (teams) advancing to the integrated final of 2025 「Pan-Government Public Date Utilization Startup competition」 hosted by Ministry of the Interior and Safety with the same or similar items are not allowed to participate.

- ※ Participants who are found to have violated the qualification criteria after the competition will be **subject to disqualification and/or prize forfeiture**.

□ How to Apply

- (Deadline)
 - Value-Up Track (General, International student): April 30 (Wed.) 17:00
 - Grow-up Track, Preliminary Track: June 23 (Wed.) 17:00
- (How to Apply) Apply online on Promising Startup Team 300+ website (www.u300.kr)

- ※ Check and download application documents on the announcement board of notice.
- ※ Membership registration is required before application (including team members), and please be advise that access to the website may not be smooth or error may occur due to excessive traffic on the date of deadline, so it is recommended that make application 2-3 days in advance. Registration can be modified before the application deadline.
- ※ **For details on how to apply, refer to the 'Online Application Manual' in the announcement on the website.**
- ※ Teams that were disqualified from Value-Up Track (but passed the document evaluation) and startup teams having those who were included in the final selection (receiving certificate) of Startup Build up Track in 2024 as a team representative will be exempted from the first document evaluation when applying for Grow-up Track and only have to submit required documents

- (Documents to be submitted and precautions when filling out)
 - Application form: Replaced with online application system
 - Participation pledge: Be sure to sign in the signature block
 - Consent form for collecting and using personal information: Be sure to sign in the signature block ([all team members sign in](#))
 - Certificate of enrollment or leave of absence: Be sure to sign in signature block ([All team members sign in](#))
 - Certificate of enrollment or leave of absence: Only those issued after the announcement date (March 31, 2025) ([submitted by all team members](#))
 - ※ When submitting a certificate of enrollment or leave of absence, submit the original document with the official school seal stamped on it. If the school seal is omitted, it will not be valid.
 - ※ For elementary/middle/high school students, it can be replaced with a certificate of enrollment or a photo of student ID card.

- ※ In the case of out-of-school youth, it can be replaced with a participation consent form from a legal guardian or ‘out-of-school youth support center manager’ .
- **In the case of international students of (Value-Up Track (International student)), submit foreigner identification document.**
 - ※ Copy of alien registration card or passport
- **Business Plan:** Fill out, according to the format (Pictures and tables can be inserted) (Submission in PDF)
 - ※ Submit an item(idea) introduction for ‘Preliminary Track’
- **Certificate of business registration:** Only the start-ups founded before the announcement date of the Integrated Final (February 4, 2025)

□ Precautions (※Must-read)

① Application and Reception of the Competition

- **Participation can be done in team units (a team of 3 to 5 members including the team representative), and each person can apply for participation. with only one team.**

- ※ In the case of college (graduate school) students, enrolled students, students on leave of absence, and students who completed the coursework can all apply, but graduates cannot apply.

- ※ The finalists of 2016 - 2024 'Promising Start-up Team 300' can apply.

- (However, if applying with the same item as before, developments compared to the past must be reflected in the business plan.)

- ※ When a team composed of students (enrolled/on leave) from multiple schools applies for the Grow-Up Track, the team participates in the region of the school where the team representative's school is located.

- Duplicate application across tracks is not allowed. However, it is possible to reapply for 'Grow-Up Track' after disqualified for Value-Up Track.

- Only one business(item) can be applied for per participating team in this competition.

- The contents of the application form, such as the participating track, team name cannot be changed after the deadline. However, team members may be changed only in the following cases.

<If a team member is changed before the final selection>

- 1. Request for a change of team member is allowed only during the following period.**

- ※ After announcing the results of document evaluation by track until the deadline for submitting materials for presentation review

- 2. Deductions (5 points) are given during the presentation evaluation if a team member is changed.**

- **For participants of 'Value-Up Track', it is not allowed to participate in other**

- 『Challenge! K Startup 2025』 Ministry leagues (Ministry of SMEs, Ministry of Science and ITC, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, etc.) at the same time.**

- If the application form and business plan are falsely written, all support benefits will be canceled and refunded, and participation in the project will be banned for the next three years.

- **If the submitted documents are incomplete or do not qualify for participation,** the applicant will be excluded from the evaluation without further announcement. Please strictly follow the submission form and make sure to check your eligibility. All submitted documents will not be returned.

- **PDF file recommended for submission** (※ The operating institution is not responsible for broken fonts or designs.)

② Selection and Evaluation

- **All business plan announcements** made during the course of the competition **must be carried out by the team representative.**
 - ※ Deductions (5 points) are given in the evaluation if a team member other than the team representative makes presentation.
- Presentation materials must be submitted in advance for presentation evaluation.
 - ※ Submitted presentation materials are used as proof of participation in the evaluation and as reference materials for the evaluation committee, and applicants may be disqualified if not submitted.
 - ※ Submitted presentation materials will be used as materials for a white paper after the competition ends.
- The judges participating in each evaluation are university start-up fund officials or venture investment experts such as AC/VC.
- If the number of participating teams for each track is less than the No. of teams of the final selection, the recruitment period may be extended.

③ Competition Operation

- All details of schedule are subject to change depending on circumstances.
- **The prize money from this competition will be paid to the team representative and the taxes and public charges should be borne by the representative.**

④ Others

- Applicant him/herself should be responsible for **disadvantages and responsibilities arising from not understanding the contents of the announcement, not checking or not reading the announcement on the competition website, etc.**
- **All civil and criminal responsibilities arising from copying other people's ideas, technologies, and intellectual property rights lie with the team representative.**
- Guidance on "Claim for Exception to Disclosure of Ideas" in Korea

A an idea provider may obtain a patent or license in accordance with Article 30 of the Patent Act (in the case of an invention that has not been publicly announced) or Article 5 of the Utility Model Act (in the case of an invention that has not been publicly notified) **within 12 months from the time the idea is announced or disclosed.** A design application can be filed with Article 8 of the Design Protection Act (an exception to loss of novelty) within 6 months from the time when the competition is announced or published.

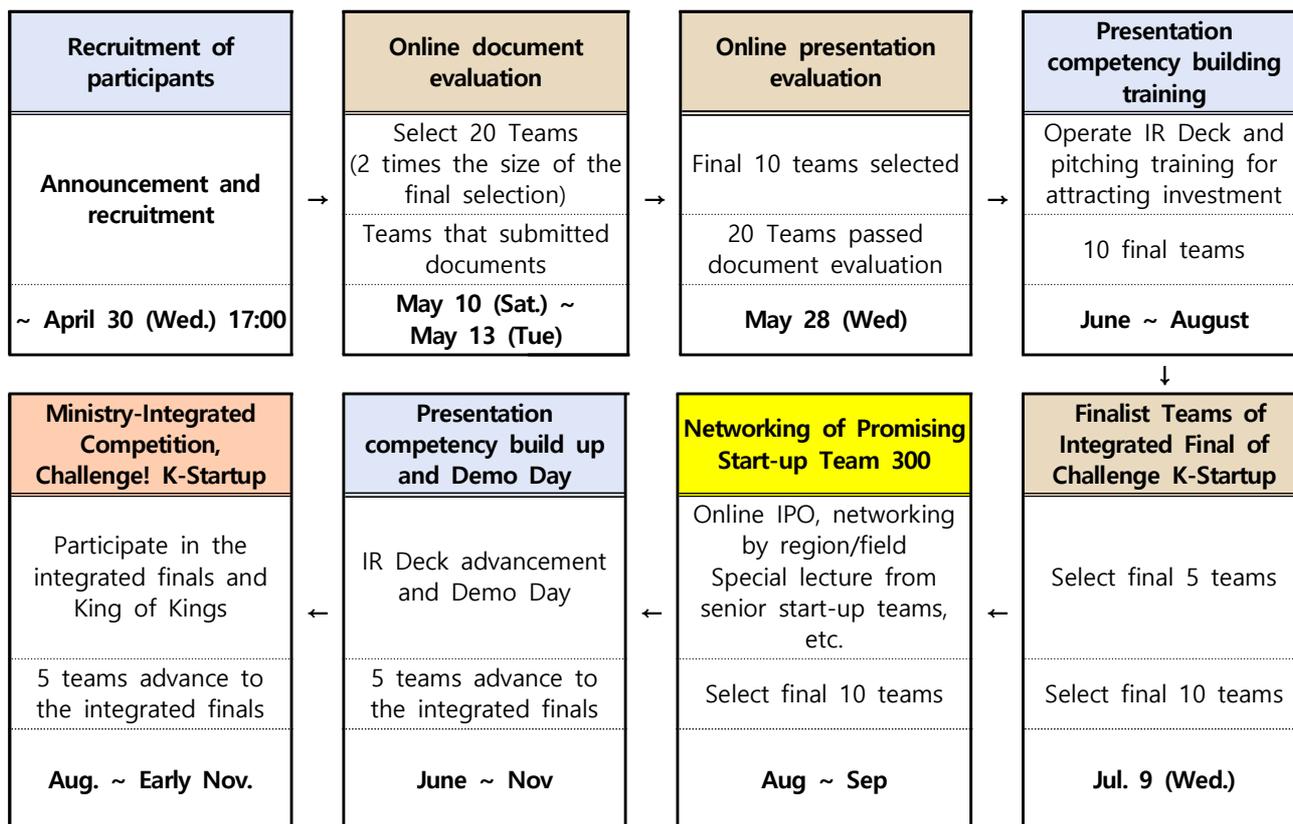
- **Business start date is calculated based on January 29, 2025, the announcement date of 「Challenge! K-Startup 2025」, an integrated start-up competition among Ministries.**
 - ※ Those who started business after January 29, 2025 are considered as preliminary start-ups.
- **A commendation from the head of the host organization (3 points) and incentive will be awarded to school teachers or staff who have contributed to the operation of the competition (recruitment, selection, etc.)**

- If there is a violation of the competition announcement and related regulations or false entries or omissions in the business plan, you may be subject to disadvantageous measures such as cancellation of selection and refund of prize money.
- In case of receiving subsidy with false application or fraudulent measure, it may be subject to imprisonment for up to 10 years or a fine of up to KRW 100 million in accordance with the 「Subsidy Management Act」
- Disadvantages may be applied in the evaluation if the act of causing social controversies, such as wage arrears, tax evasion, industrial accidents, unfair practices, etc is detected.
- For inquiries other than the information in the announcement, contact us through the '**Kakao Channel**' (Channel Name: **Promising Start-up Team 300**, https://pf.kakao.com/_xiAyNd)

IV

Details of Schedule by Track

- **Value-Up Track (International Student):** Track for start-up teams of international students who have the potential to start a business in Korea and hope to advance to the start-up



○ Details of Schedule

No.	Category	Schedule	Contents
1	Online Document Evaluation	May 10. ~ May 28.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Targets) Teams that submitted the documents · (Details) <u>20 teams, twice the final recruitment size, are selected</u> through online evaluation using the submitted documents by experts such as university start-up funds and venture investors. ※ (Additional points) Max. 3 points to be given when meeting any of the followings (Multiple entry of additional point not allowed) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ① Teams with more than 50% international students (including representative) ② Teams with those completing Overall Assistance for Startup Immigration System (OASIS) course ③ Teams participating in the "leading laboratory-specialized start-up university project" applies.

No.	Category	Schedule	Contents													
3	Online Presentation Evaluation	May 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Target) 20 teams that passed the document evaluation · (Details) 10 teams selected in the finals through online presentation evaluation by experts such as university start-up funds experts and venture investors 													
3	Presentation Competency Building Training	June ~ NOV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Target) 10 final teams · (How to) Group training and 1:1 pitching class (mentoring) · (Details) IR competency-building training to advance to the integrated finals <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Description (Preliminary)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Startup Teams Competence Assessment</td> <td>Set the education direction by team level based on competency assessment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Basics of IR</td> <td>Improve understanding of IR through analysis with case study</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IR Storytelling</td> <td>Organize storytelling tailored to individual factors such as business items, team composition, and business models</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IR Deck Advancement</td> <td>Establish an evidence-based pitching structure such as business model, market size, and competitor analysis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IR Pitching</td> <td>Individual IR pitching mentoring and feedback (2 or more times per team)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>※ Training contents may change depending on the circumstances of the competition</p>	Category	Description (Preliminary)	Startup Teams Competence Assessment	Set the education direction by team level based on competency assessment	Basics of IR	Improve understanding of IR through analysis with case study	IR Storytelling	Organize storytelling tailored to individual factors such as business items, team composition, and business models	IR Deck Advancement	Establish an evidence-based pitching structure such as business model, market size, and competitor analysis	IR Pitching	Individual IR pitching mentoring and feedback (2 or more times per team)	
Category	Description (Preliminary)															
Startup Teams Competence Assessment	Set the education direction by team level based on competency assessment															
Basics of IR	Improve understanding of IR through analysis with case study															
IR Storytelling	Organize storytelling tailored to individual factors such as business items, team composition, and business models															
IR Deck Advancement	Establish an evidence-based pitching structure such as business model, market size, and competitor analysis															
IR Pitching	Individual IR pitching mentoring and feedback (2 or more times per team)															
4	Evaluation for Teams Advancing to the Integrated Finals	July 9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Target) 10 final teams · (Details) Select 5 teams to advance to the integrated finals of 『Challenge! K-Startup 2025』 through presentation evaluation 													
5	Promising Startup Team 300 Networking Day	August ~ September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Target) 10 final teams · (Details) <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Program</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Online</td> <td>Online IPO</td> <td>- Online exhibition of the items of the final selection team</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Offline</td> <td>Official Events</td> <td>- Offline ceremony to celebrate the final selection team - Award certificates and special lectures from senior start-up teams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Networking by region/field</td> <td>- Networking by region/field with senior entrepreneurs and investment experts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Event Operation</td> <td>- Business card exchange between start-up teams, etc.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> · (Others) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Certificate by Minister of Education' awarded only to the final selection teams that participated in the online virtual IPO and official offline events 	Category	Program	Description	Online	Online IPO	- Online exhibition of the items of the final selection team	Offline	Official Events	- Offline ceremony to celebrate the final selection team - Award certificates and special lectures from senior start-up teams	Networking by region/field	- Networking by region/field with senior entrepreneurs and investment experts	Event Operation	- Business card exchange between start-up teams, etc.
Category	Program	Description														
Online	Online IPO	- Online exhibition of the items of the final selection team														
Offline	Official Events	- Offline ceremony to celebrate the final selection team - Award certificates and special lectures from senior start-up teams														
	Networking by region/field	- Networking by region/field with senior entrepreneurs and investment experts														
	Event Operation	- Business card exchange between start-up teams, etc.														
7	Student Startup Festival Value-up Track Demo Day	Early Nov.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Target) Value-Up Track (International student) excellent 5 teams · (How) 2025 Industry-University Cooperation EXPO-linked Demo Day' (presentation evaluation) and online broadcasting 													
8	Follow-up Support	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Accelerating to follow up on seed investment attraction and other support projects 													

□ Evaluation index for Document/Presentation Evaluation for Value-Up Track

Category	Items	Description
Problem Recognition	Motivation for developing the item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivation for developing of products and services by the (prospective) team for this project - Analysis on inconveniences due to the absence of products and services, downside of the Korean and Global market, and specificity of feasibility
	Purpose and necessity of the item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purpose of realizing the start-up item and degree of understanding of the needs of Korean and global markets and target customers for the products and services to be developed through this project - Awareness of problems and vulnerabilities of products and services suggested by consumers or experts in the field
Feasibility	Strategies for commercialization of the item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feasibility of the project, such as the development (manufacturing) period and production method (in-house*, outsourcing, etc.) considering the current status of product, service, and business model(BM). * In the case of in-house, include relevant experience or technology - Feasibility and adequacy of the business plan (goal and achievement plan)
	Market analysis and ways to secure competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Details of superiority factors and differentiation strategies of the products and services in various aspects such as function, utility, ingredients, design, and style - Specific improvement plans for problems and weaknesses of the products and services suggested by consumers or experts in the field
Growth Strategy	Funding and procurement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specificity of funding and input plan based on the stage of commercialization of the start-up team - Appropriateness of required funds forecast based on sales estimation - Feasibility of milestone (schedule) for financing required based on government funds (R&D and policy funds, etc.) and investment funds (angel investment, VC, etc.)
	Market entry and performance creation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Product (service) positioning and market(Korean and global) entry and sales strategy(distribution channel, timing, sales amount, etc.) for Korean and global market entry (expansion) - Preliminary Start-up Team: Specificity and the feasibility of advancement plan - Start-up team: Achievements in the market and capabilities (core personnel), feasibility of entry(expansion) plan]
Team Composition	Competencies of representatives and team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expertise (technical skills, know-how) owned by the representative and team members and compatibility with the duties in charge to the development (production) and commercialization of the products and services - Preliminary Start-up Team: Specificity of the personnel plan for hiring, the number of additional employees (planned), and the appropriateness of the main responsibilities of personnel and the timing of recruitment (team composition: representatives and team members) - Start-up team: Review the current status of HR possessed by the representative and the specificity and feasibility of the additional (planned) employment - Details of the business network status and major cooperation matters of the relevant start-up team with commercialization promotion

VI

Awards and Benefits

Teams of Value-Up Track

Target	Benefits
10 teams for Value-Up Track (International student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (Training) Provide mentoring for 1:1 pitching class · (Certificate) Issue 'Certificate for Promising Start-up Team' (Minister of Education) · (Integrated finals) Advance to the integrated finals (32 General teams, 5 International student teams) · (Others) Additional points and preferential treatment given when selected for start-up-related support programs by the host organization, providing opportunities to connect with private and other ministry projects (KDB Startup Program, IP Stepping Stone, etc.)
Advance to Student Start-up Festival 5 teams for Value-Up Track (International student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide opportunities for IR pitching and investment attraction linked to university start-up funds · Grand Prize (KRW 3 million) – 1 team · Best Award (KRW 2 million) – 1 team · Excellence Award (KRW 1 million) – 1 team

Ref 1

『Challenge! K-Startup 2025』 Overview

□ Purpose

- Promote start-up culture by discovering and rewarding promising (preliminary) start-up teams with outstanding items by holding a inter-ministerial start-up competition

□ Qualifications

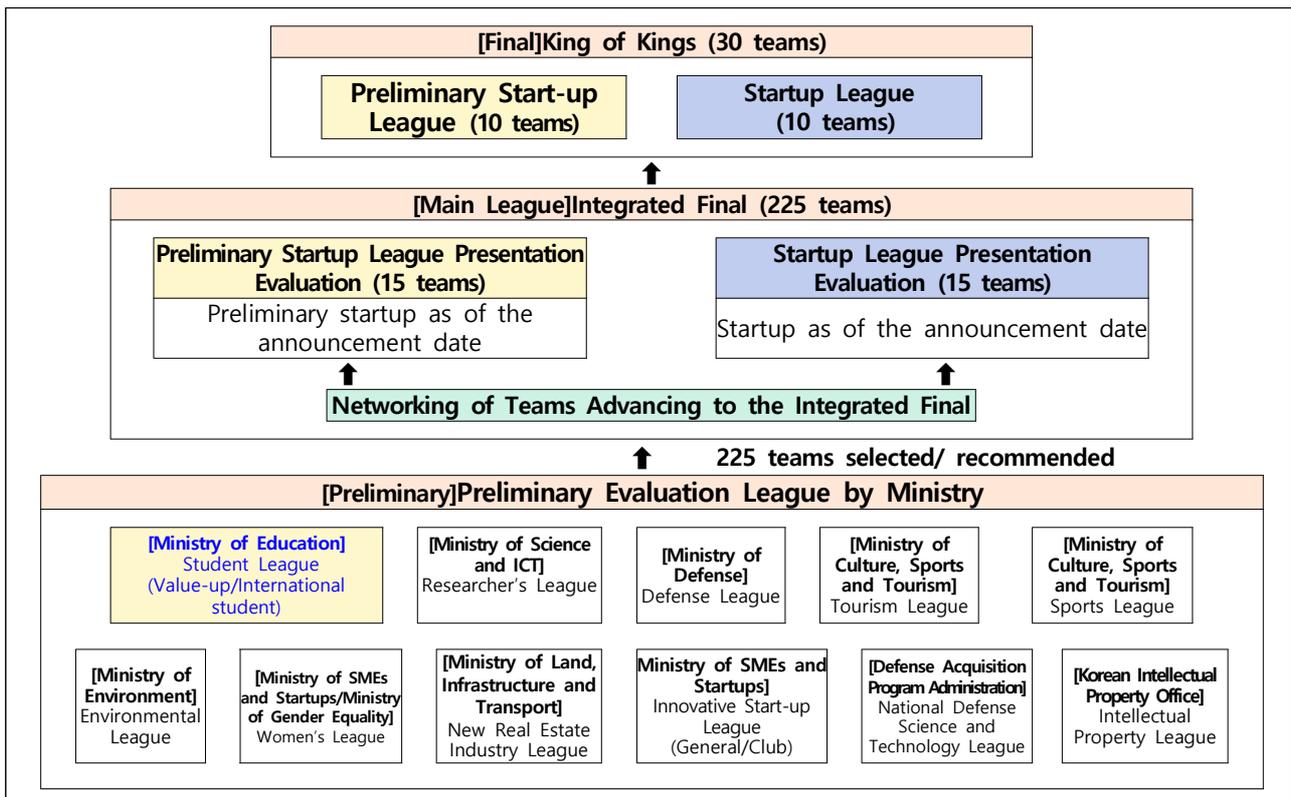
- Preliminary start-up or representative of a star-up established within 3 years as of the integrated announcement (Jan. 29, ' 24)

□ How to Operate

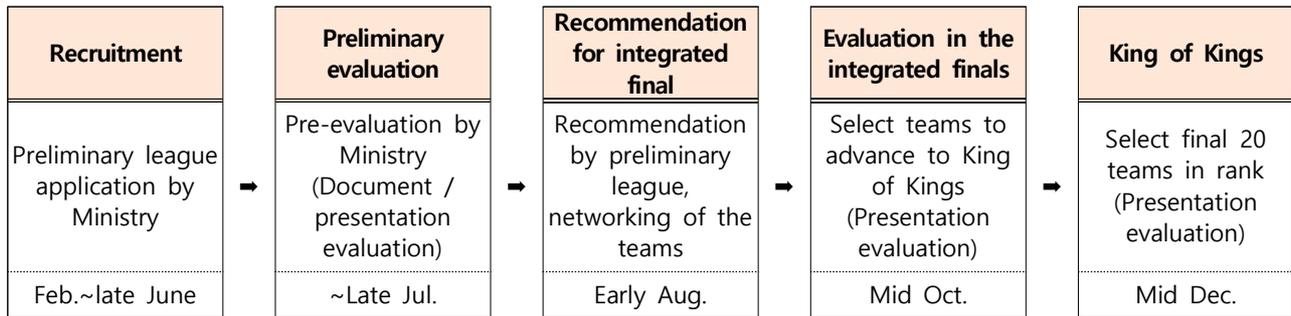
- Select start-ups with promising items from the preliminary league of each ministry and decide the final winner through the evaluation in the final round and King of Kings

※ From the stage of Integrated Final, it will be operated separately for the **Start-up League** and **Preliminary Startup League**, depending on the status of startups of the participating teams (as of the date of integrated announcement)

< Operation System of Challenge! K-Startup 2025 >



□ Operating Schedule



* Tournament schedules are subject to change. For details, check the detailed announcements for each preliminary league.

Purposes

- Introduce ‘2025 Promising Students Start-up Team 300+’ and encourage participation of students(teams) with excellent start-up capabilities
- Provide online video training on start-up preparation, such as start-up cultivation and team building, to increase interest in student start-ups

* Open to anyone interested in participating in Promising Start-up Team 300+

How to Proceed

- Online Briefing Session: Mid April
- Where to Watch: Korea Entrepreneurship Foundation Zoom channel
 - ※ If you send a message with “Application for Briefing Session” via KakaoTalk or email, we will notify you as soon as the schedule is confirmed.
 - ※ Promising Student Startup 300+ Kakao Talk: http://pf.kakao.com/_xiAyNd
- (Contents of the session) Competition procedure, information on benefits for participating teams, Q&A, etc.

Contents	Note
Introduction on 2025 Promising Student Start-up Team 300+ (Application and program process, benefits, etc.)	Host Agency Host Agency(KoEF)
Information on trade secret protection system and original certification service	Korea Intellectual Property Protection Agency

Participation Guide and Distribution of Lecture Videos

- Scheduled will be published on the website of the Ministry of Education, National Research Foundation of Korea, Korea Entrepreneurship Foundation, official website of the competition and social media (Facebook).

□ Purposes

- Introduce ‘2025 Promising Students Start-up Team 300+’ and encourage participation of students(teams) with excellent start-up capabilities
- Support international students in building teams and networks for the U300

□ How to Proceed

- Online Briefing Session: April 15 or 16
 - ※ If you send a message with “Application for Briefing Session” via KakaoTalk or email, we will notify you as soon as the schedule is confirmed.
 - ※ Promising Student Startup 300+ Kakao Talk: http://pf.kakao.com/_xiAyNd
- Where to Watch: Seoul Startup Hub (서울시 마포구 백범로 31길 21)
- (Contents of the session) Competition procedure, information on benefits for participating teams, Q&A, etc.

Contents	Note
Introduction on 2025 Promising Student Start-up Team 300+ (Application and program process, benefits, etc.)	Host Agency(KoEF)
Special lecture by previous year’s international student track participants	senior international student entrepreneurs
Networking & Team building session	participants