Utility of Tomorrow Contest
Evaluation of Entries, Draft 1.0

Winners prototype their entries at the week-long 2014 workshop, together with technical and business experts. Working backwards from our view of a successful workshop led us to our evaluation criteria for entries, described below.

- What motivates this contest: utilities need to better engage with customers! Today's university students are the utility customers of tomorrow, AND have amazing ideas for improving people's lives through digital technology. This contest is a way to have both sides come together into the same workshop and see what game-changing results come out of it!

- A natural means for capturing and expressing innovative ideas in this context is a customer-facing software application running on a mobile device. So we encourage you to consider: "On an innovative mobile app branded by my utility company, I would like to see…"

- If your idea does not involve a mobile app, we still want to hear about it! Our focus on mobile apps is intended as an aid to innovative thinking, and we do not want to limit your creativity.

- Ideas for new physical infrastructure or hardware are certainly relevant for utilities, but it will not be feasible to build hardware prototypes during the timespan of the workshop. Therefore the work will focus on software development. Hardware components and interfaces needed for winning ideas will likely be simulated, though some target hardware may be available on site. Examples may include electric vehicles, selected smart appliances, smart thermostats, photovoltaic panels, and distribution grid components.

- As noted, the five Challenges for 2013 are Green Energy, Smart Appliances, Sustainable Resources (water, and waste management), Electric Vehicles, and Other. Please choose the most appropriate category for your idea, so we ensure it is routed to our most qualified evaluators, and receives the best possible chance of winning.

- Winning ideas will likely be those that can be implemented in the next 1-3 years. That means your idea should be realistic within the technology and economic landscape—for your chosen region of the world—over the next one to three years.

We found the best way to help contestants keep their ideas grounded is to ask for some level of business analysis to accompany the core idea. Our recommended sample submission is loosely based

on the Business Model Canvas, which we gratefully acknowledge:
http://www.businessmodelgeneration.com/canvas

The sample submission PDF defines four different subsections. Motivated by the comments given above, our recommended evaluation weighting of the different subsections is as follows:

-1. Abstract	10%
-2. Description of the Idea	**60%**
…broken down as:	
2.1. Value Proposition	*20%*
2.2 Key Activities	*20%*
2.3 Key Resources	*10%*
2.4 Key Partners	*10%*
-3. Business Viability	**25%**
…broken down as:	
Basic cost, revenue, and social benefit information	*15%*
More detailed business plan information (sales channels, customer segmentation, other…)	*10%*
-4. Annotated References	**5%**

Note that Section 2 is the most important: please provide a clear description of the idea in a way that can be understood by multiple reviewers from different backgrounds.

Our reviewers evaluate submissions based on multiple criteria, approximately equally weighted and roughly summarized as:
+Creativity
+Desirability, from the end user's perspective
+Technical Feasibility (especially Sections 2.2, 2.3, 4)
+Business Viability (especially Sections 2.4, 3, 4)

- As an ideation contest, we welcome well-defined ideas independent of their technical implementations—so you do not need to provide engineering specifications for your idea. If you believe it is important for the reviewers to be aware of some technical details, you can include those details in separate attachments (please note in your main entry that you uploaded or emailed them), or add links in your Section 4 references.

- Our utility sponsors come from different continents, and understand that every region faces unique utility challenges that depend on the geography, weather, infrastructure, and economy. Our evaluation team will take those factors into account when assigning scores. You can help us by defining the specific utilities or region where you propose that your innovative idea be implemented first (though it may indeed be useful to utilities across the world).

- How much effort will all this take to write up and submit? While we are not strict about word counts, from our experience it would take about 800 words to complete a quality entry. We will not penalize for length, but do recommend 1500 words as an upper limit, to ensure the entry gets a complete review by our evaluation team in a timely manner.

On the question of entries in the form of videos:

-1. Videos do not take the place of written entries. We consider them optional; the quality of the idea is paramount. Winners will be chosen from among all entries, including those without videos, and those accompanied by videos.

-2. A quality video could take the place of a section or subsection, e.g., Sections 2.2 and 2.3 of the entry.

We will continue to hold webinars about the contest in different time zones to go into more detail and answer questions. Webinar schedules will be posted on our Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/UtilityOfTomorrowContest

We also encourage your detailed questions at: utility.of.tomorrow@gmail.com

Best of luck, and we really look forward to seeing your idea!

-The Utility of Tomorrow Contest Team