



*Last updated on February 2, 2026*

## **Evaluation Process**

The SMART Antiviral Prize uses a two-stage review process:

1. Written Submission Review
2. Written Submission Review and Virtual Presentation (Pitch Call)

### **Stage 1: Written Submission Review**

An expert judging panel will review, score, and rank all Concept Stage written submissions using the criteria below. Scores and rankings will be based solely on the information provided in the written submission at the time of submission.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Description</b>
Scientific rationale and antiviral target strategy	Judges will assess how clearly the submission explains its antiviral concept, including the proposed mechanism of action, relevance to broad-spectrum activity within one or more prioritized viral families, and strength of the supporting evidence (e.g., literature, public data, or preliminary in silico/experimental findings) that the target or pathway is essential, druggable, resistant to development of viral escape, and plausibly conserved across multiple viruses.
Development and regulatory strategy	Judges will consider how well the submission lays out a realistic, coherent path from the current state of the program toward a Phase 1-ready small-molecule antiviral candidate, including key preclinical activities and milestones, anticipated regulatory needs, and a thoughtful approach to identifying and mitigating major technical, regulatory, and operational risks over the anticipated prize stages.
Capabilities, partnerships, and execution feasibility	Judges will evaluate whether the applicant and any proposed partners have the expertise, resources, and collaborations needed to execute the plan, including relevant scientific and development capabilities, access to required infrastructure and IP/freedom to operate, and an overall program management approach that makes timely, high-quality delivery of the proposed work feasible.



## **Stage 2: Virtual Presentations (Pitch Calls)**

Based on rankings from Stage 1, the highest-scoring applicants will be invited to participate in a virtual presentation (“Pitch Call”) with the judging panel. The Administrator expects to invite fifteen (15) applicants.

To support a balanced portfolio, the Prize Administrator intends to invite at least two applicants targeting each prioritized viral family (*Togaviridae* and *Flaviviridae*).

All finalists will be required to use the same pitch format and time limits and may not introduce material changes to their proposed approach. Pitch Calls are intended to clarify and confirm information provided in the written submission. During Pitch Calls, judges will evaluate submissions using the same criteria applied during Stage 1 and will additionally consider:

- Consistency with the written submission
- Clarity regarding key risks and proposed mitigation strategies
- Feasibility of near-term milestones
- Responsiveness to judges’ questions

## **Prize Award Recommendations**

Following Pitch Calls, judges will submit results—reflecting final scoring and prize recommendations—to Start 2 for decision. Consistent with the stated evaluation criteria and eligibility requirements, the final recommendations will support selection of eight winners with at least one (1) winner from each prioritized viral family (*Togaviridae* and *Flaviviridae*).

Note: The above evaluation criteria apply only to the Concept Stage. Evaluation criteria for subsequent stages will be published at a later date and finalized in the official rules and requirements prior to the commencement of each stage. Clarifying or supplemental information may be issued as necessary.