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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM TEAM CONVERSATIONS MAY 4-10

### **Q) Can we replace our member that backed out?**

Yes. When a team completes an entry (for one of the prizes and case study), the team will be asked to list its members and this is the list used for awarding certificates and prize money. If there is concern beforehand, you may reach out to [makethecase@capp.global](mailto:makethecase@capp.global) and let us know. If possible, you should also make changes in F6S.com, but please recognize that the official list will be whom you submit for your entry.

### **Q) On the abstract of either Case Study template: the proposed solution—is this the solution of the proven project, or is the solution what we think it should be, combined with what the project has already done?**

Good question. Part I and II are focused on the solution (initiative) itself – basic background information and its impact. Part III and IV are your team’s interpretation of its potential if it currently had more resources, and if and how it can be replicated and scaled.

View these four parts as a story to tell. You introduce the initiative in Part 1, tell us why it’s great in Part II. Explain how it can be even better in its current location if it has more financial and local government support in Part III and then why it deserves to be replicated and scaled in many other places in East Asia and the world.

### **Q) Is there a price ceiling for our proposed budget?**

A good way to look at this question “if you team had the funds.....incremental results/benefits” is to first define what your team thinks is “maximum social benefit” based on what your initiative’s scope of activity. Would “social benefit” be best serviced by expanding the area served? Or if you did X and Y, would that significantly decrease the amount of plastic waste as a result? Ideally, as we laid out in the UN-funded report we wrote (<https://bit.ly/PlasticCommitments2020>), your team can look at the “magnitude” and “velocity” of what you propose to do and the money to be spent. One can surmise that most of these initiatives are underfunded. Thus, put yourself in the shoes of the executive team. First, ask

yourself, what is realistically possible that our organization has to do to achieve this “maximum social benefit?” Even if we had unlimited budget, can we get this done? Second, ask what activities that we can do would marginally increase the “magnitude” (i.e. impact of our solution) and also increase its “velocity” (how fast) given the proposed staff and money resources and time it will take? Third, ask yourself if it’s a money issue at all?

Lastly, your answers (line items) of what you would spend and why will go a long way to “make your case” about this initiative. As you “make the case” that your selected initiative can be “replicated and scaled” how will it seem if you suggest a huge budget for maximum social impact, but the likelihood that an organization in another location could get this much money out of the gate would be deemed “slim or none.” Be realistic in the budget and the incremental gains that it can achieve – and that will make your answer much more powerful to the reviewer –and let’s assume, the local government that could read this Case Study. Sometimes asking for “less” and maximizing the “ask” is better than shooting for the moon and never getting the funds.

**Q) What counts as a short project timeline completion? ) Example: 1 year, within a month**

Not sure how to answer this question, other than to say that one should look at the time/effort/resources to spend to get the project completed. For example, beach cleanups are great, but the time/effort/resources required are massive for a one-time, one-off cleanup effort. On the flip side, many commitments made by world governments or companies typically state a delivery date of 5-10 years, always by 2030 when the SDGs are due –and there are almost never any shorter-term project milestones to meet... essentially these type of projects are kicking the can down the road. When your team is thinking about what can be accomplished, be realistic in the time/effort/resources that will be needed/required and the completion date expected based on what your team suggests as possible. There’s no right answer. It really depends on the project and milestone goals.

**Q) Can a project be classified into two or more initiatives? ( Example: commercialisation & product redesign)**

This seems problematic as other teams will select case studies that are easier to describe, and with limited space (words) to answer questions, your team may find itself spending all its time describing what you want to occur, and your initiative would go from “proven/successful” to something that is far less certain. It’s hard to answer this question without specifics, but be weary of doing too much to change what the current stakeholder is doing well. Then again, be bold and if your team firmly believes in “product redesign” as the way to move forward, state what and why.

**Q) How complicated can the project be? Can we merge existing projects?**

See Q4’s answer just substitute “merging existing projects” for “product redesign.”

**Q) Should we only have 1 stakeholder?**

A stakeholder can mean different things. For the most part, it would mean the organization most involved in the initiative --who has the most invested to make the initiative successful. I think, in many ways, the people/community are always stakeholders related to plastic waste initiatives that involve their actions, but, in general, ask yourself who is the organization (the stakeholder) most invested in the success of the initiative to happen successfully.

Also, are there other stakeholders who are essential to the success of the initiative? Do you need community involvement to be successful? Do you need local government?

The question isn't "should we only have 1 stakeholder" but what groups in the area are essential for the success of the initiative to happen. Of course, it's the initiative's owner, but it may be others that are absolutely needed for success.

**Q) Is there a word limit for the May 15 submission (step 2)?**

It's now June 30<sup>th</sup>, and no word limit. We would appreciate feedback.

**Q) Are the solutions better from East Asia or Europe or will the whole world's solutions be fine?**

The competition is limited to initiatives in East Asia. That's the whole point of the competition – to find solutions being done in East Asia with success and to promote them to others in East Asia and the world.

**Q) I would like to ask, any deadline or submission is really fixed and would not change the deadline?**

All deadlines as of 12 May are final. There will NOT be any more extensions.

**Q) Do we have a more detailed Criteria of the Case study or other submission?**

No, we do not plan to provide more information than we already have provided on the web site, and in the materials referenced, as well as this Q&A. See Q2 as one detailed "hint." Your team can go to <https://cappindia.in> and look at Season One of the Make the Case India competition and you can see the winning team's presentations and case studies. The template was different, but truly when looking at all the entries, there were clear reasons why certain case studies were selected and those that were not. That's why it is more important to interact with the organization's leadership about the initiative you select, pick their brains, and add your team's views to "make your case"

**Q) Will we have a consultation day or week which can seek comments for the projects?**

This is not something we intend to do. If a team has a question that they'd like to ask that absolutely has them in a quandry, i.e. they are at a loss of what to write, they can reach out to us at [makethecase@capp.global](mailto:makethecase@capp.global) and we will reply by email and add our answer to this Q&A section.

**Q) What judges do we have? A panel of judges from CAPP? Or other organisations?**

Each entry will be judged by 3 reviewers from industry, academia within East Asia, as well as from around the world. To be more specific: Most likely professors, plastic waste experts, and environmental professionals from around the world.

Be more concerned with your answers, than who will be the judges.

**Q) Do we need to do quantitative research for the Case study or other submission?**

From my experience in two seasons of the Make the Case competition in India, the teams that add relevant quantitative research typically has a better understanding of both the problem and solution being offered. For example, saying "Hong Kong has a plastic waste problem, our initiative has a viable waste collection program and it should be extended to every part of the city" is easy to say, but better if you say something like "City ABC produces 3000 tons of plastic waste each year; our initiative selected focuses on waste from schools. There are 200 schools serving 80,000 students and it is estimated they produce 70 tons of plastic waste...that's the target the stakeholder organization is tackling" --the above numbers are totally made up, but the more you can support your answers, especially related to Part III as an example, the better your answers will be.

**Q) How many people do we need to interview?**

Teams that interview more people, and list them, should have a greater comprehension of the initiative they are writing about. That said, it's up to the team itself. You don't have to interview anyone. We do recommend they speak to the leadership of the organization running the initiative if possible. Plus, perhaps any others they may recommend, especially potential beneficiaries of the initiative.

**Q) What does the 'reference' refer to?**

References refer to the backup research information your team finds to support your answers. The more references your team cites, the more the reviewers will possibly see that your team did its homework. You don't have to cite any references. Up to you.

**Q) My team had additional questions regarding the Plastic Atlas Insights,**

1) For the first question, do we have to include a screenshot of the graphic that surprised us the most?

I personally think it's a good idea as the judges may not be familiar with the graphic --and there's no constraint on pages -just word limits.

2) For the second question, do we interpret the term "the best way" in the question as providing only one way to engage the youth or can we include as many suggestions as possible?

Interesting question. Hard to know what's best approach not knowing the graphic being selected, but if I personally were answering it, I would do my best to answer "the best way" and then also mention other ways. Be a bit bold. There's no wrong answer as it's your team's interpretation as to how to get young people involved, and mentioning other potential options (perhaps with why you think these are good options) shows you thought through your answer and considered other options, too.

**Q) Would it be better to choose an initiative from a different country, or is choosing an initiative from our country okay? Would it affect our score since we would likely have an advantage?**

We fully expect teams to select an initiative they know about firsthand or within their country, although you can select from any country. It's up to your team. Yes, definitely an advantage, but really that's part of the competition and I'd like to think if I were in a multi-country competition, myself, I would select an initiative from the US as it's my country and I'd be proud to show off something here that works to fight plastic pollution.... you still have to "tell the story" about it and "make the case" as to why the initiative should be replicated and scaled.

**Q) Will our university be notified of our participation in the competition?**

We don't have a formal notification plan, but will be reaching out to those admin/professors who helped spread the word about the competition ---yes, indirectly is the best answer to give.

**Q) May we consult with other parties outside the competition to gather insights on our case study, someone to act as an adviser**

Absolutely. This is a learning experience for you and your team members. We encourage assistance, and that's why we strongly recommend you reach out to the organization that you'll write about as that's firsthand knowledge and insights that are priceless, too.

**Q) We are thinking about a larger well known organization offering its solution in a number of locations, is this a good choice?**

Regarding your question about XYZ Are they in East Asia? I went to their site and didn't see any evidence of such. From my viewpoint of watching the judging in our two India competitions, I

can share that the student teams that selected more well-known initiatives and organizations had a more difficult time to tell the "story" - and that usually reflects less enthusiastically in the scoring by the reviewers. On the other hand, if they are somewhere in East Asia, you could create a story that they are a perfect solution at the right time, say for the ABC Country, for example -- wherever you suggest --and tell the story that shows the judges that what you suggest could happen, then that's great, too. This is up to you.

From my perspective, I think all teams are better served to find a really great organization doing something very scalable in their local area or country, such as YOUR COUNTRY, where you may have more local knowledge of why it's working and how it can be replicated and scaled --and can get access to the stakeholders leading the effort.

**Q) You mentioned NGO does that mean that you need consent forms from them. For example, I live in xxxx and I am fully aware of the plastic concerns in our area. Do we need permission from local officials? Because that kind of permission will take time and at least a month. Can the scope be in a specific subdivision in an area in xxxxx? We have an option that we can easily access to but can it be an ngo in a particular city. Will this suffice?**

From our experience running two similar competitions in India, the better submissions are those that literally "make the case" and tell a story about what the initiative is doing, its impact, how and if it can be replicated and scaled. Therefore, selecting an initiative with the above ingredients will be much better received, than there's a big problem of plastic waste in a large city and here's what needs to happen using ABC technology. I'm personally more of an advocate of "one small area at a time" and it sounds like that's what's happening with the initiative your team may select.

As far as permission, the nature of the questions in the template are more generalized, than specific, and we do not suggest you need to get permission, but likely not a great idea to provide any confidential information, either. Each stakeholder/organization has their own privacy concerns and from our experience in India, most stakeholders seem to welcome a student team peeking into their "successful" effort and that they want to bring attention to it -- only positive outcomes can result. But, please be careful if you think you do need to get permission, then it may make sense to select another initiative.

We hope to publish the Case Study of the winning teams, and would seek permission from the organization to do so, but again, just be careful if your team does talk with representative(s) of the organization that they don't share any confidential, sensitive info.

**Q) Please clarify why Make the Case added the PCC codes list as a resource?**

The PCC codes document provides a classification (or typology) of the types of initiatives you can write about in your Case Study. It is not a list of real stakeholders or organisations that run a specific initiative, just a list of terms to describe the different types of initiatives.