

BUSINESS HORIZONS

2026 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

July 19-23, 2026 | Grand View University, Des Moines

INDUSTRY ADVISORS

WHO: Business professionals from any industry or career field with a passion for mentoring and building confidence in our Iowa students.

DESCRIPTION: Industry Advisors are the pilots of the Business Horizons program. These volunteers guide and mentor each Industry (10-12 students) through five days of team-building activities, competition preparation, the development of their product/business and more. Advisors support their team as they navigate their way through the week while fostering a positive, encouraging team environment.

The Business Horizons Industry Advisor position is also an excellent professional development opportunity, and a great way to showcase your company and industry/profession to our future workforce!

Two to three advisors are assigned to each team to allow for collaboration and flexibility with schedules. All materials and curriculum are provided, as well as training prior to the program. All meals and housing (if desired) for the week are also provided by Business Horizons.

TIME COMMITMENT: One half-day training in late June or early July + Full BH Week. Timing below is approximate:

- Sunday, July 19 – 11:00am – 8:30pm
- Monday, July 20 – 8:00am – 7:45pm
- Tuesday, July 21 – 8:00am – 7:45pm
- Wednesday, July 22 – 8:00am – 8:30pm
- Thursday, July 23 – 7:30am – 5:45pm

Advisors are welcome to join evening activities, if desired. Advisors will be asked to attend a meeting each morning to review the daily schedule and expectations. Advisors will be provided with a full schedule of activities prior to the program. It is possible to incorporate work and home obligations during the week in coordination with staff and Advisor partners.

BUSINESS CONSULTANTS / ENTREPRENEURS

WHO: Individuals who have started a business and/or currently run a business in any industry.

DESCRIPTION: Entrepreneurs and business leaders are invited to visit Business Horizons and spend time with assigned student teams to not only share their personal story and expertise, but also to provide feedback and guidance to the students on their Business Horizons projects and investor pitches as they prepare for competitions. This time includes lunch and networking with other volunteers, a brief, informal overview of your background, and work time with one of our student teams. These volunteers will also be joined by a "marketing consultant."

TIME COMMITMENT: Wednesday, July 22; 11:30am-1:45pm (*includes lunch and prep time*)

MARKETING CONSULTANTS

WHO: Professionals in marketing, advertising, web or graphic design, social media, etc.

DESCRIPTION: Student teams spend plenty of time on marketing efforts – from trade show table displays and brochures, to logos, business cards, and their team's infomercial. Marketing consultants are needed to provide extra feedback as students put the finishing touches on their materials and finalize plans for their infomercial. Marketing consultants will join “visiting entrepreneurs” over lunch to share insight into their role for their respective organization, and spend some time with their assigned Industry team providing feedback on their projects.

TIME COMMITMENT: Wednesday, July 22; 11:30am-1:45pm (includes lunch and prep time)

INVESTOR JUDGES

WHO: Professionals in the fields of investment, business consulting, finance, and entrepreneurship.

DESCRIPTION: At the end of the week, student teams compete in an investor pitch, where each team prepares and delivers a formal investor presentation. Their goal is to convince the judges that their company will be a good investment based on their analysis of the market demand, customer discovery, and profitability of the venture. Judging criteria follows that of the Business Model Canvas. Judging criteria is reviewed during a brief “training” period prior to live judging. Investors may ask questions to determine who is worthy of their investment (think “Shark Tank”) and will ultimately determine the winning team.

TIME COMMITMENT: Thursday, July 23; 9:00-11:45am (*includes training time*)

INFOMERCIAL JUDGES

WHO: Professionals in marketing, advertising, digital media, video production, etc.

DESCRIPTION: After completing a media rationale and story board, each industry team will film and edit an infomercial to get the word out about their new product/business. It is the job of our judges to score each team's infomercial based on creativity, strategy, clarity, and overall effectiveness during the live showing on the final day of the program.

TIME COMMITMENT: Thursday, July 23, 12:15-2:45pm (*includes lunch and training time*)

Are you or your company interested in supporting Business Horizons? If so, please indicate your interest [online here](#) or contact Anna Mable, Workforce Programs & Engagement Coordinator, at amable@iowaabi.org to discuss these opportunities further. Thank you for your consideration!