Diplomacy Lab’s Wonk Tank Competition

The Competition
Under Secretary Kerry, the U.S. Department of State has increased its efforts to engage the American people in the work of diplomacy and development and broaden the Department’s foreign policy making in response to a proliferation of complex global challenges. In recognition of the growing role young people are playing in shaping the global agenda, the U.S. Department of State is launching a new policy pitching platform, Wonk Tank, under the existing Diplomacy Lab partnership aimed at fostering the next generation of foreign policy leaders. Launched by Secretary Kerry in 2013, the Diplomacy Lab is a public-private partnership that enables the State Department to “course-source” research and innovation related to foreign policy challenges by harnessing the efforts of students and faculty experts at universities across the country.

How to Pitch
Any student currently enrolled in an American university will have the opportunity to pitch policy recommendations or insights to policy experts at the U.S. Department of State and the world at large.

Students will submit two items for consideration: a policy pitch proposal and a 3-5 minute video. The proposal will detail the foreign policy or development challenge, the individual’s proposed solution, and implementation steps. The video will be a snapshot into the individual’s pitch to State Department officials in Washington during the final round of the competition taking place on Friday, April 1, 2016.

The deadline for proposals will be Friday, February 19, 2016. The student policy pitch proposal form can be found here: http://goo.gl/forms/Kx1naVp68l

Evaluating Student Pitches
Diplomacy Lab partners will collectively determine the four finalists, giving four American university students the opportunity to present their pitch to a panel of senior officials.

Judges will consist of Diplomats-in-Residence, senior university faculty, and the Secretary of State’s Office of Global Partnerships.

Winning in Washington
The Wonk Tank Final competition will take place at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. on April 1st, 2016 following the annual Global Partnerships Week in front of a live audience of Department officials, current and previous Diplomacy Lab partner offices from the Department, and the public.

Three senior State Department officials will serve as judges on April 1 along with input from a subject matter expert relating to each of the student pitches. The “Winning Wonk” will be awarded a paid, 8-12 week internship at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) for the summer of 2016.

Competition Timeline
February 19: Submission deadline for student pitch proposals
March 3: Diplomacy Lab will notify the four finalists
March 7-11: Global Partnerships Week (www.p3.co) public announcement of the four Wonk Tank finalists
April 1: Wonk Tank final competition at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C.

Contact Us
For more information, please visit www.diplomacylab.org, email us at diplomacylab@state.gov, or follow us on Twitter @diplomacylab and #wonktank.