Design Brief

Objective: The Design Brief provides a brief, non-technical overview of the entire project. The

design brief is a short document that can be used alone or as support during the presentations and

poster symposium to provide the reader with enough information about the project to:

● understand the target user and the challenges they face that inspired the project;

● state the project goals;

● provide a general idea of the prototype and its key features;

● relay the current status of the project;

● convey the expected impact for the user and how perceived inequities are relieved;

● reflect on the team’s experience implementing the Human Centered Design Process.

Format: Teams must use the Design Brief Template (see Appendix).

Required Elements

1. Problem Statement: Describe the people who will benefit from the project and the challenges

they face. Discuss the issues of inequity that the project hopes to address. 100 word maximum

2. User Research: Discuss key information about the users gathered through your research,

interviews, and ongoing discussion with the user throughout the project. The information

shared here should be directly related to the user’s needs, insight, goals, and prototype. 200

word maximum

3. User Insight: Discuss your team’s understanding of the experiences, emotions, and motivations

of the users. This insight should inform the rest of the project and help the reader have a deeper

understanding of the inequity of the user. 200 word maximum

4. User Needs: Develop a specific list of the user’s needs produced from the user insight. The

needs should be reflected in the project goals. 100 word maximum

5. Project Goals: List project goals and describe how they are linked to and will adequately meet

the user’s needs and address inequities and/or barriers faced by the user. Meeting these goals

should be reflected in the key features and graphic(s) provided. 100 word maximum

6. Key Features of Design: List key features, illustrating that the design will adequately meet

project goals. 200 word maximum

7. Prototype Graphic: Include a graphic that is easy to understand with key features that are

adequately labeled. The reader should have a general understanding of how the prototype

functions by looking at the graphic.

8. Status of Project: Describe the current status of the project and discuss potential next steps. 200

word maximum

9. Impact: Discuss how design addresses inequities for the user and/or removes barriers. This

impact should reflect how the team met the project goals. 200 word maximum

10. Reflection: Show that the team has an increased understanding of human-centered design.

Examples of personal growth and insights gained about designing for others and helping them

overcome challenges should also be included. 200 word maximum

2020-2021 MESA USA

National Engineering Design Competition

Designing for Equity

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Deadline for Design Brief:

● Local/State competitions: Check with your local MESA office about the procedure for

submitting the design brief to local/state competitions.

● National Competition. For teams advancing to the national competition, the design brief must

be submitted via e-mail to Arizona MESA on or before 4:00 pm in your local time zone, on June

4, 2021 (subject to change). Briefs should be submitted by a student team member. The briefs

will be judged and scored prior to the National Competition. Late submissions will be assessed

a 10-point deduction. No submissions will be accepted after June 7, 2021 (subject to change).

● Design briefs MUST be submitted in Portable Document Format (.PDF). Teams shall ensure the

submitted final brief can be read using Adobe Reader (10.0 or newer) and that it matches your

original document. A PDF version of the completed design brief template must be e-mailed to:

Arizona MESA, Head Judge at azmesa@email.arizona.edu. Check the MESA USA national

website at mesausa.org for further information. Reports submitted in a format other than PDF

will be assessed at 10-point penalty. No exceptions.

● Please note that the host and Head Judge are not responsible for any internet service delays

or misdirected submissions. It is the responsibility of the student team members to ensure that

the brief is delivered successfully in the proper format and proper size prior to the deadline.

Therefore, submission of materials in advance of the above-listed deadline is strongly

recommended.