



Press Release
September 18, 2014

**WANT A REAL-LIFE LEARNING OPPORTUNITY?
TAKE THE AMBASSADOR'S ENTREPRENEURIAL CHALLENGE!**

We are inviting Finnish teachers, regional and national education officials, and others to encourage high school/lukio students to participate in the Ambassador's Entrepreneurial Challenge (AEC). This autumn the U.S. Embassy and partners have designed an outreach program targeted at Finland's future generation of innovators and leaders, with special emphasis on entrepreneurship.



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Groups of secondary students (2-5) are invited to submit an idea that tackles a real-life problem, issue or market opportunity. Regional semi-finals will be in six locations throughout

Finland: Helsinki, Tampere, Turku, Jyväskylä,

Kuopio and Oulu. Panels of business and society leaders will select a winning team in each region. Regional winners will compete in the National Championships in Helsinki, pitching their ideas and sharing their plans with the U.S. Ambassador and prominent civic and business leaders.

The prizes are truly amazing – winners will travel to the United States in the summer of 2015 for study programs in business, innovation and leadership. Other prizes include seed money to implement business plans and a consultation with the U.S. Ambassador on how to move plans forward.

The program demonstrates the Embassy's sustained cooperation with Finland – particularly educational institutions and key business partners – on areas of mutual interest, including innovation, critical thinking, problem-solving, and building bridges internationally.

Check out the U.S. Embassy Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/finland.usembassy>, which has regular updates and visuals, including photos and videos on the AEC. Ambassador Oreck's video clip can be found at <http://youtu.be/FBc3NCmkdeg>

Flyers and FAQs are on the Embassy web site at <http://finland.usembassy.gov/aec.html>
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The Ambassador's Entrepreneurial Challenge (AEC) encourages secondary students to tackle a real-life problem, issue or market opportunity that would improve an enterprise, an industry and/or the country. "You just need that big, GREAT idea, Ambassador Oreck says. "It can be in business, social issues or just plain fun."

The Challenge is the result of continued cooperation with Finnish organizations, including high schools, to promote critical issues for the 21st century such as innovation, entrepreneurship, and the creation of new solutions for old problems.

Creating new enterprises, bringing ideas to life and resolving outstanding issues are vital elements of dynamic economies. Additionally, small and medium-sized companies are a key job creating sector in both our countries. Why not bring that awareness to youth, engage them in creating their vision for tomorrow's economy today? Join the AEC and build a better tomorrow.