

Challenges in Business Education + International Student Business Competition: A Mysterious Business Case II

General Information and Conditions

The project “Challenges in Business Education + International Student Business Competition: A Mysterious Business Case II”, approved on 17 December 2025 by the Visegrad Fund and to be financed and registered by the same entity as Project No. 12520120, consists of two interconnected parts:

1. **Round Table** – A one-day session bringing together professors and students to discuss and evaluate the challenges of business education in the digital era.
2. **International Student Business Competition** – A four-day competition where selected students collaborate and compete to solve a mysterious business case under challenging conditions.

The project is administered by the Department of International Business at the Prague University of Economics and Business (hereinafter referred to as “VŠE”) and is implemented with the direct involvement of two partner universities: Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (hereinafter referred to as “UMB”) and the University of Pécs.

Program Overview

16 January 2026

- Morning: Departure for Banská Bystrica, Slovakia (the Round Table location)
- Late Afternoon: Arrival and preparations for the Round Table

17 January 2026

- Morning & Afternoon: Round table discussion titled “*Challenges in Business Education: How to Motivate and Prepare Students for Their Future Careers in the Digital Age?*” at Cesta na amfiteáter, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. Open to the public.
- Evening: Opening of the International Student Business Competition: A Mysterious Business Case II

18 January 2026

- Morning: Group Work + Transfer to a *Mysterious Location*
- Evening: Check-in and Continuation of the Competition

19–21 January 2026

- Competition Activities
- 21 January (Afternoon): Final project defenses

22 January 2026

- Morning: Return journey

Participation Slots

- **Czechia:** 6 participants (3 from VŠE)
- **Hungary:** 6 participants (3 from the University of Pécs)
- **Slovakia:** 6 participants (3 from UMB)

If the guaranteed slots for any participating university are not used, they are reallocated to candidates from other universities in the same country in which the participating university is located. If slots for other universities in a V4 country are not used, they are reallocated to candidates from the participating university in that country.

Application Process

Eligibility:

Open to Bachelor's students from any university located in the Czech Republic, Hungary, or Slovakia.

Application Period:

17 December 2025 (19:00) – 25 December 2025 (until 23:59)

Application Requirements:

- Please submit a short CV in English (photo not required) in PDF format only, including your basic personal details, educational background, and any relevant work experience. Applicants with valid CVs will be invited to an online interview.
- Proof of study (can be submitted later, but no after 5 January 16:00). Indicate it in your application.

Please note that all applications must be sent to v4mysterious@vse.cz. Each person may **apply only once**. Incorrect applications will be desk-rejected, and no appeal or resubmission is possible.

The received applications will be processed by the Organizing Team and the assigned reviewers (as detailed below) and may be shared with the Visegrad Fund. No applications will be shared with any other third parties or published online. All applications will be deleted upon conclusion of the project, no later than 31 January 2027.

Selection Process

- 26 December – 27 December 2025: Applicants will be invited for interviews.
- 28 December 2025 – 30 December 2025: Online interviews conducted with two reviewers. The interviews will assess students' motivation and interest in the business competition.
- By 2 January 2026, 16:00: Notification of results.
- By 4 January 2026, 16:00: Selected students must provide binding confirmation of their participation. If they fail to do so, they will be immediately replaced by the next highest-ranking students who did not qualify.
- By 6 January 2026, 16:00: Substitutes must provide binding confirmation of their participation, should any of the originally selected students either decide not to participate or fail to confirm their participation on time.

What Selected Participants Receive

- **Half board** each day (starting with dinner on 17 January and ending with breakfast on 22 January).
- **Accommodation** in Banská Bystrica from 16 to 18 January (note: this does not apply to students from UMB), and at a *Mysterious Location* from 18 to 22 January 2026 (note: shared rooms and shared bathrooms).
- All main **participation costs** related to the program covered.

Not Covered by Organizers:

- Transportation costs (approx. 80 EUR).
- Mandatory travel insurance (approx. 10 EUR).

- Meals not included in the half board plan.
- Pocket spendings.

Important Notes

- The Competition will take place in winter conditions and includes outdoor activities.
- The Competition can take place in any of the following four countries: Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia.
- The event is not suitable for students with reduced mobility or specific health conditions.
- Students who are prone to illness during the winter season are kindly requested not to apply. A complete list of participants is required for both parts of the event and any drop-out will cause significant difficulties for the organizers.
- Special diets cannot be accommodated due to budget constraints (Participants with special dietary requirements may apply, but they will be responsible for providing their own food if they choose not to accept what is offered by the organizers).
- Students will be requested to fill out questionnaires that serve to measure their educational process. This activity is mandatory, as it represents an inherent part of the project's evaluation framework.
- Selected students who choose not to cooperate or avoid participating on the spot, thereby leaving their team members to work without them, will be asked by the organizers to leave the event immediately at their own expense.
- Students who become suddenly ill will also be required to leave the event and seek medical assistance. The remaining members of the affected team will be eligible to continue.
- The announced program may be subject to slight changes.

Photo and Video Documentation

The Visegrad Fund requires photo and video documentation from the event. Participants will be asked to provide their consent for the publication of any materials in which they appear. Refusing to participate in photo or video recordings will not exclude any student from the Competition.

Competition Structure & Awards

Participants will be randomly assigned into **3 teams of 6 members**.

Awards:

- **Winning team:** 1800 EUR per person (300 EUR/person)
- **Best performer** (from any team): 150 EUR

All awards will be **payable within 60 days** from the end of the Competition.

FAQ – Challenges in Business Education + International Student Business Competition: A Mysterious Business Case II

1. Can students of other nationalities participate?

Yes, as long as they are registered as students at a university located in Czechia, Hungary or Slovakia.

2. I am a Master's student. Can I try my luck?

Unfortunately, no. This event is for Bachelor's students only. You must be enrolled in a Bachelor's program at least until 31 December 2025. The organizers will request proof of enrolment (e.g. a confirmation from your study department), which must be submitted no later than 5 January 2026, 16:00.

3. Is participation in the Round Table mandatory?

Yes. The event is designed for participants who wish to engage fully in both parts – the Round Table and the Competition. Non-participation will result in the exclusion of a participant from the Competition.

4. Last year, there was a motivation letter and an entry quiz. Why do you have interviews this year?

The reason is simple: many of the motivation letters submitted last year were AI-generated or did not meet content or length requirements. The quiz assessed basic economic knowledge, but not the motivation. The interview format, while more challenging for everyone, is a more reliable way to confirm that applicants are genuinely interested, willing to participate actively in both parts of the event, and capable of communicating in English at an acceptable level. We are not seeking participants who are unwilling or unable to engage actively in communication.

5. How will the interview be organized?

Students will be offered two possible interview dates and asked to select their preferred option. If they are unable to attend either date, their participation will no longer be considered. Two professors will be present during the interview.

6. Why are there only 18 slots this year?

We are limited by budget and want to focus on selecting the best of the best candidates.

7. Can I attend the Round Table only?

Yes, you may join as a guest on 17 January 2026 without applying for the Competition. However, no costs will be covered for guest participants.

8. What will happen on 17 January 2026?

The Round Table will feature an open discussion, a series of short speeches and workshops led by professors and invited guests. It's a great opportunity to exchange ideas and explore the different perspectives that students and educators have about the learning process.

9. How difficult will the Competition be?

The mysterious business case will be adapted to the Bachelor's level, but participants will need to conduct independent research under mentor supervision. Time is limited, and you'll need to prepare your defense and supporting evidence efficiently. This means, it will be quite difficult.

10. Is participation in outdoor activities mandatory?

Yes. Outdoor activities are an integral part of the Competition. Each team's success depends on all members completing these activities. A team cannot win if some members refuse to participate.

11. I'm not a very sporty person. Should I still apply?

The event is not designed for athletes, but for students eager to challenge themselves and learn new things in business and economics. You'll be encouraged to step out of your comfort zone – not run a marathon. Anyways, consider carefully whether you are ready to go the extra mile.

12. Will the Competition be different from the previous edition?

Yes, partly. This edition introduces new game and outdoor elements and a tighter schedule, making it more challenging and fast-paced. The atmosphere will be more thrilling. However, with fewer participants, the environment will be less anonymous and will foster greater personal development and teamwork.

The Round Table immediately before the Competition will also provide fresh insights to inspire participants.

13. Where will the Competition take place?

That's a secret and nobody will tell you – you'll find out only upon arrival. If you prefer predictability, you are advised to stay home.

14. Who can I contact if I have more questions?

Reach out to the Organizing Team at v4mysterious@vse.cz.

These conditions are valid as of 17 December 2025, 17:00. Any changes will be updated on the webpage: kmp.vse.cz/isbc.

Acknowledgment

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