backboard.io X 🦜 McHacks 13

Hackathon Kick-Off Contest

🚨 **DISCLAIMER:** Participation in this challenge is completely voluntary and separate from the McHacks 13 hackathon. Choosing to participate or not will not affect your ability to participate in McHacks 13.

⚙️ ABOUT
McHacks is excited to present our pre-hackathon challenge sponsored by Backboard.io! Backboard.io is a developer-first AI infrastructure platform that gives you one API for LLM routing, stateful memory, RAG, and tools—modular by design. It lets teams build AI that actually remembers, stays predictable on cost, and scales cleanly from prototype to production. Find out more at backboard.io.

🏆 THE CHALLENGE
Your mission is to build any project using the Backboard API with the single requirement that the project must use Backboard.io (any combination of the modular features listed below). Integrations with workflow tools (e.g., n8n, Zapier) are allowed.

Backboard.io modular features available:
- Integrated LLM Routing
- Stateful API
- Memory
- RAG (BM25)
- Web Search
- Custom Tools
- Configurability (Choice of LLM provider & model)
- Memory Orchestration

✅ PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS
- Open to anyone! Any age, any education level, any skill level.
  - **Note:** You can still participate even if you did not get accepted into McHacks 13.
- Projects can be submitted individually or in teams of up to 4 people.
  - **Note:** If you were accepted as a McHacks 13 participant, you do NOT need to compete with the same team for this challenge.
  - **Note:** Teams can be formed with members across different schools.

🕐 KEY DATES & TIMELINE
- January 3, 2026: Contest Announcement
- January 3-14, 2026: Project Build Window
- **January 14, 2026, at 11:59 PM PST: Submission Deadline**
- January 15, 2026: Project Evaluation by the Backboard.io team
- January 16, 2026: Challenge Winners Announced

🚀 REGISTRATION & DEV CREDITS
- **Registration:** Register for the challenge by creating your account at backboard.io/hackathons and using the promo code **MCHACKS26**. If you're competing in a team, you must register as a team.
- **Registration Cutoff:** There is no hard registration cutoff. You can register up to the submission deadline.
- **Developer Credits:** Upon registration, your will account already be loaded with developer credits for Backboard.io usage.

🏁 PROJECT SUBMISSION
1. Create a 3-5 minute YouTube video that pitches and demos your project.
2. The YouTube video title **must** follow this exact format to be judged:
   [Project Name] - Backboard.io x McHacks 13
3. Make sure your YouTube video is public. Submit your team details and YouTube video link here: https://forms.gle/RjmVdWhPS6hScLWa9.
4. The demo must clearly show Backboard.io usage (memory, routing, RAG, or other features) to demonstrate technical implementation.

📋 JUDGING CRITERIA

Criteria	Weight
Technical Implementation / Use of Backboard.io	40%
Innovation & Originality	30%
Impact & Usefulness	20%
Presentation / Pitch Quality	10%

🎉 PRIZES
- **1st Place:** $1,000 cash.
- **Top 5 Teams:** 1-hour mentoring session with Rob Imbeault (Backboard.io founder, unicorn founder & angel investor).
- **Top 10 Teams:** $100 Backboard.io developer credit per team.

🛠️ SUPPORT & RESOURCES
- **Documentation & Quickstart SDK:** Available at https://app.backboard.io/quickstart.
- **Getting Started Tutorial:** https://youtu.be/_LkDBg8OaA?si=9blPgEGaL2vbt4ru.
- **Need Help?** If you have any questions related to Backboard.io usage or judging criteria, please email support@backboard.io or submit a support ticket on the Backboard.io platform. For all other inquiries, please email contact@mchacks.ca.
- **Backboard.io Platform Notes:** Use any LLM (closed or open source). Backboard.io supports switching providers/models quickly without losing memory; memories can be ported across models. Modules include stateful memory, vector DB/RAG, model routing, web search, custom tools, and integrations for automations and workflows. Use them freely!

Good Luck!!!