

2019 ELS Case Competition FAQs

1. What is the ELS Case Competition?

The United Way Emerging Leaders Society (ELS) Case Competition is a six-week experience in which teams of young talent develop as leaders. Teams are paired with executive mentors to create and present solutions to the challenges that come with an ever-changing environment.

Our current environment is one that is more global and connected than ever before. Companies are faced with critical questions that affect their business culture and ultimate success-how do we attract and retain top talent, keep our employees engaged and connected, advance corporate social responsibility goals, while also growing revenue and elevating our brand? Similarly, the United Way network is evolving and transforming to address peoples' need to be connected to their community and the causes they care about. ELS created the ELS Case Competition to foster innovative solutions by tapping into the next generation of leaders within the community.

2. I'm interested, how do I become a part of a team?

United Way is inviting up to 20 teams of young, local professionals and graduate students to participate in the 2nd ELS Case Competition. Teams will be comprised of 3-5 members from the same workplace who live or work in Central or Northeastern Connecticut. Businesses, schools, and agencies may all sponsor teams within their organization. Registered teams will need endorsement by an executive sponsor within their workplace.

3. What is the cost to participate?

The cost for a team to participate in the ELS Case Competition is \$2,500. *

4. How does the mentorship component work?

United Way will identify and assign a local mentor to each team. Mentors are business and community leaders who are also key stakeholders of United Way. Mentors coach their team through the process of developing a business proposal and may offer guidance with preparing their executive summary, compiling research, or practicing their presentation.

5. What is the case challenge and when do we have access to it?

Teams must be registered by **Tuesday, August 27**. The case challenge will be released on **Tuesday, September 3** and will include supporting documentation to inform recommendations. Teams will have one week from the case release to submit questions to United Way. United Way will then post public responses to all the questions on **Thursday, September 12**. Teams are allowed and encouraged to do outside research in order to prepare their responses. Responses, in the form of an executive summary, will be due on **Thursday, September 26**.

6. When will competitions be held?

United Way will post a schedule of presentations on **Friday, September 27**. All teams will present in the first round on **Tuesday, October 1** at Spaces in West Hartford. Teams will be given 10 minutes to present before a panel of judges. Judges will select three finalists to build upon their proposals and compete at the culminating event on **Tuesday, October 15**. During the culmination event, teams will be recognized for achievement in one of the "best of" categories. Competing teams will have 15 minutes to present and respond to questions from a new panel of judges comprised of local business and community leaders. At the end of the night, the judges will select one winner based on the content of the presentation.

7. What are the key dates I need for my calendar?

- Tuesday, August 27 – Team Registration Deadline
- Tuesday, September 3 – Case Release
- TBD – Orientation/Information Session (teams and mentors)
- Tuesday, September 10 – Deadline to submit questions (9:00 a.m.)
- Thursday, September 12 – Answers posted by United Way (5:00 p.m.)
- Thursday, September 26 – Executive Summary Deadline
- Friday, September 27 – Presentation Schedule Released
- Sunday, September 29 – Visual Aids Deadline (11:59 p.m.)

- Tuesday, October 1 – Presentations: Round 1 at Spaces, West Hartford (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
- Sunday, October 13 – Visual Aids Deadline for Final Round (11:59 p.m.)
- Tuesday, October 15 – Culmination Event @ Hartford Yard Goats Clubhouse (6-9 p.m.)

8. What does the winning team get?

The winning team will be invited to a reception with a special guest, as well as the opportunity to participate in a test pilot of their idea.

9. How can I learn more?

To register your team today, visit our website at <https://unitedwayinc.org/events/elscasecomp>. Email Rebekah Castagno, ELS Manager at <mailto:rcastagno@unitedwayinc.org> with any questions.

*Contact us if your organization is a nonprofit.