

Judge Advisor Timeline

Below is a chronological list of Judge Advisor tasks. The Judge Advisor may be responsible for recruiting all the judges, or the JA may share the workload with the Volunteer Coordinator and/or PDP. JAs must work with the VC/PDP early to determine a Judge Recruitment Plan. If the Judge advisor is involved in judge recruiting, this may start as early as six months before the event. It's recommended to have judges assigned at least 2 weeks before so they can complete training.

Note that some of the links in this document may automatically download files for use.

November/December/January

	Log in to the Volunteer Management System (VMS) to confirm your assignment for the event. Tip 1: Edit the number of judges needed for your event based on size of event and communicate this change with the VC so they are aware. Tip 2: Check out the Volunteer Registration & VMS Training Tab on the Judge Advisor Resources page if the system is new to you.
	Establish contact with the Volunteer Coordinator (VC) for your event and create a judge recruitment plan with your Program Delivery Partner (PDP) and/or Senior JA. Be sure the VC knows if you will be responsible for communicating with all judges Tip: Ask your PDP to contact you if you do not have their contact information.
	After establishing a Judge Recruitment plan, contact previous judges and invite them to volunteer as well as any new potential judges.
	Monitor the judge recruitment progress in VMS As judges register – review their history and experiences, assign them, and have them start on training, consent and release, and any award preferences they might have. That is an ongoing process and the earlier you start, the easier it is
	Read the Judge Manual (updated annually) & Complete your Judge Advisor Training.
	Read and become familiar with all files posted on the Judge Advisor Resources webpage. Tip: JAs should download all files the day before reporting to the venue as internet may not be available at the event and changes may have been made from when they were first posted.
	Join the Judge Advisor Slack and become familiar with it. <i>Not in the slack? Reach out to FIRST for assistance!</i> Tip: Make sure you have notifications turned on to see important updates from FIRST.
	Work with your Program Delivery Partner (PDP) or Event Manager to coordinate any judge room supplies needed - Reference the Regional Planning Guide – Judge Section for suggestions. Reminder: FIRST does not provide a laptop or printer for Regionals for Judge Advisors. If you're not comfortable providing your own laptop, please work with the Planning Committee on identifying one you can use at the event.
	Work with the Program Delivery Partner (PDP) or Event Manager to confirm space available for the judge room & additional interview rooms and when you will have access to the rooms.

1 Month Prior to Event

	Monitor the judge recruitment progress in VMS – As you get closer to event, you should be checking weekly. As judges register – review their history and experiences, assign them, and have them
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	start on training and share any award preferences they might have. That is an ongoing process and the earlier you start, the easier it is
	Send an introductory email to assigned judges - have them complete judge training & send basic info including company name (for the PowerPoint Slide for introductions) Tip: Refer to email templates . Add specific event info as necessary
	Decide which Judging Model you are using – Shared Judge Team or Separate Judge Team. Tip: Refer to Chapter 7 in the Judge Manual for more details.
	Start pairing judges and confirm who is doing FIA & FLA. Use the Shared Judge Teams – Judge Pairing & Process Template or the Separate Judge Teams – Judge Pairing & Process Template . Share out judge pairing assignments as soon as you can. Tip: Refer to email templates . Add specific event info as necessary
	Follow up with judges assigned to submitted awards (FIA & FLA) to confirm their acceptance. These awards require pre-event work, and selected judges must understand their commitment.
	Email FIA and FLA Judge Portal information to judges. Note: HQ will send an announcement to JAs in Slack when these portals are available
	Distribute the Judge Manual to all assigned judges. Note: Request they read applicable chapters and ask any clarifying questions.
	Email judges with event logistics (training, arrival times, etc.) Tip: Refer to email templates . Add specific event info as necessary

Week Prior to Event

	Download team list from the FRC-Events website and identify Rookie teams Note: Any team that has a team number of 11,700 or higher is eligible for Rookie awards for this season
	Obtain preliminary event schedule from the Event Manager to ensure judging aligns with event schedule.
	Finish assigning judges to award categories. Tip: Make sure rookies have veteran partners if possible
	Review the JA Deliberation Guide (as needed) and confirm your plan for deliberations
	Confirm judges have completed the required Judge Training. Follow-Up with judges who may not have. Tip: You can check with judges have completed certification. Refer to Chapter 7 of the Judge Manual for details on how to verify & the email templates for instructions to share with judges
	Decide if you will be projecting the template training PowerPoint on site. If yes, be sure to download and update the slidedeck. If not, it still has helpful reminders that you can go over. Tip: Most events may not have a projector available. Contact your PDP to see if this will be an option.
	Email a final reminder to judges with information and event logistics. Tip: Refer to email templates . Add specific event info as necessary
	Print or email documents from the Judge Advisor Resources page including handouts for judges
	Determine the auditing process to ensure all teams are interviewed by Team Attributes (TA) judges and Machine Attributes (MA) judges.

	Suggestion: Post a sheet in the judge room with three columns: Team number, TA Interview and MA Interview. Judges should then sign their name next to each team for which they conducted an interview
	Create interview time slots for the <i>FIRST</i> Impact Award & <i>FIRST</i> Leadership Award. Utilize the Submitted Awards Interview Scheduler to generate a randomized interview schedule. Tip: JAs should make the schedule a few days prior to the event to ensure teams attending back-to-back events have not won the <i>FIRST</i> Impact Award at another event.
	Compile the judge names & companies and put on the PowerPoint Slide for introductions . You will want to make any last-minute adjustments on site.
	DISTRICT CHAMPS ONLY: You may need to post the interview schedule for EI & RAS interviews. Only eligible teams are able to be interviewed. Refer to the DCMP Events section within Chapter 7 of the Judge Manual for options and consult with your PDP. Be sure to communicate the plan to teams BEFORE the event.

Set-Up Day

	Introduce yourself and the Judge Advisor Assistant (JAA, if applicable) to the Event Manager. <i>Obtain the judge room key, if possible. If you cannot get a key, make sure you understand how to get the room locked and unlocked, especially early morning when you arrive.</i>
	Ensure the Event Office has a cell phone number to reach the JA and/or JAA.
	Obtain the event schedule from the Event Manager and confirm the award schedule and when award scripts are due.
	Compare your list of teams with the list that Pit Admin or the Event Manager has. This will help ensure that no teams are missed.
	Login to the Award Entry System and use the Award Eligibility report to obtain a list of teams attending your event who have won awards at a prior event THIS season.
	Double-check your interview time slots to ensure no changes have been made in the portal (i.e. if a team won already and is no longer eligible or late team adds/drops).
	Introduce yourself and the JAA to the Pit Administration Supervisor. • Be sure to explain the FIA & FLA Interview Process for the event. • Confirm they will check for any missing Consent & Releases for the FLA students. • Ask them to update you if any teams drop their interviews or want to switch time slots.
	Ensure the judge room is setup correctly • Have flip charts ready with one award name written on each page • Put the judge packets on the table with their name badges • Set out judge shirts for distribution Suggestion: Have the judges sit in their assigned groups
	Set up <i>FIRST</i> Impact Award & <i>FIRST</i> Leadership Award interview rooms (if applicable).
	Check for sufficient seating for the Match Observer judges by the field. Note: There may not be space at the Scoring Table, but you can work with the Event Manager and <i>FIRST</i> Technical Advisor (FTA) to find another space.
	Set up an auditing process to ensure all teams are interviewed by Team Attribute (TA) judges and Machine Attribute (MA) judges.
	Cross-reference the teams that have checked in against the teams that signed up for the event. Adjust judging assignments as needed to compensate for any no-shows.

	Deliver copies of the FIA and FLA interview schedule to Pit Administration. Ask them to announce all teams that have been assigned time slots as we want to ensure all teams know their interview time(s).
	Do any last-minute edits to the Judge Intro PowerPoint Slide as needed for introductions by the deadline given to you by your event manager and give the slide to the Event Manager. This slide will be shown during the opening ceremonies on Day 1.

Day One

	Before judges arrive - Double check with your event manager for any changes - Check catering and room setup to confirm everything is as planned. Double check on any special orders (food allergies).
	Hold a morning judge meeting - Review list of items from the JA Reminders Sheet or use the template training PowerPoint. - Review the judge assignments, pit map, rookie team list, timelines, etc. - Describe the awards again and give examples - Make sure your FIA and FLA judges are aware of timing the interviews for consistency. - Have each judge introduce themselves
	Explain how the progress of team interviews will be audited and the judge's' responsibility to document all the teams they have interviewed. Suggestion: Post a sheet in the judge room with three columns: Team number, TA Interview and MA Interview. Judges should then sign their name next to each team for which they conducted an interview
	Distribute Judge Shirts to judges only (not assistants). Tip: Encourage veteran judges who have shirts from previous years to wear those.
	Remind judges about Conflict of Interest forms and have them sign if they have not already. Note: Only judges with a conflict of interest need to sign. Use these to adjust team assignments and destroy forms at the end of the competition.
	Strongly encourage judges to compare thoughts and finalize notes immediately after talking to a team. Suggestion: One goal for Day 1 should be to have a short list for all awards before judges leave.
	Work with the JAA to keep everyone updated as matches run behind/ahead of schedule. This is important as it impacts the time available/remaining to have the award scripts completed.
	Get status updates from the FIA / FLA judges. New this season! The FIRST Impact Award is now the first award presented during the playoffs and is before any playoff matches begin. For that reason, events are asked to have all FIA interviews completed & winner(s) are decided and entered into the Award Entry System (AES) by the Judge Advisor on day 1.
	Ensure that all teams have been interviewed by BOTH a TA judge pair and an MCI judge pair before starting award deliberations.
	Secure judges' room (computer, printer, etc.) and any deliberation notes that may be openly displayed for the evening.
	Participate in Awards Ceremony (if applicable).

Day Two

	Have judge meeting and review schedule, assignments, etc. Ensure judges know when to return to deliberate awards.
	Ask the JAA to get a copy of the current standings from the scoring table. Post a sheet with the current top-seeded 10-15 teams on the morning of Day Two. Remind the judges that the current standings usually change by the end of qualification matches.
	Meet with the Head Referee, FTA, Lead Robot Inspectors, & Pit Admin for feedback on their observations of team behavior. Pay particular attention to feedback on the behavior of teams in contention for awards. Reminder: If you receive any feedback that you believe will disqualify a team from an award, you must talk to the Global JAs and the PDP first.
	Facilitate judge award deliberations for final awards. Ask the judges to include the “Team stories” that will help generate the award script while presenting their nominees. Note: Your job is to help the group reach a consensus. Take charge of the decision-making process. Do not take charge of the decision! Expect strong opinions – FIRST judges are exemplars of passionate dedication to the success of FIRST teams.
	Once each award is decided, assign someone to draft the award script. Note: The JA must review and approve all scripts before finalizing. (Avoid use of poems)
	Have JAA return all FIA material back to teams in the pits.
	Submit the award winners & scripts into the Award Entry System (AES) by the pre-agreed deadline. Note: This will submit the winners to the Scorekeeper. Note 2: As a reminder JAs can print the script after submitting in AES. Work with the Event Manager on printing if needed.
	Break down the judge room & return supplies as applicable
	Give the Consent and Release forms to Pit Admin. Destroy the Conflict-of-Interest forms and any other documents containing Personally Identifiable Info (PII).
	Have the FLA judges fill out the award portal questions for consideration by FLA Championship judges.
	Participate in Awards Ceremony (if applicable).
	Review the FIRST Impact Award Feedback from your judges in the portal. Make any edits as needed. Note: Feedback must be entered within 48 hours. If the feedback deadline is missed, the JA must email the teams the feedback directly.

Post Event (1-2 days after the event)

	Ensure the FIRST Leadership Award Judge Portal questions are answered & students are selected within 24 hours of the event ending.
	Complete Key Volunteer Evaluation sent via email from FIRST.
	Email Thank You note to judges and JAA. Tip: Refer to email templates . Add specific event info as necessary
	Feel free to send any additional JA feedback via email to Global JAs (Cindy & Allen) or FIRST

Judge Advisor Timeline for the *FIRST* Impact Award

Pre-Event:

- Identify *FIRST* Impact Award Judges
 - Refer to Chapter 7 of the [Judge Manual](#) for best practices.
- ~1 month prior, email FIA Judge Portal Information to judges
 - Refer to the [email templates](#) for a great starting place and suggestions on what to include
 - Please note HQ will send an announcement to JAs when portals open
- One to Two weeks prior – Email FIA Teams to explain process
 - Refer to the [email templates](#) for a great starting place and suggestions on what to include
- Prior to your event - Create the randomized interview time slots using the [Submitted Award Scheduler](#).

At the event:

- Double-check interview time slots to ensure no changes have been made in the portal (e.g., if a late team adds/drops)
- Meet with Pit Admin Supervisor and confirm they understand the process. Deliver interview schedule after match schedule is posted
- Set up interview room
- Meet with FIA judges and ensure they understand timing for interviews

At end of event

- Review the *FIRST* Impact Award Feedback from your judges in the portal. Make any edits as needed.
 - **Note:** Feedback **must** be finalized within 48 hours.

Judge Advisor Timeline for the *FIRST* Leadership Award

Pre-Event:

- Identify *FIRST* Leadership Award Judges
 - Refer to Chapter 7 of the [Judge Manual](#) for best practices.
- One month prior - Email FLA Judge Portal Information to judges
 - Refer to the [email templates](#) for a great starting place and suggestions on what to include
 - Please note HQ will send an announcement to JAs when portals open
- One to Two weeks prior – Email FLA Teams to explain process
 - Refer to the [email templates](#) for a great starting place and suggestions on what to include
- Prior to your event - Create the randomized *FIRST* Leadership Award interview time slots using the [Submitted Award Scheduler](#).

At the event:

- Double-check interview time slots to ensure no changes have been made in the portal (i.e. if a late team adds/drops)
- Meet with Pit Admin Supervisor & confirm they understand Consent & Release process. Deliver interview schedule after match schedule is posted
- Set up interview room
- Meet with FLA judges and ensure they understand timing for interviews

At end of event

- Have the judges fill out the FLA award portal within 24 hours of the end of the event