

ROTTERDAM-CARLETON INTERNATIONAL CASE COMPETITION

ROCA *Official Rules*

Rotterdam Business School



**ROTTERDAM UNIVERSITY
OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

Sprott School of Business



**Carleton
UNIVERSITY**

Canada's Capital University

ROCA ROCKS!

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The following rules and guidelines for the Rotterdam-Carleton International Case Competition, hereinafter referred to as "ROCA", are intended to ensure guidance and fairness to all participating teams. The organisers and judges of the Competition, as selected by the host institution, will strictly enforce Competition rules. Any interpretation of these rules that may arise during the Competition will be solely the responsibility of the organisers. Their decisions will be final.

Hans van Oudheusden & Robin Ritchie

WELCOME

ROCA is a global and challenging business competition in a global and challenging business city, either in Rotterdam or in Ottawa (2020 in Rotterdam, 2021 in Ottawa, 2022 in Rotterdam, 2023 in Ottawa, etc.). The tournament provides university students from all-around the world a platform to showcase their problem-solving and analytical skills to (business) managers from the international business world.

The Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences and the Carleton University, Ottawa, are proud of hosting this prestigious event and give all participating teams a cordial welcome.

MISSION

1. Challenging participants with complex problems that demand integrative, transdisciplinary thinking and reasoned application of knowledge and theoretical concepts;
2. Helping companies in the local area by asking participants to come up with creative and feasible solutions for their “wicked problems”, and to develop an effective action plan;
3. Reflecting the reality of modern international and interdisciplinary business by using cases with a strong focus on newer technologies and completely new business models;
4. Providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and perspectives from a diversity of cultures, both within the competition itself and in its additional activities;
5. Facilitating meaningful networking among students from participating universities and those from the hosting university;
6. Connecting participants, when feasible, with potential employers that share our universities’ commitment to internationalisation, with the aim of creating and enhancing student career opportunities;
7. Promoting Rotterdam and Ottawa through the cases and the event.

UNIQUE FORMAT

The Rotterdam-Carleton International Case Competition (ROCA) aims to be an event like no other, on par with the best undergraduate business case competitions in the world. And the **first transatlantic international undergraduate business case competition in the world!** With a unique format:

- Unlike many other case competitions, the format of **ROCA** guarantees all teams a minimum of 3 matches, with the six finalists tackling a total of 4 different cases.
- All cases in **ROCA** will be “live and relevant”. Not only because all cases will be written in close cooperation with companies and institutions, teams will also get the opportunity to talk with the managers during the preparation time at the competition.
- **ROCA** Teams will consist of four students who will present their recommendations to a panel of expert judges from leading companies and institutions across Rotterdam or Ottawa. Cases will be relevant and challenging, and cover a broad range of interdisciplinary business problems with a strong focus on the “Economy and Society of the Future”.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Student Eligibility

ROCA is open to any student registered, *for the duration of the Competition*, in an undergraduate (bachelor level or equivalent) programme through special invitation by the Rotterdam University or Carleton University. Students on exchange at a member institution for the entire academic semester may compete for that member institution, provided they meet other eligibility requirements. Individuals who have previously participated in ROCA may not enter the competition again.

NOTE: To be eligible, a student must NOT have completed his degree requirements by the time ROCA is held.

1.2 Team Composition

The team is composed of four eligible undergraduate students chosen by their university, accompanied by a team coach.

1.3 Team Coach /Advisor

A coach or advisor is an individual assigned by a participating university to oversee the preparation and training of his team for ROCA. Coaches are typically faculty members at the participating institution. Each team should have at least one coach, and it is always expected that one or more coaches will accompany the team. The coach is usually also the person who communicates with ROCA organisers on behalf of the team.

1.4 Registration Fee

Each institution invited to enter a team in ROCA must pay the registration fee (for 4 students and 1 coach) by the deadline and according to the procedures set by the hosting university.

1.5 Travel Documents

It is extremely important to obtain appropriate travel documents for all four team members as soon as the team has been registered for ROCA.

1.6 Absence of a Team Member

No extra person, either from Rotterdam, Ottawa or any other potential volunteer, will be allowed to join a team in the event that the team arrives with only three (3) team members; however, the team will be allowed to participate with three (3) team members.

During ROCA, if a team member becomes ill and is unable to participate, the team will be allowed to participate with three (3) team members.

1.7 Withdrawal of a Team

On very rare occasions, a team may withdraw from the competition after the teams have been announced. This can happen for a variety of reasons, such as political reasons (e.g. change in visa requirements or travel bans) or financial reasons (e.g. bankruptcy of university).

When this happens with sufficient lead time, the school will be replaced. If a substitute cannot be found, a spare team from the hosting university may be invited to take the spot.

It is also conceivable that a team may need to withdraw at the last minute—potentially as late as one or two days before the start of ROCA. In that case, ROCA will be modified to allow for the participation of only 15 teams. The competition schedule will remain the same and any teams that would have played against the missing

opponent will present to the judges and be awarded a point total (on a scale of 1 to 13) that reflects the quality of their presentation.

1.8 Language

All case presentations must be in English.

2. Rotterdam-Carleton International Case Competition Week: RULES AND GUIDELINES

Sixteen (16) teams will be invited to compete in ROCA. Further details regarding the schedule and other arrangements will be announced by the ROCA Organising Committee.

Note: The ROCA Organising Committee has the right to organise the competition with only twelve (12) teams if 16 high-quality teams cannot be found before May 1st (due to financial reasons, academic calendar reasons etc.); the principle is always the quality of the competition, not the quantity

2.1 ROCA Structure

2.1.1 Divisional Matches – Days 1 to 3

A divisional round robin will be played in four divisions of four teams each; each team will compete head-to-head with the three other teams in the same division.

First divisional match: Team 1 vs. Team 3; Team 2 vs. Team 4

Second divisional match: Team 1 vs. Team 4; Team 2 vs. Team 3

Third divisional match: Team 1 vs. Team 2; Team 3 vs. Team 4

A random draw will be held in order to assign teams to divisions. All teams in ROCA will take part in a draw at the Welcome Ceremony held on Sunday afternoon.

DIVISION A	DIVISION B	DIVISION C	DIVISION D
1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4

Monday, 6-hour case (incl. 0,5 hour question session with *company in case*; max. two (2) students per team. Four (4) teams are present at the same time, i.e. max. eight (8) students in total. All students must arrive and leave the question session at the same time.

Team 1 vs. 3			
Team 2 vs. 4			

Tuesday, 6-hour case (incl. 0,5 hour question session with *company in case*; max. two (2) students per team. Four (4) teams are present at the same time, i.e. max. eight (8) students in total. All students must arrive and leave the question session at the same time.

Team 1 vs. 4			
Team 2 vs. 3			

Wednesday, 6-hour case (incl. 0,5 hour question session with *company in case*; max. two (2) students per team. Four (4) teams are present at the same time, i.e. max. eight (8) students in total. All students must arrive and leave the question session at the same time.

Team 1 vs. 1	Team 2 vs. 1	Team 2 vs. 1	Team 2 vs. 1
Team 4 vs. 3			

Following the three divisional (round-robin) matches, each team's scores will be aggregated, and the total used to rank the four teams in the division; the winner in each division will advance to the Final, all four division winners will be in the Final. In the event that there is a tie in the aggregated scores of teams, the team that won in head-to-head competition against the other tied team will be ranked higher.

The two runners-up with the highest point totals will advance to the Final too. The six teams (four + two) will present in the order specified in the rules.

NOTE: In the event of ROCA consisting of only 12 teams, three divisions of four will be formed. The three division winners advance to the Final and the two runners-up with the highest point totals. The five teams will present in the order specified in the rules.

NOTE: In the event that second-place finishers have identical point totals, the ranking will be based on which team had the highest score on the third day. If the teams are still level, the ranking will be based on which team had the highest score on the second day. If the teams are still level, the teams will draw lots with the winner progressing.

2.1.2 Final Matches

Friday, 6-hour case (incl. 20 min. question session with *company in case*. All students of the team are allowed per question session, but it is up to the team how many students will attend (0, 1, 2, 3 or 4). All six sessions are separate, i.e., one session per team. It is up to the team how to use these 20 min. best.

2.1.3 Presentation Schedule

Competing “head-to-head” means that a pair of teams presents the same case to the same panel of judges. The start times for the preparation and presentation phases for each team will be scheduled so that the two teams can present their completed analysis to the same judging panel immediately upon completing their case preparation, one after the other.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday start times for Competition matches will be “staggered” (i.e. an early wave of matches, followed by a late wave of matches).

In the scheduling of the divisional matches, each team should have the opportunity to present first at least once, and second at least once.

2.2 Team Ambassador

Each team will be assigned a team ambassador (also known as a “buddy”). The ambassador’s task is to assist the team, serving as the primary contact between the team and the ROCA organisers. When the team is preparing its case solution, the team ambassador will serve as a runner, replenishing supplies (e.g., water, paper) and resolving issues as needed. No communication is permitted between team members and anyone except their team ambassador from the beginning of the preparation time to the time of presentation. *This specifically and explicitly includes team coaches.*

2.3 Case Preparation

2.3.1 Preparation Room

A preparation room will be provided to each team; every effort will be made to ensure that teams have the same preparation room for the duration of ROCA. Network connections (internet) are allowed, however, phone lines and mobile phones are NOT permitted in the preparation room. The preparation room will be available for the team at least 15 minutes before the preparation is to start. The following materials will be provided for the teams in the preparation room:

- Four copies of the case
- Black board, white board, or flip chart
- Paper, pencils, and pens
- Two blank memory sticks

Each team has to bring their own laptops (min. 2 and max. 4) with MS Office 2019, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Laptops must have the ability to connect with wireless networks *.

Each team may also bring one or more ready-made presentation templates. All templates must be contained within a single PowerPoint file. No third-party templates are allowed; a third party is any template not created by a member of the team. This includes, but is not limited to, purchased templates, torrented templates, downloaded templates, or templates made by students not competing in ROCA.

Each member of the team is also permitted to bring into the preparation reference books and notes. Team members are encouraged to coordinate so that they do not duplicate reference books. In addition, each team member can also bring into the preparation room dictionaries, English-language grammar texts, rulers, and other drawing aids. Teams are also permitted to bring their own presentation clicker, if desired.

The use of internet is permitted, but “open sources” only.

Not permitted:

- Accessing password protected websites and databases during the competition preparation times (e-mail, dropbox, JSTOR, LexisNexis etc.).
- Communication with any external party about the case during case preparation.
- Cellphones, PDA’s, or financial calculators and all other electronic devices apart from the team's personal laptops.

A *Code of Honour* applies. Furthermore, the team ambassador and members of the Organising Committee have the right to check for violations of the rules at all times. If anything is deemed to violate Competition rules, a penalty will be applied. This penalty will be determined by the organisers based on the severity of the violation, and may include transferring one or more points from the offending team to its direct opponent after the score for the match has been determined.

*NOTE: The ROCA Organising Committee plans to write all cases together with the local business community. There will be time to talk directly to the company in the case and/or case writer(s) during the case preparation period. Furthermore, a few weeks before the start of ROCA participating students and trainer/coaches will receive an instruction to access **the knowledge database that belongs to the cases that students will have to solve during the competition. Students will have access to files about the industry, trends, the company involved etc. This will give the students the opportunity to prepare themselves on solving the ROCA cases.** Of course, the case itself will not be disclosed, therefore the students can only guess what kind of problem they can expect. During the competition the students will have access to the same files plus the business problem case.

2.3.2 Presentation Templates

Teams are permitted use of a PowerPoint file containing one or more ready-made presentation template(s). A template may contain graphics such as background images, arrows, boxes, organization charts, icons, maps, and photographs. Videos and dynamic/animated images are NOT permitted in the template.

Teams are encouraged not to use school logos, but to design own logos that represent the consultancy agency they want to be in the matches.

2.3.3 Presentation Memory Stick

Teams must save their work on two presentation memory sticks *provided by the organisers*. At the end of the preparation time, the team ambassador will take one memory stick and use it to load the presentation file onto the presentation computer. Teams must also save a copy of their final presentation to the hard drive of one of the laptops in their preparation room. This will serve as a backup for their presentation memory stick. The other memory stick is used for informing judges digitally (during the deliberations), the possibility of printing and as an extra backup.

2.3.4 Set-up Time

The set-up time is not optional.

Immediately prior to each round, team ambassadors will meet their team and accompany them to the preparation room. The ROCA schedule allows for at least 15 minutes of set-up time before each preparation period is to begin. During this time, the team ambassador will ensure that the room is appropriately configured and supplied, and that computers are working properly.

The team ambassador will collect all mobile phones and other equipment with potential for internet access from team members, and will keep these devices with him/her until after the presentation.

Cases will be made available to the coaches after the final team has gone into its preparation room.

2.3.5 Preparation Time

Each team has six (6) hours to prepare its case analysis.

If a major problem occurs during the preparation time (for example a power cut or fire alarm), preparation will be suspended for the amount of time needed to solve the problem. The preparation time will then be extended for up to 30 minutes in order to compensate for any preparation time lost.

If a team experiences a problem with either of their computers, it is their responsibility to advise the Case Preparation Room Monitor, who must immediately communicate the concern to the technical support team. They will offer help or provide another laptop. Since every team member is allowed to bring his/her own laptop, a working laptop is always the responsibility of the team or team member. Therefore, the preparation time will not be extended.

The team ambassador will notify the team when 10 minutes of preparation time remains. The team should ensure that the presentation is saved on the presentation memory stick (provided by the host institution) within the preparation time allotted.

If there has been a delay in any of the preparation or presentation rooms, this may extend the time teams must wait before they are allowed to enter the presentation room. While not desirable, such delays are considered part of the competition.

The organisers reserve the right to inspect the preparation room at any time.

2.3.6 Maximum Number of PowerPoint Slides

The maximum number of slides permitted in a presentation is 35. Slides may be retained by the presenting group for use in the question & answer session that follows the presentation. The total amount of slides, however, may never exceed 35.

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 Presentation Room

A presentation room will be provided for the case analysis presentation. The room will be set up with:

- One computer with software, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- One data projector
- Possibly a presentation clicker
- Possibly microphones
- Possibly a photographer / videographer recording the presentation

3.2 Presentation Time

During the matches, each team will be allowed 15 minutes for the formal oral presentation. Each member of the team must participate in the presentation. Normally, teams use the entire 15 minutes.

NOTE: in the Final teams will have 12 minutes for the formal oral presentation.

3.3 Timekeeper

A timekeeper will supervise each pair of case presentations (i.e. each match). The timekeeper will begin by asking members of the audience to switch off all mobile phones. S/he will then ask the team to enter the presentation room when it is available for the presentation. The timekeeper will let the team organise itself, which should not take more than two (2) minutes. When ready, s/he will introduce the presenting team by stating the name of the institution, and let the judges introduce themselves by name and judging role and, finally, motion the presentation to begin. S/he will indicate to the presenting team when there are ten (10) minutes, five (5) minutes, three (3) minutes, and one (1) minute remaining in the presentation time. When the 15 minutes (12 minutes in the Final) are up, the timekeeper will end the presentation whether or not the team has finished. It is imperative that the timekeeper sits where s/he can be seen by all team members.

3.4 Question & Answer Session

Following the completion of the formal presentation, the timekeeper will state the amount of time available for questions for the panel of judges. Generally, this will be 10 minutes (8 minutes in the Final) but, if delays have been experienced, the Q & A time may be reduced. Teams may show new slides during the Q & A session provided they are relevant to questions asked. The team may not, however, continue the presentation. Furthermore, the total amount of slides may never exceed 35. See under 2.3.6

A five (5) minute, a three (3) and a one (1) minute warning will be given during the question & answer period. It is imperative that the timekeeper be visible to the judges during the Q & A period.

3.5 Attending and Recording Presentations

During all matches, recording of presentations (i.e., photographs, video recording, or audio recording) by anyone other than ROCA organisers or the coach of the presenting team is strictly prohibited without explicit permission from the presenting team. The organisers reserve the right to record presentations for use in educational or promotional activities following ROCA.

During the divisional matches, student teams are NOT permitted to view the presentation of their direct opponents in the same division. Coaches are free to attend presentations for any match.

During the Final, presentations are open to all participants, including direct opponents after having presented.

4. JUDGING

4.1 Judge Selection

Judges are selected by the ROCA Organising Committee, and represent different professional experiences and backgrounds. Ideally, each judging panel should contain representation from the business community, case alumni, and university faculty members.

Each judging panel normally consists of at least three judges. The formation of the judging panels is the sole responsibility of the organisers and cannot be contested.

4.2 Judges' Scoring

During their deliberation judges can consult / watch a digital copy of the presentation slides via the timekeeper's laptop. The timekeeper will make these slides available before they begin their deliberation. The deliberation period after every presentation is 10 minutes. After completing their second deliberation, judges have 5 minutes to decide the score and outcome of the match.

Judges will work to come to a consensus when evaluating teams, as opposed to each judge stating an individual score and then averaging these scores.

Schedule:

- first team, 25 minutes (presentation and Q&A)
- deliberation, 10 minutes
- second team, 25 minutes (presentation and Q&A)
- deliberation, 10 minutes
- final scoring, 5 minutes

After the Final (6 teams) judges have 30 minutes to decide the outcome of the tournament and the winner of ROCA, i.e. to determine the ranking (first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth).

Note: in the Final (6 teams) total time of presentation and Q&A for each team is 20 minutes (12 minutes + 8 minutes), after the Final the deliberation starts. Between the first three teams and the last three teams in the Final there is a 30 minutes break which can be used by the judges to start deliberating the first 3 teams.

During their deliberation the judges can consult / watch a digital copy of the presentation slides via the timekeeper's laptop. The timekeeper will make these slides available before they begin their deliberation.

4.3 Judges' Feedback

Immediately after scoring the match, judges will give oral feedback to the competing teams, one team at a time, for 10 minutes, in such a way that the teams understand the reasons why one team was judged to have been superior to the other. Teams are encouraged to make notes; it is allowed to record the oral feedback. Teams are not permitted to hear the feedback of other teams.

Immediately after the second team has received its feedback, the judges should invite the first team to return to the room. The match score should then be announced to both teams simultaneously.

The judge panels will submit a scoring form to the organisers. The scores will be posted publicly.

After the Final the feedback form used by the judges in their evaluation will be made available to the coach of each team, after the winner will have been announced at the gala banquet. There will be no scoring, just a ranking.

5. SCORING

After both teams have presented, the judges will determine a winner on a thirteen-point scale, i.e. the total of the points to both teams must be thirteen. Ties are not permitted. The following will be used as a guide:

- 7,0 to 6,0: winning team marginally better
- 7,5 to 5,5: winning team better
- 8,0 to 5,0: winning team clearly better
- 8,5 to 4,5: winning team clearly superior
- 9,0 to 4,0: winning team outstanding and losing team weak
- 9,5 to 3,5: winning team outstanding and losing team extremely weak

6. FINAL DIVISIONAL STANDINGS

Once the three divisional matches are complete, each team's scores are aggregated, and the total used to rank the four teams in the division. The four division winners advance to the Final PLUS the two runners-up with the highest point totals.

Sequence of presenting teams in the Final: the team with the highest amount of points will be asked when they want to present in the Final (as first team, as second team, as third team etc.). Then the team with the second-highest amount of points will be asked when they want to present in the Final etc. etc.

NOTE: In the event of ROCA consisting of only 12 teams, three divisions of four will be formed. The three division winners advance to the Final and the two runners-up with the highest point totals. The five teams will present in the order specified in the rules.

NOTE: In the event that second-place finishers have identical point totals, the ranking will be based on which team had the highest score on the third day. If the teams are still level, the ranking will be based on which team had the highest score on the second day.

7. FINAL

All rules previously described for the divisional matches apply to the ROCA Final too. However, the finalists will be given no more than 12 minutes for their presentation. The Q & A session will be 8 minutes. There will be no scores, teams will be ranked (1 to 6)

8. AWARDS

The team that wins the ROCA Final is declared ROCA Champion and receives both a ROCA trophy and individual gold medals. Members of the losing teams in the Final match are second-place finishers (awarded individual silver medals), and third-place finishers (awarded individual bronze medals); the fourth-place, fifth-place and sixth-place finishers receive no medals.

Recognition will also be given to:

- the best two individual presenters
- the most spirited team

9. PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF RULE VIOLATION

The organisers retain the right to disqualify any team from ROCA if the rules are not observed or if a team does not maintain a proper standard of conduct in the professional and collegial spirit of ROCA.

Any concerns or disputes regarding the implementation of these rules and/or any improper or disloyal behaviour must be brought to the immediate attention of the organisers. Please note that the decision of the organisers is final and not subject to review.

ROCA Organising Committee, September 2022