

31 Jan 2026 Hackathon Starter Kit

Last updated: Jan 28, 2026

Important: Please fill in the [access and credits form](#) to ensure you have the API Credits and Codex access in time for the build session.

This is your starter kit for the afternoon hackathon. Across our three tracks, there are [over \\$170,000 USD](#) in prizes available, awarded as API credits and ChatGPT Pro subscriptions.

To get started, you can consider:

1. Building with [Codex](#), along with our [OpenAI Docs MCP](#); and
2. Forking one of the provided [OpenAI starter apps](#) listed below

If you're new to Codex or agentic coding tools, we highly recommend reviewing the [tutorial playlist](#) and [step-by-step walkthrough](#) ahead of time so you can spend the session building, not onboarding.

1. Hackathon Tracks

You'll submit your project to one of the following tracks:

Track	Focus	Possible Directions
1. Agentic Software Engineering with Codex	Developer tools that get maximum leverage out of Codex as an AI coding agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create applications, MCPs, or Skills that help developers plan, code, test, review, and ship software faster• Build on top of the open-source Codex CLI harness, MCP Server, App Server, or SDK• Tackle real developer pain points in the SDLC such as code review, test generation, refactoring, repo onboarding, or CI/CD automation
2. Multimodal Intelligence	Rich, immersive applications that reason and interact across multiple modalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build end-to-end experiences that combine text, images, and video into a cohesive user journey• Create interfaces where users can see, show, and interact, not just type prompts (e.g. visual inputs, generated media, interactive feedback)• Demonstrate how multimodality enables more intuitive, expressive, or immersive experiences than text-only applications
3. Multi-Agent Systems & Workflows	Systems where multiple agents collaborate to tackle real-world problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply multi-agent collaboration to complex, real-world problems that cannot be solved reliably by a single agent• Demonstrate measurable gains in accuracy, robustness, creativity, or determinism from agents working together• Design purposeful coordination (debate, handoffs, verification, consensus), not just parallel agent execution

2. Rules

1. **Team Size:** Teams may have **up to 3 members**.
2. **Submissions:** Each team submits **one** project based on the requirements in Section 3.
3. **No pre-work:** All coding and implementation must take place during the hackathon build period, starting with the afternoon session on 31 January and ending at the submission deadline of 11:59 PM on 1 February (see next section).
 - a. Teams are *encouraged to brainstorm ideas ahead of time*, but should **not** develop the project in advance.
4. **Use of open-source software:** Teams may use existing open-source libraries, frameworks, and example projects, including forking public repositories.
 - a. If a team forks an existing repository, the submission and git history must clearly show the work done during the hackathon.
 - b. Commit history should reflect meaningful changes made within the build window.
5. Each project should be submitted to one primary track and will be judged within that track.

3. Submission Instructions

1. Submissions are to be made through this [form](#).
2. Submissions close at **11:59 PM on 1 February 2026 (IST, UTC+5:30)**.
3. Each submission shall include:
 - a. A link to a **public GitHub repository**
 - i. To remain public for at least 30 days
 - ii. The repo must include a **README** with:
 1. What it does (1–2 sentences)
 2. how to run (exact commands)
 3. demo steps (what to click / what prompt to run)
 - b. A project write-up (up to 500 characters)
 - c. A write-up on how you used the OpenAI models, APIs and tools (up to 500 characters)
 - d. A **demo video** (up to 2 minutes)
 - e. (Optional) A link to a deployed prototype

Some overlap across tracks is expected - please submit your project to the track that **best** represents its primary focus.

4. Judging Criteria

Submissions will be judged within their chosen track based on the following criteria:

1. **Clarity of idea:** Is the problem well-defined, and is it clear what the project is trying to achieve?
2. **Track alignment:** Does the project strongly align with the focus of the chosen track, and make effective use of the relevant tools or concepts?
3. **Technical execution:** Does the project work as described? Is the core functionality implemented correctly and thoughtfully?
4. **Completeness:** Is there a clear end-to-end workflow or experience that can be run, tested, or demonstrated, even if rough or minimal?
5. **Impact & insight:** Does the project demonstrate meaningful usefulness, insight, or creativity beyond a trivial demo?

5. Prizes

Prizes below are awarded within each track

 1st Place	 2nd Place	 3rd Place
\$15,000 USD in API Credits	\$10,000 USD in API Credits	\$5,000 USD in API Credits
1 year of ChatGPT Pro per team member	1 year of ChatGPT Pro per team member	1 year of ChatGPT Pro per team member
+ more!		

1 year of ChatGPT Pro is valued at \$2,400 USD per member

Note: Judging will take place *after* the event concludes. Winning teams will be selected by the judging panel and notified separately following the event.

6. Resources to help you get started

6.1 API Credits + Codex Access

We will provide all participants with:

- Access to Codex
- \$100 USD in OpenAI API credits

Please remember to fill in the [access and credits form](#) if you have not already done so. This is required to ensure you receive access in time for the build session.

6.2 Optional Workshops

At the start of the afternoon, each track will run an optional workshop to help you get oriented quickly. These sessions will cover:

1. How to get started with the relevant APIs and tools
2. Short demos
3. Sample open-source repositories you can fork and build on

You can attend the workshop, jump straight into hacking, or move between both—whatever works best for your team.

6.3 OpenAI Sample App Repos

Agents

- [Agents SDK \(Python\) - Examples](#)
- [Agents SDK \(JS\) - Examples](#)
- [Customer Support Agent](#)
- [ChatKit Starter App](#)
- [ChatKit Advanced Examples](#)

Codex

- [CLI Harness](#)
- [TypeScript SDK](#)
- [App Server](#)

Multimodality

- [Image Gen + Sora](#)
- [openai.fm](#) (text-to-speech API)
- [Realtime API + Twilio](#)
- [Realtime Console](#)
- [Realtime Solar System](#)

6.4 Documentation and Guides

- [Docs MCP](#)
- [Developer Documentation](#)
- [API Platform Documentation](#)
- [OpenAI Cookbooks](#)