

2025 Tashkent International Mediation Competition

Competition Rules

I. Competition Timeline

The 2025 Tashkent International Mediation Competition will follow the timeline below. All deadlines are final, and teams must comply with them to participate.

Stage	Deadline	Notes
Release of Competition Rules	13.03.25	Rules made publicly available to all interested participants.
Team Registration Opens	10.04.25	Teams can start applying for the competition.
Team Registration Deadline	30.04.25	Final date to submit team applications. Late applications will not be accepted.
Announcement of Selected Teams	05.05.25	The list of selected teams will be published.
Case Problem Released	05.05.25	Teams receive the general and confidential information for the case.
Deadline for Clarification Requests	To be announced	Teams can submit up to 5 clarification questions.
Clarifications Published	To be announced	Organizing Committee responds to selected clarification questions.
Competition Dates	30-31.05.25	Official competition rounds take place in Tashkent.
Award Ceremony	31.05.25	Announcement of winners and special awards.

II. Definitions

General Terms

2.1. Competition – Refers to the 2025 Tashkent International Mediation Competition (TIMC), conducted within the framework of Law Spring 2025 in Tashkent.

2.2. Organizing Committee – The group of organizers and the volunteers of the Competition responsible for planning, managing, and ensuring the proper execution of the Competition.

2.3. Team – A group of students representing a university or higher education institution that participates in the Competition.

2.4. Coach – A professor, legal professional, mediator, or experienced individual who advises a Team in preparing for the Competition.

2.5. Language Track – selected language by a Team for a Competition.

Roles in the Mediation Session

2.6. Mediation Session – A structured, time-limited session where two Teams (acting as the disputing parties) attempt to negotiate a resolution with the assistance of a neutral Mediator. Sessions follow an interest-based negotiation approach, focusing on mutual problem-solving rather than legal argumentation.

2.7. Client – A participant who plays the role of a party in the dispute. The Client presents their interests, concerns, and objectives in the negotiation process.

2.8. Counsel – A participant who plays the role of the Client's legal or business advisor. The Counsel assists in structuring arguments, managing negotiation strategies, and ensuring the Client's interests are effectively communicated.

2.9. Mediator – A neutral, third-party professional assigned to facilitate the Mediation Session. The Mediator helps guide discussions, clarify interests, and assist Teams in finding a resolution but does not evaluate or score Teams.

2.10. Judge – A professional selected by the Organizing Committee to observe and evaluate Teams' performance based on predefined criteria. Judges provide scores and constructive feedback but do not intervene in the Mediation Session.

Session Mechanics

2.11. General Information – A summary of the case problem, including the background of the dispute and key issues. It is provided to all participants, including Mediators and Judges.

2.12. Confidential Information – Additional details provided separately to each Team, outlining specific negotiation goals, internal constraints, and strategic considerations. Teams must not disclose their Confidential Information to the opposing Team or Mediator.

2.13. Caucus – A private meeting between the Mediator and one Team (Client and Counsel), conducted during a Mediation Session. The other Team must leave the room, and the discussion remains confidential.

2.14. Break – A short pause requested by a Team during a Mediation Session for internal discussions between Client and Counsel, without the presence of the Mediator or the opposing Team.

2.15. Negotiation Strategy – The approach a Team takes in the Mediation Session to advocate for its interests while working toward a resolution. Strategies may involve BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement), concessions, offers, and active listening techniques.

Competition Structure & Scoring

2.16. General Rounds – The preliminary stage of the Competition, where all Teams participate in multiple Mediation Sessions. Teams accumulate scores based on their performance, and the highest-scoring Teams advance to the Final Rounds.

2.17. Final Rounds – The elimination stage, including the semi-finals and final round, where the top-performing Teams from the General Rounds compete for awards.

2.18. Score Sheet – The official evaluation document used by Judges to assess each Team’s performance in a Mediation Session. The Score Sheet contains predefined criteria, including communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and professionalism.

2.19. Special Awards – Additional recognitions granted to outstanding participants or Teams for exceptional performance in specific areas, such as Best Client, Best Counsel, and Best Teamwork.

2.20. Rule Violations – Any breach of the Competition rules, including unauthorized communication, disclosure of Confidential Information, coaching during sessions, or disruptive behavior, which may result in penalties or disqualification.

III. Introduction & Overview

Purpose of the Competition

3.1. The **2025 Tashkent International Mediation Competition** aims to promote the use of mediation as an effective dispute resolution method. The Competition provides law students with practical experience in negotiation and mediation, enhancing their advocacy, problem-solving, and teamwork skills in a simulated professional environment.

Structure & Format

3.2.1. The Competition will be conducted in two languages: English and Uzbek. Teams must indicate their preferred language during registration. Separate mediation sessions will be held for each language track, and Teams will compete only within their chosen track.

3.2.2. Each Mediation Session involves:

- Two Teams (one representing each party in the dispute).
- One Mediator (an expert neutral third party facilitating the discussion).
- Two Judges (evaluating the performance of the participants).

3.2.3. The Competition consists of:

- General Rounds – All participating Teams compete in at least two Mediation Sessions.
- Final Rounds – The highest-scoring Teams advance to the final stages, culminating in a championship round.

Key Features

3.3.1. The Competition focuses on interest-based negotiation, where Teams must seek mutually beneficial solutions rather than adversarial positions.

3.3.2. Only one case will be used throughout the Competition, with separate General Information and Confidential Information for each round.

3.3.3. Caucuses and Breaks may be used strategically during Mediation Sessions but must follow the time limits and rules set by the Organizing Committee.

3.3.4. The Competition is judged by experienced professionals, including mediators, lawyers, and dispute resolution experts.

IV. Participation & Eligibility

4.1. Eligible Participants

4.1.1. The Competition is open to law students currently enrolled in an undergraduate or postgraduate law program at a recognized university or higher education institution.

4.1.2. Students must be at least 18 years old at the time of the Competition.

4.1.3. Both full-time and part-time students are eligible to participate, provided they are officially enrolled in a law program at the time of registration.

4.1.4. The following individuals are not eligible to compete:

- Practicing lawyers.
- Individuals who have passed a bar exam or obtained a license to practice law in any jurisdiction.
- Students who have previously competed in the Final Rounds of this Competition or an equivalent international mediation competition.

4.1.5. Each university or institution may register only one Team per language track (English or Uzbek). A university may not have multiple Teams in the same track.

4.1.6. Universities offering programs in both English and Uzbek may register one Team per language track, but each Team must be completely independent (no shared members or Coaches).

4.1.7. By registering, Teams confirm their commitment to:

- Comply with all rules and deadlines set by the Organizing Committee.
- Attend all required Mediation Sessions.
- Conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner throughout the Competition.

4.2. Team Composition

4.2.1. Each Team must consist of a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of four (4) members.

4.2.2. Each Team member must participate in at least one Mediation Session during the Competition.

4.2.3. In each Mediation Session, a Team must assign:

- One participant as the Client (representing the business or individual involved in the dispute).
- One participant as the Counsel (advising the Client on legal or business matters).

4.2.4. Teams may rotate roles between Mediation Sessions, but each round must always have a Client and Counsel structure.

4.2.5. Once the Competition begins, no new Team members may be added or replaced, except in cases of:

- Serious illness or medical emergency.
- Unforeseen circumstances preventing a Team member from continuing.

Such substitutions require written approval from the Organizing Committee and must be requested as soon as possible.

4.3 Role of Coaches

4.3.1. Each Team may have one (1) official Coach, who may be a:

- University professor or academic faculty member.
- Practicing lawyer or legal professional.
- Mediator or dispute resolution expert.
- Other professional with relevant experience in negotiation and mediation.

4.3.2. A Coach must not be a current student participating in the Competition, even if they are from a different university.

4.3.3. A Coach may supervise only one Team per language track. If a university has one Team in the English track and one in the Uzbek track, they may have the same or different Coaches.

4.3.4. The Coach's role is to support the Team's preparation by:

- Providing guidance on negotiation and mediation strategies.

- Assisting with case analysis and preparation before the Competition.
- Offering feedback on practice rounds.

4.3.5. The Coach must not:

- Participate in Mediation Sessions.
- Provide real-time assistance, instructions, or coaching during a Mediation Session.
- Communicate with the Team in any way once a session has started.

4.3.6. Coaches may attend their Team's Mediation Sessions as silent observers, but they must:

- Remain seated and avoid any gestures or reactions that could influence participants.
- Refrain from speaking to the Team, Mediator, or Judges during the session.
- Not interfere in any way with the Competition process.

4.3.7. Any violation of these rules may result in penalties for the Team, including score reductions or disqualification.

V. Registration & Fees

Application Process

5.1.1. Teams must submit their application through the official Competition registration portal within the deadline specified in the Competition Timeline.

5.1.2. Each application must include:

- The full names of all Team members and their designated roles (Client/Counsel).
- The preferred language track (English or Uzbek).
- The name of the university or institution being represented.
- The contact details of the Team's primary representative.
- Any additional information required by the Organizing Committee.

5.1.3. Applications must be fully completed before submission. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

5.1.4. A university may submit applications for both language tracks, but each Team must be independent, with no shared members.

5.2. Selection Criteria

5.2.1. If the number of applications exceeds the available slots, the Organizing Committee will select Teams based on the following factors:

- Geographic and institutional diversity – Preference may be given to Teams from different regions or universities.
- Demonstrated interest in mediation and dispute resolution – Participation in related courses, events, or competitions may be considered.

5.2.2. The Organizing Committee's decision on Team selection is final and non-appealable.

5.2.3. A waiting list may be maintained for Teams not initially selected. If a selected Team withdraws before the deadline, a Team from the waiting list may be invited to participate.

5.3. Registration Fees & Payment Policies

5.3.1. A non-refundable registration fee must be paid by each selected Team before the deadline to confirm participation.

5.3.2. The Organizing Committee will determine the fee amount, payment method, and deadlines. This information will be communicated to selected Teams upon confirmation.

5.3.3. Failure to pay the registration fee by the deadline will result in automatic disqualification, and the spot may be offered to a Team from the waiting list.

5.3.4. The registration fee covers participation in the Competition but does not include:

- Travel expenses.
- Accommodation costs.
- Meals and personal expenses.
- Visa fees (if applicable).

5.3.5. The Organizing Committee may provide limited financial assistance or fee waivers in exceptional cases. Requests must be submitted in writing with supporting documentation.

VI. Competition Format & Rounds

General Structure

6.1.1. VI. Competition Format & Rounds

6.1. General Structure

6.1.1. The Competition consists of a series of simulated Mediation Sessions, where Teams compete as Client-Counsel pairs to negotiate a commercial dispute under the guidance of a neutral Mediator.

6.1.2. The Competition is conducted in two language tracks: English and Uzbek.

- Teams must select their preferred language track upon registration.
- Teams will compete only within their chosen track, and switching after registration is not permitted.
- The case problem, scoring criteria, and rules remain the same across both language tracks.

6.1.3. Each Mediation Session will involve:

- Two Teams – One representing each side of the dispute.
- One Mediator – A neutral third-party professional facilitating discussions.
- Two Judges – Evaluating the Teams' performance based on pre-defined criteria.

6.1.4. The Competition is structured as follows:

- General Rounds – Each Team competes in at least two Mediation Sessions, playing different roles in the dispute.
- Final Rounds – The highest-scoring Teams from the General Rounds advance to the elimination rounds, culminating in a championship round to determine the overall winner.

6.2. General Rounds

6.2.1. Each Team will participate in at least two Mediation Sessions during the General Rounds.

6.2.2. In each session, the Organizing Committee will assign the Teams to play one of the following roles:

- Requesting Party – The party initiating the mediation.
- Responding Party – The party responding to the mediation request.

6.2.3. Teams will face a different opposing Team in each session, ensuring fairness in competition pairings.

6.2.4. After completing all General Rounds, the highest-scoring Teams will advance to the Final Rounds.

6.2.5. If there is a tie in Team rankings, the following criteria will be used to determine advancement:

- The Team's average score across all General Rounds.
- Judges' qualitative feedback on performance.
- The Team's performance in the most recent Mediation Session.

6.3. Final Rounds

6.3.1. The highest-scoring Teams from the General Rounds will proceed to the Final Rounds, which consist of:

- Quarter-finals (if applicable, depending on the number of participating Teams).
- Semi-finals – The four best Teams compete for a place in the Final.
- Championship Round – The top two Teams compete for the title of Competition Winner.

6.3.2. The number of Teams advancing will depend on the total number of participating Teams and will be determined by the Organizing Committee before the Competition begins.

6.3.3. In the Final Rounds, the winning Team from each session advances, following an elimination format.

6.3.4. The Final Rounds may introduce additional confidential details related to the dispute, requiring Teams to adjust their negotiation strategies dynamically.

6.3.5. The final rankings will be determined based on:

- The results of the Final Rounds.
- The cumulative scores from all rounds (in case of a tie).

6.4. Mediation Case & Confidential Information

6.4.1. The Competition will use one case problem for all rounds.

6.4.2. The case problem will be divided into:

- General Information – Available to all participants, including Mediators and Judges, outlining the dispute's background.
- Confidential Information – Provided separately to each Team before their Mediation Session, detailing their client's specific goals, constraints, and negotiation strategy.

6.4.3. Each Team's Confidential Information must not be shared with the opposing Team, the Mediator, or any third party at any point during the Competition.

6.4.4. Additional Confidential Information may be introduced in later rounds to reflect changing circumstances in the case, requiring Teams to adapt their approach accordingly.

6.5. Team Obligations During Sessions

6.5.1. Each Team must:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before their scheduled Mediation Session.
- Ensure their Client and Counsel understand their respective roles.
- Respect time limits and session procedures.
- Conduct themselves professionally and adhere to mediation ethics.

6.5.2. If a Team fails to appear at the scheduled time without valid justification, the session may be forfeited, resulting in a zero score for that round.

6.5.3. If a technical or procedural issue arises, the Mediator or Organizing Committee may grant a brief extension at their discretion.

6.6. Mediation Session Procedures

6.6.1. Mediation Sessions will follow a structured format:

1. Opening Statements – Each Team briefly introduces its interests and objectives.
2. Joint Discussion & Negotiation – Teams work collaboratively, using mediation techniques to resolve the dispute.
3. Caucuses (if requested) – Private meetings between the Mediator and one Team.

4. Breaks (if requested) – Internal discussions between Client and Counsel without the Mediator.
5. Closing Statements – Each Team summarizes key agreements or unresolved issues.

6.6.2. Teams must:

- Prioritize interest-based negotiation rather than positional bargaining.
- Engage with the Mediator constructively.
- Aim for a realistic and practical resolution of the dispute.

VII. Mediation Session

7.1. Time Allocation

7.1.1. Each Mediation Session will last 90 minutes, divided as follows:

- Opening Statements – Up to 10 minutes.
- Joint Discussion and Negotiation – Up to 60 minutes.
- Caucuses and Breaks (if used) – Included within the 60-minute discussion period.
- Closing Statements – Up to 10 minutes.
- Feedback from Judges – Up to 30 minutes (not included in scoring).

7.1.2. The Mediator is responsible for ensuring adherence to the session's time limits and managing the discussion efficiently.

7.1.3. If a Team exceeds the allocated time for any section, the Judges may impose a score deduction at their discretion.

7.1.4. If a Mediation Session is delayed due to technical issues, procedural concerns, or unexpected disruptions, the Organizing Committee may grant a limited time extension, provided it does not interfere with other scheduled sessions.

7.2. Use of Breaks & Caucuses

7.2.1. Each Team is allowed one (1) Break per session (maximum 5 minutes), which may be used for internal discussions between the Client and Counsel.

- The opposing Team and the Mediator must leave the room during the Break.
- Judges will remain in the room but will not engage with the Team during this time.

7.2.2. Caucuses (private meetings between the Mediator and one Team) are permitted but must not exceed 10 minutes each.

- A Caucus may be requested by either the Mediator or a Team.
- The opposing Team must leave the room while the Caucus is conducted.
- Judges will remain present but will not participate or influence discussions.

7.2.3. The total time spent on Caucuses and Breaks is deducted from the 60-minute negotiation period.

7.2.4. The Mediator has the discretion to deny a Caucus or Break request if:

- The request is deemed unnecessary or excessive.
- The session is running out of time.
- The request is being used to disrupt or delay the process.

7.3. Rules on Communication & Assistance

7.3.1. Only the Client and Counsel may speak during a Mediation Session.

- Coaches, other Team members, and external advisors may not communicate with participants once a session has begun.

7.3.2. Written notes may be exchanged between the Client and Counsel during the session, but:

- Notes must be handwritten or printed before the session.
- Electronic communication devices (phones, laptops, smartwatches, etc.) are strictly prohibited during the session.

7.3.3. Participants must engage in professional and respectful communication throughout the session.

This includes:

- Demonstrating active listening and constructive dialogue.
- Refraining from interruptions, aggressive behavior, or disrespectful remarks toward the opposing Team, Mediator, or Judges.
- Adhering to mediation ethics and confidentiality.

7.3.4. Any violation of communication rules may result in:

- A warning for minor infractions.
- Score deductions for repeated or significant violations.
- Disqualification in cases of severe misconduct or unethical behavior.

VIII. Judges & Mediators

8.1. Selection & Qualifications

8.1.1. Judges and Mediators will be selected by the Organizing Committee from experienced professionals in mediation, negotiation, or dispute resolution.

8.1.2. Judges may include lawyers, mediators, business professionals, and academics with expertise in mediation and negotiation.

8.1.3. Mediators will be neutral third-party experts and will not score the Teams but will facilitate the session.

8.1.4. A Judge or Mediator must disclose any potential conflict of interest with participating Teams before the Competition.

8.2. Role & Responsibilities

8.2.1. Judges will:

- Observe and evaluate the performance of Teams.
- Provide scores based on the Competition's evaluation criteria.
- Offer constructive feedback after each session (not influencing scores).

8.2.2. Mediators will:

- Facilitate the Mediation Session neutrally.
- Encourage dialogue and guide negotiations but not evaluate or score the Teams.
- Ensure adherence to mediation procedures and time limits.

8.2.3. Judges and Mediators must remain impartial and professional at all times.

8.3. Code of Conduct

8.3.1. Judges and Mediators must treat all participants fairly and avoid favoritism.

8.3.2. Judges must not provide coaching or strategic advice to any Team during the Competition.

8.3.3. Any violation of neutrality or professionalism may result in disqualification from the judging panel.

IX. Scoring & Awards

9.1. Evaluation Criteria

9.1.1. Teams will be scored based on their negotiation and mediation advocacy skills, not on whether they reach a final agreement.

9.1.2. Judges will evaluate Teams using the following criteria:

- Effective Communication – Clarity, persuasiveness, and active listening.
- Strategy & Problem-Solving – Creativity in resolving the dispute and balancing legal and business interests.
- Collaboration & Teamwork – Coordination between Client and Counsel, and cooperation with the opposing Team.
- Use of Mediation Techniques – Ability to engage with the Mediator and use interest-based negotiation strategies.
- Professionalism & Ethics – Respectful conduct and adherence to mediation principles.

9.1.3. The total score for each session will be an average of the individual Judges' scores.

9.2. Advancement Rules

9.2.1. After the General Rounds, the highest-scoring Teams will advance to the Final Rounds based on cumulative scores.

9.2.2. In case of a tie, the Organizing Committee will consider:

1. Team performance in the most recent round.
2. Consistency across rounds.
3. Judges' qualitative feedback.

9.3. Special Awards

9.3.1. The Competition will recognize outstanding performances through special awards, including but not limited to:

- Best Client – For the participant who demonstrates exceptional negotiation skills in the Client role.
- Best Counsel – For the participant who provides the most effective legal/business representation.
- Best Teamwork – For the team with the highest cumulative score for the teamwork.

9.3.2. Special awards will be based on Judges' scoring and qualitative feedback.

X. Penalties & Disqualification

Violations & Sanctions

10.1.1. A Team may be penalized or disqualified for violating the Competition rules, including but not limited to:

- Failure to adhere to session time limits.
- Use of unauthorized communication devices during Mediation Sessions.
- Coaching or external assistance during a session.
- Disclosing Confidential Information to the opposing Team or Mediator.
- Unprofessional or disruptive behavior toward Judges, Mediators, or other participants.

10.1.2. Possible penalties include:

- Warning – For minor infractions.
- Score deduction – Judges may reduce points for rule violations.

- Session forfeiture – A Team may be disqualified from a Mediation Session.
- Competition disqualification – In severe cases, the Team may be removed from the Competition.

Appeals & Complaints Process

10.2.1. If a Team believes a violation has occurred or a scoring decision is unfair, they may file a complaint with the Organizing Committee within 30 minutes after the session.

10.2.2. The Organizing Committee's decision on any complaint will be final and binding.