PRESIDENTIAL
AI CHALLENGE

Guidebook for Participation

"The President's National Artificial Intelligence Challenge invites every student in America—from kindergarten to 12th grade—to unleash their imagination and showcase the spirit of American innovation.

Our extraordinary educators will guide and empower you through this process to build a brighter, stronger future for us all."

- First Lady Melania Trump

On April 23, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order (EO) 14277, "Advancing Artificial Intelligence (AI) Education for American Youth," with the goal of maintaining America's global dominance in this technological revolution for future generations. This EO directed the establishment of the Presidential AI Challenge (Challenge) to foster interest and expertise in AI technology in America's youth. Early training in the responsible use of AI tools will demystify this technology and prepare America's students to be confident participants in the AI-assisted workforce, propelling our Nation to new heights of scientific innovation and economic achievement.

For organizations interested in investing in AI education for America's youth, please visit https://www.whitehouse.gov/edai/ to join more than 100 other organizations that have established public-private partnerships to provide resources for K–12 AI education.

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About the Presidential AI Challenge

The Presidential AI Challenge (Challenge) is a national challenge where K-12 youth, educators, mentors, and community teams come together to solve real-world problems in their communities using AI-powered solutions with an opportunity to showcase their solutions at a national level. Students and educators of all backgrounds and expertise are encouraged to participate and ignite a new spirit of innovation as we celebrate 250 years of independence and look forward to the next 250 years.
Website: https://www.ai.gov/initiatives/presidential-challenge

Eligibility

Elementary Category

- Groups or classrooms of children in grades K-5 led by educators or community groups, such as 4-H clubs, are eligible.
- Note that any elementary youth using age-appropriate AI tools should do so under the direct supervision of adult family members, educators, or community group leaders, and in accordance with the tools' terms of service or end-user license agreements, and with appropriate guidance to ensure safe and responsible use.
- The group or classroom leader will use the Challenge resources, attend Challenge-sponsored events, and submit the Challenge projects on behalf of the elementary youth.

Middle School Youth Category

- Grades 6-8 are eligible.
- Eligible groups will consist of 1-4 youth and one Supervising Adult who will submit the Challenge project.

High School Youth Category

- Grades 9-12 are eligible.
- Eligible groups will consist of 1-4 youth and one Supervising Adult who will submit the Challenge project.

Educator Category

- Any full-time classroom teacher in a K-12 public, including charter, or private school is eligible. A homeschool educator is eligible if he or she can provide one of the following:
  - A dated copy of a letter of intent to homeschool one or more students to the state or counties in which their students reside;
  - A copy of the current membership ID to a homeschool association; or
  - A dated proof of purchase of curriculum for the current academic school year.
- All eligible educators must be at least 18 years old and teach in one of the 50 states, a U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity schools, a U.S. Department of State Overseas school, or the U.S. Jurisdictions of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Eligible groups will consist of 1-3 educators.

Awards and Prizes

- All compliant submissions will be recognized with a Presidential Certificate of Participation.

- Other awards and prizes will be awarded throughout all phases of the Challenge, including the training opportunities in the Fall.

  - Youth and educators who voluntarily elect to compete in the optional Challenge Competition, and are selected as State Champions, will receive:

    - A Presidential Certificate of Achievement and

    - Cloud Credits, access to special web-based resources, and other items provided by organizations who are investing in AI education for America's youth.

  - Youth and educators who elect to compete in the competition, and are selected as Regional Champions, will receive:

    - A Presidential Certificate of Achievement;

    - Cloud Credits, access to special web-based resources, and other items provided by organizations who are investing in AI education for America's youth; and

    - Eligibility to be considered for an invitation to Washington, DC, for a three-day, in-person event, including a White House showcase of selected Regional Champions.

  - Youth and educators selected as the National Champions will receive:

    - A Presidential Award Certificate;

    - Cloud Credits, access to special web-based resources, and other items provided by organizations who are investing in AI education for America's youth;

    - $10,000 for the school, homeschool, or community group in the Elementary Category;

    - $10,000 per team member in the Middle School Youth Category;

    - $10,000 per team member in the High School Youth Category; and

    - $10,000 per team member in the Educator Category.

How to Participate

1. Assemble your team. Each team should consist of:
   - **Elementary**: An educator or community leader and groups or classrooms of elementary youth (grades K-5)
   - **Middle school youth**: 1 – 4 students in grades 6-8 and a Supervising Adult (teacher, parent, community member)
   - **High school youth**: 1 – 4 students in grades 9-12 and a Supervising Adult (teacher, parent, community member)
   - **Educators**: 1 – 3 educators, one of whom serves as the lead team member

2. Register your team. The lead Educator, community group leader, or Supervising Adult should collect the required consent forms and register the team at the Challenge website.

3. Select your project track.
   - Youth teams: Think about the types of problems or challenges that you and your teammates are encountering in your school or community.
     Track I (Proposal)
     - Teams create an in-depth proposal for how AI technologies could be applied to address a community problem or challenge. This proposal must address an observed challenge in the student's community, detail the mechanisms for applying AI technologies, and elaborate on how AI technologies could help address that challenge.
     Track II (Technical/implementation)
     - Teams build a solution with AI technologies that can help address a community challenge. Solutions could take many forms, such as phone apps, websites, or processes, with supporting materials showing how people would leverage the technologies and how AI technologies are helpful in addressing that challenge.
   - Educator Teams **(Track III):** Teams will either a) teach an AI concept to their students in a new, unique way, or b) create a tool based on AI technologies to manage some aspect of their classrooms (teaching, communication, efficiency) that could not be completed without AI-based tools.
     - Think about how the project could be replicated in other classrooms or educational environments, perhaps even on a national scale – this is not a requirement, but this is a chance to impact more than just your classroom.

4. Visit the Presidential AI Challenge webpage, "Sample Projects," for help and then visit the Education page on AI.gov for resources to help you with your project.

5. Create your project.

    - All teams will submit a written project summary that reflects on learning achievements, detailing research and lessons learned (see page 9);
    - Youth teams in Track I will prepare a presentation poster that details the proposed solution;
    - Youth teams in Track II will provide a demonstration or video of the technology solution; and
    - Educators in Track III will prepare a video or other electronic demonstration of their teaching approach.

6. Email AI.Challenge@science.doe.gov anytime you have a question about your project or the process.

7. Once your team has been registered, come to Challenge Virtual Office Hours (youth are required to be accompanied by their Supervising Adult) for advice or guidance on your team's project or to talk with someone to make sure you have addressed the Requirements and Deliverables.

8. Youth: Work with your team's Supervising Adult to choose the Track (I or II) to which your team will submit your project.

9. To receive your Presidential Certificate of Participation, submit your completed project no later than January 20, 2026, at 11:59pm local time.

    - Be sure to carefully follow all instructions on the Requirements and Deliverables page on the Challenge website or your project will be disqualified from being recognized.

10. When you submit your project, your team can also voluntarily enter the optional Challenge Competition and have your submission judged for the chance to win additional prizes at the state, regional, and national levels.

    - Click here to learn about the different levels of the optional Challenge Competition and additional eligibility requirements.

11. All submitted projects will undergo Federal eligibility and compliance screening to ensure:

    - Each individual meets the published eligibility criteria and
    - Each submission is complete, appropriate, and compliant with the published guidelines. All eligible and compliant submissions will be scored by at least three different judges.

12. For teams voluntarily entering the Challenge Competition, all scoring guides are available on the Scoring Guides page.

13. If your team is a State Champion, the team's Supervising Adult or Lead Educator will be notified with information on the Regional Championships.

Timelines

The Challenge

August - December 2025	• Online registration opens: August 26, 2025 • Virtual and in-person training, such as information sessions, mentorship, and office hours, becomes available to registered participants: September 15, 2025 • Recordings of webinars are placed on the [website](#) as they become available
January 2026	• Project submission deadline: January 20, 2026

Challenge Competition Tier I: State Championships

January 2026	• Project submission deadline for the Challenge Competition: January 20, 2026
March 2026	• Announcement of State Champions: As soon as March 16, 2026, but no later than April 1, 2026

Challenge Competition Tier II: Regional Championships

April 2026	• State Championship Teams present projects to and answer questions from a panel of judges (five virtual regional events): March 27 - April 13, 2026 • Announcement of Regional Champions: As soon as April 16, 2026, but no later than May 1, 2026

Challenge Competition Tier III: National Championships

May 2026	• Regional Champions who are invited to Washington, DC, for the National Finals and three days of AI-focused events will be notified • Selected teams will be notified no later than May 15, 2026
June 2026	• Projects are judged while the Regional Champions are in Washington, DC • Dates: June 7-10, 2026

Project Requirements

Elementary, middle, and high school teams in Tracks I and II will complete a project that involves the study, development, or use of an AI method or tool to address community challenges, while **educators in Track III** will focus on creative approaches to teaching or using AI technologies in K–12 learning.

Teams' projects will be summarized and communicated in one or more deliverables which shall be submitted online:

- All teams will submit a written project summary that reflects on learning achievements, detailing research and lessons learned;
- Teams in Track I will prepare a presentation poster that details the proposed solution;
- Teams in Track II will provide a demonstration or video of the technology solution; and
- Educators in Track III will prepare a video or other electronic demonstration of their teaching approach.

Team members who submit projects that are compliant with the requirements below will be eligible for AI-related prize drawings and recognized with a Presidential Certificate of Participation. Email AI.Challenge@science.doe.gov if you have any questions about the requirements.

❶ All deliverables (project narrative and supplemental media) must be included or linked to in a single PDF document that:
- Is no larger than 50 MB;
- Is no longer than 10 pages in length; and
- Uses 12-point (or larger) font size.

❷ Each submission must include a **500-word minimum, team-authored narrative** that clearly explains the team's project and cites any tools and primary sources used for both the project and the preparation of the narrative. Some considerations to keep in mind when preparing the narrative include:
- Track I
  - What specific community problem are you addressing, and why does it matter?
  - Who is affected by this problem, and how?
  - What kind of AI technologies or methods are you proposing?
  - How will AI tools or methods help solve or address the problem?

- What research did you conduct to support your ideas?
- Did you explain any difficulties or obstacles you encountered in developing your proposal?
- What makes your approach or solution unique?
- Did you clearly explain how AI tools or methods are used and ensure that your proposal is realistic, effective, and responsible?
- What did you learn from working on this project?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about your project?
- Is your narrative reflective, organized, and at least 500 words?

- **Track II**
  - What community problem are you solving, and who benefits?
  - What AI methods, tools, or platforms did you use?
  - How does the AI component work in your solution?
  - What challenges did you face during development, and how did you address them?
  - In what way is your solution creative or innovative in how it applies AI technologies?
  - How did you test or verify the accuracy of any AI-generated content, outputs, or predictions (if applicable)? How accurate did you find the outputs to be?
  - How did working on this project deepen the team's understanding of AI technologies and their appropriate and responsible use?
  - What did you learn from working on this project?
  - Is there anything else you would like to share about your project?
  - Is your written explanation clear, at least 500 words, and reflective of your journey?
  - Does your media (e.g., video, slides, app walkthrough) explain the project well and engage the viewer? The team's PDF submission must include links to videos (no longer than 4 minutes), digital posters, or websites to be viewed by the judges.

- **Track III**
  - What AI concept, method, or tool are you teaching or using?
  - How is this approach different or better than traditional instruction?
  - How did you ensure that the AI-generated content is grade-level appropriate?
  - How did you test or verify the accuracy of any AI-generated content, outputs, or predictions (if applicable)? How accurate did you find the outputs to be?
  - What planning and preparation went into your instructional design?
  - How does your lesson engage students? Can students apply or connect it to their own experiences?
  - Did you include any evidence of impact or learning (e.g., pilot run, feedback)?
  - How did working on this project deepen the team's understanding of how to use AI concepts, methods, or tools in educational contexts?
  - Is there anything else you would like to share about your project?
  - Is your video or demo clear, engaging, and easy to follow?

❸In addition to the narrative, the PDF document must also include:

- ◆ **Track I**: A link (accessible with no password) to the presentation poster, either digital or a photo of a physical poster.
- ◆ **Track II**: A link to the video or demonstration of the technology solution.
  - o The video entry should consist of a single, 4-minute maximum video.
  - o When creating the video, a good best practice is to talk as if you are reiterating the question in your response. (Ex: "Our proposed solution to the problem is…" or "Our team's solution is innovative and different because….").
- ◆ **Track III**: a link to their video or other demonstration of their teaching approach or newly-developed technology.
  - o The video entry should consist of a single, 4-minute maximum video.
  - o The video entry should tell a compelling story and include methods and insights not provided in the written entry to create a novel presentation.
- ◆ **Notes on videos:**
  - o Please try to maintain a maximum file size of 300 MB.
  - o Recording a team Zoom call for the 4-minute video is an option for the video.
  - o Email AI.Challenge@science.doe.gov if you need access to a Zoom session.
  - o If you use a phone to shoot a video, please be sure to shoot horizontally at all times.
  - o Videos do not have to include credits, but if they do, these must be included in the 4-minute time limit.
  - o Videos can be shot and edited by someone not on the team; however, the subject(s) of the video and its content must be created by team members.
  - o Your video will need to be successfully uploaded to your platform before you can complete your submission. Please allow enough time prior to the submission deadline to upload your video.

❹ Each submission must include a Certification of Originality, stating the following:

- ◆ The project submission is original content created specifically for the Challenge.
- ◆ All AI tools or technologies used are identified and credited.
- ◆ All research and artifacts (e.g., maps, photos, etc.) are identified and credited.

❺ To receive the team's Presidential Certificates of Participation, go to the Challenge website, AI.gov, to submit and upload your pdf with project narrative and links to additional media no later than January 20, 2026, at 11:59pm local time.

❻ Youth and educator teams who meet the additional eligibility requirements below can voluntarily choose to enter their projects into the competition part of the Challenge (Challenge Competition), through which teams can win the opportunity to showcase their projects at a finalists' event at the White House.

- ◆ **Additional Eligibility Requirement for the Challenge Competition**: Each lead elementary program or classroom leader, each educator in Track III, and each middle and high school youth and their Supervising Adult must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national (American Samoa), or lawful permanent resident (LPR).

The Challenge Competition

Youth and educator teams who meet additional eligibility requirements can voluntarily choose to enter their projects into the Challenge Competition with three tiers of competition: state, regional, and national.

State
- All submitted projects will undergo Federal eligibility and compliance screening to ensure:
    - Each individual meets the published eligibility criteria; and
    - Each submission is complete, appropriate, and compliant with the published guidelines.
- At least three judges will score eligible and compliant project submissions using detailed rubrics provided by the Challenge.
- Scores will be sorted by state, participation category, and track to determine the State Champions for the following:
    - Elementary – Track I
    - Elementary – Track II
    - Middle School Youth – Track I
    - Middle School Youth – Track II
    - High School Youth – Track I
    - High School Youth – Track II
    - Educators – Track III
- In addition to the State Champions, one additional Champion, per track and category, will be identified from the District of Columbia, and one additional Champion, per track and category, will be identified from all submissions from the U.S. Territories, collectively.
- Due to their large populations, two State Champions, per track and category, will be identified from California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. (These are the states represented by 15 or more members in the U.S. House of Representatives.)

Regional
- Each State Championship team will be invited to participate in the Regional Championship.

- Regions have been determined by locality and population, placing each state, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories into five distinct groups. Each winning team (or teams) from the State competition is assigned to a region for the Regional competition.

West	West Central	East Central	Northeast	Southeast
Alaska	Colorado	Illinois (x2)	Connecticut	Alabama
Arizona	Kansas	Indiana	Delaware	Arkansas
California (x2)	Missouri	Iowa	Maine	District of Columbia
Hawaii	Nebraska	Kentucky	Massachusetts	Florida (x2)
Idaho	New Mexico	Michigan	New Hampshire	Georgia
Montana	North Dakota	Minnesota	New Jersey	Louisiana
Nevada	Oklahoma	Ohio (x2)	New York (x2)	Maryland
Oregon	South Dakota	Tennessee	Pennsylvania (x2)	Mississippi
Utah	Texas (x2)	West Virginia	Rhode Island	North Carolina
Washington	Wyoming	Wisconsin	Vermont	South Carolina
U.S. Territories				Virginia

- Each State Championship team will present their project to and answer questions from a panel of judges via a live, virtual format, competing against the other State Champions in their region within the same categories and tracks resulting in Regional Champions for the following:
  - Elementary – Track I
  - Elementary – Track II
  - Middle School Youth – Track I
  - Middle School Youth – Track II
  - High School Youth – Track I
  - High School Youth – Track II
  - Educators – Track III

National
- The White House will determine which Regional Champions will be invited to Washington, DC, for a three-day, in-person event including a White House showcase of selected Regional Champions. The showcase event will result in National Champions for each of the following tracks:
  - Elementary – Track I (educator or group leader, only)
  - Elementary – Track II (educator or group leader, only)
  - Middle School Youth – Track I
  - Middle School Youth – Track II
  - High School Youth – Track I
  - High School Youth – Track II
  - Educators – Track III
- Note: The U.S. Government must complete a review of team members, Supervising Adults, chaperones, and the teams' projects before teams can be invited to the National Finals. See the Guiding Questions to develop appropriate projects.

How Will Projects Be Judged?

Youth and educator teams who meet additional [eligibility requirements](#) can [voluntarily choose to enter their projects](#) into the Challenge Competition. The following scoring guides will be used by judges to determine the State Champions. The same scoring guides will be used in combination with the team's presentation scores to determine rankings at the regional and national levels.

Track I: In-Depth Proposal – Propose how AI technologies could address a community challenge with detailed analysis and justification.

Scoring Guide:

Criteria	Description	Points
Problem Definition and Community Relevance	The team clearly identifies a real community challenge, explains why it's important, and demonstrates insight into the needs and context of the community.	15
Relevance to the President and his Administration[1]	The team's project is relevant to the priorities, values, or vision of the President and his Administration.	10
AI Application Plan[2]	The team thoroughly explains how AI technologies could be applied to address the challenge and includes a detailed description of the proposed AI methods and tools and how the methods and tools would function in practice.	20
Research and Accuracy	The proposal is backed by research into both the community challenge and AI technologies. Sources are relevant and credible.	20
Process and Development	The team clearly outlines the development process of the proposal, including planning steps, iterations, and challenges overcome.	15
Use and Validation of AI Concepts	The team's use of AI concepts is sound, well-reasoned, and clearly justified. The AI methods/tools mentioned are relevant and realistic.	10
Originality and Creativity	The team presents an innovative, thoughtful, and unique approach to solving the challenge.	10

[1]Score is used as the first tie break; [2]Score is used as the second tie break   Total: 100 points

Track II: Technical/Implementation – Build a functional AI-based solution for a real community problem and demonstrate its application.

Scoring Guide:

Criteria	Description	Points
Problem Identification and Impact	The team clearly articulates a local/community problem and explains how the solution can improve outcomes.	10
Relevance to the President and his Administration[1]	The team's project is relevant to the priorities, values, or vision of the President and his Administration.	10
Technical Implementation[2]	The team demonstrates technical understanding and functionality of the AI solution and includes models, tools, or platforms used.	20
Process and Development	The team describes the creation and testing of the solution, including iteration cycles, setbacks, and improvements.	15
Use of AI and Validation	The team clearly explains how AI is integrated into the solution and includes testing, accuracy evaluation, or user feedback if applicable.	15
Originality and Creativity	The solution shows novel thinking, a unique application of AI, and a creative adaptation to the community context.	10
Supporting Narrative (at least 500 words)	The team explains the purpose, development journey, AI technologies used, community impact, and future enhancements.	10
Presentation/Media Quality	Supplementary media (e.g., demo video, app walkthrough, poster) is clear, engaging, and enhances understanding of the solution.	10

[1]Score is used as the first tie break; [2]Score is used as the second tie break   Total: 100 points

August 26, 2025

Track III(a) (for Educators only): Innovative AI Teaching Approach – Design and present an instructional method for teaching AI.

Scoring Guide:

Criteria	Description	Points
Instructional Innovation	Educators introduce a unique or transformative approach to teaching AI concepts.	15
Relevance to the President and his Administration[1]	The team's project is relevant to the priorities, values, or vision of the President and his Administration.	10
Student Engagement and Relevance[2]	The approach is engaging and relevant to students' lives or learning needs and shows how students are motivated to learn or apply AI meaningfully.	15
Clarity and Accuracy of AI Content	AI content is technically accurate, age-appropriate, and clearly explained. Educators effectively simplify complex AI ideas for the intended student audience.	15
Process and Planning	Educators clearly explain the development process, including instructional design, planning steps, intended outcomes, and any challenges overcome.	15
Use and Validation of AI Tools	Educators demonstrate how AI tools or techniques enhance teaching or learning in a way not easily possible without AI technologies and include rationale or evidence (student reactions, pilot results, etc.).	15
Presentation (Video or Digital Demo)	Final presentation (e.g., video, screencast, interactive slide deck) is polished, engaging, and clearly communicates the instructional idea and its impact.	15

[1]Score is used as the first tie break; [2]Score is used as the second tie break   Total: 100 points

Track III(b) (for Educators only): Using AI Tools to Transform Education – Explore how AI tools can assist in creating transformative teaching and learning experiences.
Scoring Guide:

Criteria	Description	Points
Instructional Innovation	Educators introduce a unique or transformative approach to using AI tools in K–12 education and demonstrate innovative thinking and potential to change classroom practice.	15
Relevance to the President and his Administration[1]	The team's project is relevant to the priorities, values, or vision of the President and his Administration.	10
Clarity and Accuracy of AI Content	AI content is technically accurate and clearly explained. Educators effectively use AI tools to improve the education field in ways not possible without the AI tools.	15
Process and Planning	Educators clearly explain the development process, including the design, planning steps, intended outcomes, and any challenges overcome.	15
Educator Engagement and Relevance[2]	Educators have an approach that will be engaging and relevant to other educators and their students or classrooms, and shows how other educators will be motivated to learn or apply the AI tool meaningfully and responsibly.	15
Use and Validation of AI Tools	Educators demonstrate how AI tools or techniques enhance educators' teaching style, classroom management, or communications with families in a way not easily possible without AI technologies and include rationale or evidence.	15
Presentation (Video or Digital Demo)	The final presentation (e.g., video, screencast, interactive slide deck) is polished, engaging, and clearly communicates the instructional idea and its impact.	15

[1]Score is used as the first tie break; [2]Score is used as the second tie break   Total: 100 points

Questions?

If you have any questions, please review the Challenge Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page or email AI.Challenge@science.doe.gov and someone will respond to your inquiry.

For organizations interested in investing in AI education for America's youth, please visit https://www.whitehouse.gov/edai/ to join more than 100 other organizations that have established public-private partnerships to provide resources for K-12 AI education.

Visit the AI Challenge website (https://www.ai.gov/initiatives/presidential-challenge) for information on the following:

- Sample projects;

- Guiding questions to help you develop your projects;

- Information on Artificial Intelligence for parents and families;

- Official rules;

- Consent and media release forms for students and educators; and

- Information on the virtual office hours for teams to ask questions of AI experts and the AI Challenge team.