



SEASON I · 2026-27 · UNDERWAY SINCE SEPTEMBER 29

Ohio Founders League

America's first statewide collegiate entrepreneurship league. What it is, how a season works, and where we are now.

Kevin Mackey, Founding League Commissioner · Founders League Institute



Ohio's best student founders leave. The League gives them a reason to stay.

Every year the strongest student ventures in Ohio graduate into somewhere else's ecosystem. A pitch competition rewards one afternoon and then ends. The Ohio Founders League is a season: eight months of building in public, scored on what founders actually do, with a statewide stage and real capital at the end of it.



A season, not a pitch night.

Register

Ten minutes. Founders are placed at a stage, 0 to 4, from what they have already built, and ranked against ventures that started at the same stage.

Report weekly

Real numbers every week become a Traction Score everyone can see. Missing a week never costs points; it just earns nothing.

Climb

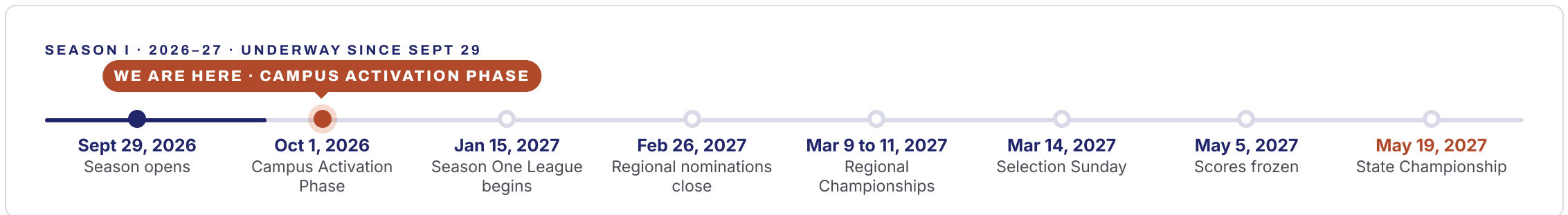
Five stages. Each ends with a Final Challenge: one piece of proof, verified by a League official who reviews everything the venture claimed.

Compete

Six weeks of league play from January 15. Thirty-six ventures, 12 per region, at three Regional Championships. Selection Sunday. One State Champion on May 19, 2027.



Season I, and where we are today.



The season opened on September 29, 2026. We are in the Campus Activation Phase, October 1 to January 15: founders and Scouts are registering, with no cutoff and no selection. Season One League begins January 15, 2027, when the full field starts live scoring and weekly reporting.



\$575,000 in non-dilutive capital.

\$500,000

To the State Champion, crowned live on May 19, 2027.

3 × \$25,000

To each Regional Champion: Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland, March 9 to 11, 2027.

No equity, ever

Prizes are grants. The League takes no equity, warrants, revenue share, or any other interest in any venture.



Scored on what founders do.

Traction Score

Every stage is worth a fixed amount: its challenges, an action budget filled by weekly reports, and its Final Challenge bonus. Clear a stage and it is credited in full. Money milestones sit on top. Verified by officials, audited publicly.

League Scoring at live events

Judges 60%: five judges, six criteria, published rubric. Traction 30%: the venture's progress against its cohort. Scouts 10%: how many portfolios the venture is in.



The whole campus plays.

Founders

Any undergraduate or graduate student at a founding university, or a graduate within a year if founded while enrolled. Student-led, majority student ownership. Any type except life sciences in Season I.

Scouts

Students, faculty, staff, and alumni pick five ventures and score the points those ventures earn. No money involved. Scouts publish profiles so founders can find help.

Campus leads

One per university. Registers ventures, reaches out to self-registered founders, reviews, and nominates. Every step logged in MyCampus.

Ten founding universities.



Ohio State, Case Western Reserve, Cincinnati, Dayton, Miami, Akron, Baldwin Wallace, Bowling Green, Youngstown State, and Tiffin. One leaderboard across all ten.



What a founding university gets, and gives.

GETS

- Lasting recognition as a founding member of America's first collegiate entrepreneurship league
- Statewide visibility across a season of coverage
- A recruiting and fundraising story for leadership
- A seat on the University Advisory Council
- A reason for its best builders to stay in Ohio

COMMITTS TO

- A \$5,000 annual founding membership fee
- A campus lead
- Nominating its strongest ventures, 10 to 15 recommended
- In-kind support: event space, marketing reach
- Amplifying the announcement and the season



The platform: three portals, one leaderboard.

MyVenture

Founders: dashboard, weekly report, active challenges, the road from Stage 0 to 4, leaderboard, and a searchable directory of Scouts who want to help.

Scout

Portfolio, the Market of every venture with its score and momentum, profiles, intros, messaging, and the Scout leaderboard.

MyCampus

Every venture from the university, the outreach workflow, nominations against the 10 to 15 rule, campus Scouts, and campus points among the ten.

Guides, printable playbooks, and narrated walkthroughs for every role are at ohiofoundersleague.org/learn.



What happens between now and May.

Oct 1 to Jan 15

Campus Activation Phase. Registration and outreach. The record each founder starts now carries into league play.

Jan 15 to Feb 26

Season One League begins. Six weeks of live scoring and weekly reporting for the full field. Regional nominations close February 26: 12 per region, 36 in all.

Mar 9 to 14

Regional Championships in Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland, \$25,000 each. Selection Sunday names the ten.

Mar 15 to May 19

The ten finalists build on. Scores freeze May 5. State Champion crowned May 19.



Get involved.



The season site
ohiofoundersleague.org



Founders: register
ohiofoundersleague.org/venture/register



Scouts: register
ohiofoundersleague.org/scout/register

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