

Moonshot Announces 7th Annual Rural Arizona Pitch Competition, Brings Statewide Finals to Phoenix for 25th Anniversary

Six-month entrepreneurship tour across rural Arizona culminates with championship event in Phoenix showcasing innovation beyond Maricopa County

FLAGSTAFF, AZ, UNITED STATES, February 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Moonshot, Arizona's leading rural entrepreneurship nonprofit, today announced the schedule for its [7th Annual Rural Arizona Pitch Competition & Tour](#), a six-month statewide initiative connecting entrepreneurs with resources, mentorship and prize funding across underserved communities.

The 2026 tour launches April 2 in Prescott and concludes Sept. 23 in Sierra Vista, visiting communities throughout rural Arizona. For the first time in the competition's history, the statewide finals will take place in Phoenix on Oct. 24 at Heritage Headquarters in downtown Phoenix.

All first-place winners from tour stops across the state will receive two nights of hotel accommodations at Hilton's Home2 Suites, Friday, Oct. 23 through Sunday, Oct. 25, allowing rural entrepreneurs to compete for the championship title and connect with the state's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The tour is made possible by title sponsors Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, APS and the Arizona Commerce Authority, along with additional corporate and community partners.

"This year's tour falls during Moonshot's 25th anniversary," said Scott Hathcock, president and



2025 Rural AZ Pitch Tour Winner Ashley Heida pitches her company Analytical Mineset at last year's finals event

CEO of Moonshot. "Traditionally, our finals event happens at one of the rural tour stops, but this year, with it being our anniversary, we wanted to showcase rural innovation and founders to investors, venture capitalists and service providers in Phoenix and show them it's time to look beyond Phoenix."

"Moonshot's leadership in championing rural entrepreneurs is vital to building a strong and inclusive economy across Arizona," said Robert Theobald, senior vice president of small business services and small business ombudsman at the Arizona Commerce Authority. "The Rural Arizona Pitch Competition showcases the remarkable innovation thriving in communities statewide, and we're proud to support Moonshot's efforts to connect these entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed."

The Rural Arizona Pitch Competition & Tour has become Arizona's premier platform for rural entrepreneurship, working with entrepreneurs across 20 communities annually and generating millions of dollars in economic impact throughout the state.

For a complete listing of all 2026 Rural Arizona Pitch Competition tour stops, [visit www.moonshotazpitch.com](http://www.moonshotazpitch.com).

For more information about sponsorship opportunities or participation, contact Scott Hathcock at shathcock@moonshotaz.com

About Moonshot: Moonshot is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing entrepreneurship and economic development in rural and Indigenous communities across Arizona. Over 25 years, Moonshot has served thousands of entrepreneurs, creating jobs and economic opportunity in underserved regions throughout the state.

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