

OFFICIAL HACKATHON RULES

PURPOSE

The hackathon aims to stimulate innovation in food by bringing together talented participants to develop technological, strategic, or product solutions that contribute to the transition toward a more sustainable diet.

All projects must fall within one of the three domains of the event

- Precision fermentation
- Plant-based innovation
- Algae-based innovation

Projects outside these categories (for example insect-based proteins) are not eligible.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

- Open to everyone, regardless of academic background or affiliation.
- Participants must register through the online form available on the official event website.
- All applications will be reviewed and selected by the organizers.
- Any incomplete or non-compliant registration will be considered null.

EVENT PROCEDURE

- Dates: December 13–14, 2025
- Venue: École 42, 96 Bd Bessières, 75017 Paris, France

Participants will be divided into multidisciplinary teams and will work on challenges related to plant-based food, algae-based food and precision fermentation.

Teams are formed both before and during the hackathon. Prior to the event, participants can sign up via a shared spreadsheet; on Saturday, December 13, one of the first workshops will be dedicated to forming teams for those who did not register beforehand.

Team formation is flexible, with two conditions: 1. a team cannot have more than five members; 2. a team cannot include more than two non-tech profiles (by “tech”, we mean engineers, coders, programmers, etc). Non-tech profiles (agronomy, business, etc.) are in the minority, and we believe it is important to encourage multidisciplinary teams.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Jury members assess projects according to four main dimensions:

- Economic feasibility (practical viability, plausible costs and benefits, realistic path to implementation)
- Environmental relevance (expected impact on emissions, land use, biodiversity, or resource efficiency; general contribution to a more sustainable food system)
- Scientific quality (credibility of sources, methodological clarity, understanding of technological principles)
- Overall coherence and alignment with the eligible themes

The authenticity of the code will also be taken into account in the evaluation of the projects.

Teams are not required to solve a pre-existing problem. They may propose new opportunities, conceptual frameworks, or creative hypotheses.

PRIZES

- 1st place: €3,000
- 2nd place: €2,000
- 3rd place: €1,000

The prizes will be awarded to the teams. They can be used to help implement the projects. A mentorship program will also be offered to the winners.

BLACKBOX PRIZES

Blackbox.ai provides all participants with \$100 in credits to use its AI and coding services.

The winners selected by the jury will also receive additional Blackbox credits as prizes:

- \$1,000 in credits for the team ranked 1st
- \$750 for the team ranked 2nd
- \$500 for the team ranked 3rd

Teams must have at least tested the provided credits to be eligible for the Blackbox prize.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Participants retain ownership of their creations. By participating, they grant the co-organizers the right to communicate, report, and incorporate ideas from the projects in publications or reports, but all other rights remain with the participants.

By taking part in the event, each participant agrees that photographs and videos taken during the hackathon may be used by the organizers for communication, promotion, and archiving purposes, on any type of medium (website, social media, press materials, institutional documents, etc.).

Anyone who does not wish to appear in these materials must explicitly inform the organizers at the latest during participant check-in. In the absence of such notification, permission for publication will be deemed granted.

ORGANIZERS

Hack the Fork is organized by the ICA, a non-profit association, and 42 Sentience, a student association of l'École 42.

LIABILITY

- Hack the Fork and Sentience 42 disclaim all liability for loss, theft, or damage occurring during the hackathon.
- Each organizer is responsible for their own actions and the logistical management they provide.
- Participants are responsible for their personal belongings and must ensure their own safety.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE RULES

Participation implies full acceptance of these rules. In case of dispute, parties will first attempt an amicable resolution. Failing that, the competent courts will be those of ICA's registered office.