

## 2023 *FIRST*® Robotics Competition

### Media/PR Toolkit

This toolkit has been designed to provide you with the information and tools you need to plan and execute a successful local Media/PR strategy that maximizes the impact of your Regional/District event and helps publicize how the *FIRST*® Robotics Competition helps young people discover the fun in science and technology.

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## Media/PR Guide

The following outlines the steps you should take to build and execute your public relations and communications plan around regional and/or district events. For any questions or concerns as you execute these steps, please contact [marketing@firstinspires.org](mailto:marketing@firstinspires.org).

### **BUILD AND EXECUTE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

- 1. Identify and prepare your spokesperson(s):** Media will seek out credible and compelling spokespersons to interview before, at and during competitions. Ideally, you will have at least one student, educator, volunteer, *FIRST* organizer and *FIRST* sponsor. All spokespersons should be media-trained and prepped before any interviews or events.
- 2. Develop story angles:** Develop angles that tie back to the *FIRST* core mission. For example:
  - Specific, tangible results achieved by participating in *FIRST* (improved academic performance, graduation statistics, internships, college scholarships for *FIRST* participants)
  - Why businesses partner with high schools (enriching the future workforce, reinvigorating adults through student mentorship)
  - Human interest stories (diversity, teamwork, building alliances with competitors, succeeding amid adversity)
- 3. Identify target media:** Search the internet for media outlets in your location, including local and regional television network affiliates, newspapers, magazines and radio stations. Analyze and target outlets by considering if they reach your target audience, how your news fits with their typical stories and the size of their audience.
- 4. Develop and distribute calendar alert:** Use this document to encourage public attendance at your event via local print and online calendar listings. Email it to the calendar sections or contacts four weeks prior to your event. Some online outlets will have a form for you to complete.  
***See Appendix D for template; fill in relevant details where specified***
- 5. Develop and distribute media advisory:** Use this document to encourage media to attend your event. Email it to television and radio broadcast assignment editors, as well as photo desks at local newspapers and stations three days, two days and one day prior to your event.  
***See Appendix D for template; fill in relevant details where specified***
- 6. Develop and distribute pre-competition press release:** Use this document to provide a more extensive explanation of the competition and how the game is played, as well as quotes from spokespersons and a list of participating schools and teams. Include links to photos and video. Email it to media one day before the event.  
***See Appendix D for template; fill in relevant details where specified***

7. **Coordinate onsite media opportunities:** Have a dedicated media contact available to coordinate opportunities, connect reporters with spokespeople and provide photos and other relevant assets.
8. **Develop and distribute post-event press release:** Use this document to provide a recap of competition and announce the winning teams. Include links to photos and video, and Email to media immediately after the closing ceremonies (no more than four hours later).  
**See Appendix D for template; fill in relevant details and winners where specified**

### Contacting Media – Best Practices

- Media are almost always on tight deadline and like to receive succinct information quickly
- Outline the key points you want to convey (*FIRST* Robotics Competition definition, regional event location and timing, confirmed spokespeople, best story angles)
  - When speaking with television media, give them an idea as to what visuals they will be able to capture (**see Appendix D, media advisory template**)
- Contact print reporters first, as they take longer to prepare stories
  - Daily newspaper: contact the Technology, Education and/or Science Editor or Reporter
  - Weekly or monthly newspaper: contact the Editor
  - TV station: contact the Assignment Desk/Assignment Editor/Weekend Assignment Editor and the Technology, Education and/or Science reporter
  - Radio station: contact the Program Director
- Keep a running list of the media with whom you speak, and the outcome. Use this list to generate a media attendance list for your event and cross-check against it when searching for coverage after your event.
- Media will find opening ceremonies, final rounds and closing ceremonies most exciting and newsworthy, so encourage them to attend these parts of your event. If you know if/when local VIPs will attend your event and they are willing to make themselves available for interviews, convey this, too.

### EVALUATE

#### Track media coverage and compile summary

- Monitor television news, radio and newspapers to identify any *FIRST* media coverage (e.g. Google News)
- Review your media contact list and call or email reporters who said they would cover the competition to find out when and where the coverage ran



## Appendix A

### **FIRST® CORE MESSAGES FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY\***

The following key messages should be reviewed and used in communications with the media so that *FIRST*® messages stay clear, concise, and consistent.

\*May be shared with members of the *FIRST* community (e.g. volunteers, sponsors) as a guide to representing *FIRST* to the general public. Not to be published.

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#### **ABOUT FIRST®**

- *FIRST* is a robotics community that prepares young people for the future.
- *FIRST* is the world's leading youth-serving nonprofit advancing STEM education, preparing a new generation of young people for the future through engaging, hands-on robotics programs.
- Founded by renowned inventor Dean Kamen in 1989, ***FIRST* has reached more than 2.5 million youth participants** in more than 100 countries over the past three decades.
- For 30 years, *FIRST* has combined the rigor of STEM learning with the fun and excitement of traditional sports and the inspiration that comes from community through programs that have a proven impact on learning, interest, and skill-building inside and outside of the classroom.
- *FIRST* encourages participation through an expanded team structure that allows young people to experiment with jobs and tasks and find where they truly excel, while encouraged by a global support system of *FIRST* partners, mentors, volunteers, alumni and sponsors.
- Thrilling robotics competitions from *FIRST* leave students with a sense of accomplishment and the understanding that they can do anything with their collective skills, leadership, and confidence, and that their experience will positively impact their future and take them further than any other sport can.
- Whether it is finding their people or finding their path, students gain the skills and confidence to forge ahead and build their future with *FIRST*.
- *FIRST* creates the people who will change the world – today and tomorrow.

***FIRST* offers a suite of robotics programs for PreK-12 (ages 4-18). Each program can be facilitated in school or after-school, and students can join at any level.**

- ***FIRST*® LEGO® League:** Grades PreK-8 (ages 4-16; age varies by country) *FIRST* LEGO League introduces STEM to children through fun, exciting hands-on learning. Participants gain real-world problem-solving experiences through a guided, global robotics program, helping today's students and teachers build a better future together. *FIRST* LEGO League's three divisions inspire youth to experiment and grow

their critical thinking, coding, and design skills through hands-on STEM learning and robotics centered around a yearly theme. The three divisions are:

- *FIRST*® LEGO® League Discover (ages 4-6)
- *FIRST*® LEGO® League Explore (ages 6-10)
- *FIRST*® LEGO® League Challenge (ages 9-16)
- ***FIRST*® Tech Challenge:** Grades 7-12 (ages 12-18)  
*FIRST* Tech Challenge teams work together to design, build, and program a robot to play a themed competition challenge by brainstorming innovative ideas, exploring advanced engineering concepts, and developing career-ready practices.
- ***FIRST*® Robotics Competition:** Grades 9-12 (ages 14-18)  
*FIRST* Robotics Competition combines the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology. Teams of students are challenged to design, build, and program industrial-size robots and compete for awards, while they also create a team identity, raise funds, hone teamwork skills, and advance respect and appreciation for STEM within the local community.

### **FIRST IS A COMMUNITY OF:**

- Critical Thinkers
- Collaborators
- Lifelong learners
- Leaders
- Innovators
- Problem solvers
- Creators
- Change makers
- Dreamers
- Builders
- Makers
- Entrepreneurs
- Inventors

### **KEY MESSAGES AND THEMES**

- **Our Future: Built Better Together**
  - ***FIRST* is an inclusive robotics community that prepare young people for the future.** Whether it is finding their people or finding their path, students gain the skills and courage to forge ahead with *FIRST*.
  - **Together with our sponsors, partners, alumni, mentors and volunteers, *FIRST* helps young people build a better future where they want to belong.** *FIRST* empowers students to be good global citizens who understand that they can use their collective skills to make a positive impact in one person's life, in their community, and even the world.
  - ***FIRST* students are prepared for greater success in the classroom and workforce.** Powered by a mission-driven global robotics community and evidence-based programs designed to ignite curiosity and encourage exploration, *FIRST* prepares young people for the future.
  - ***FIRST* inspires young people to be drivers of positive change and use science and technology as a force for good in the world** by encouraging them to live, learn and collaborate under the *FIRST* ethos of [Gracious Professionalism® and Coopertition®](#).
    - The *FIRST* Core Values are discovery, innovation, impact, inclusion, teamwork, and fun. Together with our ethos, they emphasize friendly sportsmanship, respect for the contributions of others, teamwork, learning, and community involvement.
- **Workforce readiness: *FIRST* is the only sport where every kid can “go pro.”**  
Traditional sports are fun and challenging, but not every kid makes the cut. *FIRST* encourages participation through an expanded team structure that allows young people

to experiment with jobs and tasks and find where they truly excel. Thrilling robotics competitions leave students with a sense of accomplishment and understanding that they can do anything with their collective skills, leadership, and confidence, and that their experience will positively impact their future and take them further than any other sport can.

- **Lifelong learning: The impact of *FIRST* is bigger than STEM.** *FIRST* inspires a lifelong love of learning that is critical to perseverance in an ever-changing workforce.
  - Using robotics competitions as the vehicle, *FIRST* is developing innovators, technology leaders, and creative problem solvers. *FIRST* programs help students channel their raw curiosity to think critically and seek ways to improve the world around them.
  - Innovators and inventors play a critical role in growing our economy and improving our quality of life.
  - By capturing the hearts, minds, and imagination of kids as early as four years old, *FIRST* helps them experiment with new ideas in a supportive environment where failure is part of the process and leaves them with a love of learning to build on for the rest of their lives.
  - The *FIRST* experience helps kids bridge the gap from learning concepts to real-world application.
  - Through *FIRST*, students from all walks of life develop self-confidence in STEM and valuable, real-world skills – such as digital literacy, teamwork, leadership, creative problem solving, and project management – that open pathways to all career choices and outcomes.
- ***FIRST* is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion.** To build a uniquely diverse and innovative workforce – one that can truly address the challenges facing today’s world – we need kids of all backgrounds and capabilities in the professional pipeline. All kids need equitable access to opportunity, relevant mentorship, and engagement to build a foundation for a bright future.
  - Collectively, we must empower our young people to grow up to solve the world’s most pressing problems, be strong citizens, and build a brighter future.
  - *FIRST* is committed to bringing its programs to students who would benefit most and is actively engaged in developing strategies that will ensure greater access to its programs and reduce inequalities.
  - At *FIRST*, we are committed to creating a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community for all our participants.
- ***FIRST* is a nonprofit, volunteer-driven and operated organization, and as such promotes a culture of gratitude.** *FIRST* is supported by a strong and generous network of corporations, educational institutions, professional organizations, mentors, coaches, volunteers, teachers, individual donors, and many others without whom *FIRST* could not make the impact it does.
  - **Mentorship:** *FIRST* creates powerful mentorship relationships between young people and adult mentors and coaches.
    - Meaningful involvement of adults in the lives of young people is an essential component for developing potential.
    - Mentors and coaches may be parents, teachers, professional engineers, veterans, etc.
    - A mentor or coach can be a person of any age who brings technical or non-technical expertise to the team.

- **Sponsorship:** *FIRST* is supported by a strong network of national corporations, cutting edge tech companies, educational institutions, and professional institutions.
  - Some of the world's most respected companies – including more than 200 of the Fortune 500 companies – provide: funding; mentorship time and talent; employee volunteerism; technology and equipment to make *FIRST* a reality.
  - Our partnerships and alliances between educational institutions, governmental entities, and industry help us ensure *FIRST* alumni are sufficiently prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities they will face in the workplace.
- **Volunteerism:** *FIRST* teams, competitions, and events are organized and operated by volunteers, including employees of corporate sponsors, teachers, parents, community leaders, *FIRST* alumni, and friends.
  - Adult volunteers share their skills and knowledge with students while helping expose students to real-world careers and connect them to their work in *FIRST*. In return, volunteers nurture and grow their own skill sets and engage more meaningfully in their careers and in their communities.
- **Alumni of *FIRST* programs are critical to advancing our mission across the globe.** Alumni – who belong to a global, lifelong community – are encouraged to give back by volunteering, mentoring, donating, recruiting, and spreading the mission of *FIRST*.

## IMPACT

***FIRST* has a proven impact on youth participants in shaping their futures in STEM, according to an independent study by Brandeis University:**

- **The *FIRST* Theory of Change:** Our programs use strategies known to increase student interest in STEM: hands-on learning, working as a team on real-life problems, exposure to careers and adult mentors, emphasis on *FIRST* Core Values, and a culminating celebration where students can showcase what they created and learned.
- Evidence from the ongoing *FIRST* Longitudinal Study, conducted via a multi-year partnership with Brandeis University, demonstrates that *FIRST* is meeting our mission and goals to increase the number of young people interested in STEM – and *FIRST* alumni's interest extends beyond their participation in the program to their educational and career choices.
- In addition to gains in STEM outcomes, *FIRST* participants develop skills in teamwork, problem solving, and communication, preparing them for success in school and the workforce, no matter what path they take.
- **Summary of latest findings:** At the end of seven years of rigorous data collection (May 2021), there is strong evidence that *FIRST* participation leads to long-term impact, including sustained attitudes and interest in STEM and persistence in STEM pathways into college and related careers.
  - **By their 4th year of college, *FIRST* alumni are more likely to be majoring in STEM fields than comparison group peers\*.**
    - 81% of *FIRST* alumni declare a major in STEM compared to 58% in the comparison group.
    - 68% of *FIRST* alumni declare a major in engineering or computer science compared to 29% of the comparison group.

- **Young women in *FIRST* have significant gains in all STEM areas including STEM interest, career interest, activity, knowledge, and identity compared to their non-participating peers.**
  - 69% of female *FIRST* alumni declare majors in *STEM* by their fourth year in college compared to 49% of the comparison group.
  - 51% declare a major in computer science or engineering by their second year of college compared to 16% of the comparison group of women.
  - Female *FIRST* alumni are 2.6 times more likely to take an engineering course and 3.4 times more likely to take a computer science course in their fourth year of college than women who didn't participate in *FIRST*.
- *FIRST* students are **two times more likely to show an increase in STEM-related attitudes and interests** than comparison group students. Positive impacts are evident for all *FIRST* students regardless of race, gender, income, or community type.

\*Comparison group includes students who did not participate in *FIRST* programs but were enrolled in science and technology classes at the same grade schools. All students received a baseline survey and follow-up surveys each year.

SOURCE: [FIRST Longitudinal Study: Findings at 72 Month Follow-Up](#), The Center for Youth and Communities, Brandeis University, May 2020; All differences statistically significant,  $p \leq .05$ .

### ***FIRST* provides an education and career path for young innovators with big ideas**

- Alumni of *FIRST* programs gain access to education and career discovery opportunities, connections to exclusive scholarships and employers, and a place of belonging in the *FIRST* community for life.
- ***FIRST* alumni are ready to hire and stand out to potential employers.** Their *FIRST* experience and network can help them find meaningful, fulfilling careers through any path. They have gone on to specialize in engineering, science, education, media, mathematics, theater, film, marketing, business, finance, health, art, communications, medicine, ecommerce, politics, skilled technology, manufacturing, and more.



## APPENDIX: B

### FIRST® FAQ

#### **What is FIRST®?**

*FIRST*® is a robotics community that prepares young people for the future and the world's leading youth-serving nonprofit advancing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Founded by inventor Dean Kamen in 1989, *FIRST* has evolved into a global movement by combining the excitement of traditional sports with the rigor of STEM learning, engaging millions of people with programs that have a proven impact on learning, interest, and skill-building inside and outside of the classroom. *FIRST* builds powerful mentorship relationships between young people and STEM professionals, helping kids gain confidence to explore the innovation process while they learn valuable science, engineering, technology, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. *FIRST* creates the people who will change the world – today and tomorrow.

*FIRST* offers a suite of robotics programs for PreK-12 (ages 4-18): *FIRST*® Robotics Competition for grades 9-12 (ages 14 to 18); *FIRST*® Tech Challenge for grades 7-12 (ages 12 to 18); and *FIRST*® LEGO® League with divisions spanning for grades PreK-8 (ages 4 to 16; ages vary by country). Each program can be facilitated in school or after-school, and students can join at any level.

#### **Who are some of the organizations that sponsor FIRST?**

*FIRST* is supported by a strong network of corporations, educational and professional institutions, and individuals. Some of the world's most respected companies – including more than 200 of the Fortune 500 companies – provide funding, mentorship time and talent, volunteerism, equipment, and to make *FIRST* more accessible to students all over the world.

#### **FIRST Strategic Partners are:**

The 3M Company, Amazon, Apple, The Argosy Foundation, BAE Systems, Bechtel Group Foundation, The Boeing Company, Bosch, Caterpillar, Inc., DEKA Research & Development Corporation, DoD STEM, Dow, FedEx Corporation, Ford Motor Company, The Gene Haas Foundation, General Motors Company, Google, John Deere, LEGO® Education, Lockheed Martin Corporation, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), NI, Novelis Inc., Qualcomm® Incorporated, Raytheon Technologies, Rockwell Automation, Inc., TE Connectivity, and The Walt Disney Company.

LEGO Education is a founding partner of *FIRST* LEGO League. *FIRST* LEGO League is delivered annually through the support of global sponsors LEGO Education and the LEGO Foundation, and Challenge Division sponsors, John Deere and Rockwell Automation. The 2023-2024 *FIRST* Tech Challenge Season Presenting Sponsor is Raytheon Technologies. The Gene Haas Foundation is the 2023 Season Presenting Sponsor of *FIRST* Robotics Competition, and the 2023-2024 *FIRST* Season Theme Presenting Sponsor is Qualcomm.

### **FIRST Founding Sponsors are:**

Baxter International Inc., Boston Scientific Corporation, DEKA Research & Development Corporation, Delphi Automotive PLC, FCA Foundation, General Motors Company, Johnson & Johnson Family of Corporations, Kleiner Perkins, Motorola Solutions Foundation, and Xerox Corporation.

### **FIRST has Strategic Alliances in place with:**

Alpha Omega Epsilon (A.O.E), American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), Automation Federation/International Society for Automation (ISA), Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Electronics Components Industry Association (ECIA Foundation), Girl Scouts of the USA, MIT Alumni Association, National 4-H Council, National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT), National Fluid Power Association (NFPA), National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)<sup>®</sup>, National Robotics Week, Sigma Phi Delta (SPD), SIM Foundation, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), Society of Women Engineers (SWE), Triangle Fraternity, Yale Science & Engineering Association

### **What does research show about participation in FIRST?**

More than a decade of data and research shows that exposing kids to fun, exciting *FIRST* programs builds 21<sup>st</sup> century work skills and greatly increases their motivation to seek education and careers in STEM fields. Learn more at [www.firstinspires.org/about/impact](http://www.firstinspires.org/about/impact).

### **Who participates in FIRST programs?**

- Approximately 3,220 teams of high-school students competed in **FIRST<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition** in 27 countries in the 2021-2022 season.
- 70,000+ students in Grades 7-12 competed in **FIRST<sup>®</sup> Tech Challenge** in 53 countries in 2021-2022.
- 393,000+ students, ages 4-16 (age varies by country), participated in **FIRST<sup>®</sup> LEGO<sup>®</sup> League** in 92 countries in 2021-2022.
- All competitions are intense, exciting, fun, and free for all ages.

### **Who manages the teams and events?**

*FIRST* is truly a volunteer-driven organization. For the 2022-2023 season, more than 250,000 volunteer roles were filled, with contributions in areas including mentorship, event management, recruitment, and team management. The growth and success of *FIRST* is a direct result of the efforts of the mentors, parents, teachers, community leaders, and citizens who volunteer their time and talent.

### **How can volunteers get involved?**

- Attend a *FIRST* event visit [the FIRST event search](#) to find an event close to you – attendance is free;
- Contact a mentor from a [local team](#) to assist;
- Visit [the FIRST volunteer website](#) for volunteer/event opportunities; or
- Contact *FIRST* at 1-800-871-8326 or [volunteer@firstinspires.org](mailto:volunteer@firstinspires.org).

Interested volunteers can visit our website at [www.firstinspires.org/ways-to-help/volunteer](http://www.firstinspires.org/ways-to-help/volunteer) for more information about how to become a mentor, coach, or event volunteer.

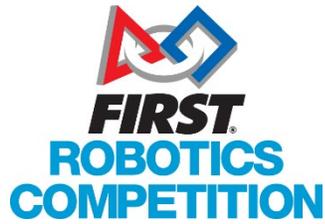
**What is Gracious Professionalism®?**

*Gracious Professionalism®* is part of the ethos of *FIRST*. The idea and phrase are found throughout *FIRST*, but no one was a stronger champion than the late *FIRST* Distinguished Advisor, Dr. Woodie Flowers.

*“Gracious Professionalism is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions. Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process.”*

**What is Coopertition®?**

*Coopertition®* produces innovation. At *FIRST*, *Coopertition* is displaying unqualified kindness and respect in the face of fierce competition. *Coopertition* is founded on the concept and a philosophy that teams can and should help and cooperate with each other even as they compete. *Coopertition* involves learning from teammates. It is teaching teammates. It is learning from mentors. And it is managing and being managed. *Coopertition* means competing always, but assisting and enabling others when you can.



## **FIRST<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition FAQ**

### **What is the FIRST<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition?**

The FIRST<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition for Grades 9-12 (ages 14 to 18) is an annual competition that helps young people discover the rewards and excitement of education and careers in science, engineering, and technology. The program challenges high-school-aged students – working with professional Mentors – to design and build a robot and compete in high-intensity events that reward the effectiveness of each robot, the power of team strategy and collaboration, and the determination of students. In 1992, the initial FIRST Robotics Competition took place with 28 teams in a high school gym in New Hampshire. In 2023, the season will include more than 3,300 teams from 31 countries competing in 94 District Events, 61 Regional Events, and 11 District Championships, as well as the [FIRST Championship](#).

### **Why involve a professional mentor?**

FIRST creates powerful mentoring relationships between the students and professional mentors. FIRST Robotics Competition teams are often mentored by engineers and other STEM and business professionals. Meaningful involvement of adults in children's lives is proven as an essential component for developing young people's potential.

### **How is the game played?**

Each year's Kickoff event unveils a new, exciting, and challenging game. From the Kickoff, teams have limited time to build and program a robot to compete in the game using a kit of parts provided by FIRST and a standard set of rules. CHARGED UP<sup>SM</sup> presented by Haas is part of the 2023 FIRST ENERGIZE<sup>SM</sup> presented by Qualcomm season. In CHARGED UP, teams are inspired to see the potential of energy storage in a new light as they compete to charge up their communities. Using renewable energy can transform our communities, but only if it is effectively stored and delivered to those who need it. The power of engineering can help make a meaningful difference. This year's challenge addresses global challenges related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #7 -- focused on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

### **Who participates in the competition?**

During the 2023 season, nearly 100,000 high-school students on 3,300 FIRST Robotics Competition teams competed in 94 District Events, 11 District Championships, and 61 Regional Events (in the U.S., Australia, Canada, Israel, Mexico, and Turkey), and the FIRST Championship. Teams are comprised of professional mentors and 10 or more student members in grades 9-12. In addition, each FIRST team has one or more sponsors. Those sponsors include companies, universities, or professional organizations that donate their time, talent, funds, equipment, and much more to the team effort.

## **Is scientific, technology, or mathematic expertise required for students to participate in the *FIRST* Robotics Competition?**

*FIRST* invites students who may not be predisposed to science, math, or technology to participate. In fact, *FIRST* Robotics Competition is designed to inspire, motivate, and encourage students to learn basic principles while challenging more experienced students. Since there are critical roles for students in everything from design and building, to fundraising and research, to marketing, every student can actively participate and benefit.

## **What do the students gain from participating?**

Throughout their *FIRST* experience, students gain maturity, build self-confidence, learn teamwork, and gain an understanding of professionalism. Students have fun while building a network of friends and professional mentors who enrich their lives.

A series of awards honor accomplishments in areas including engineering, design excellence, competitive play, sportsmanship, and high-impact partnerships between schools, businesses, and communities. A judging committee of distinguished professionals makes award decisions. The most prestigious award is the *FIRST* Impact Award (previously the Chairman's Award), which recognizes the team that best represents a model for other teams to emulate and best embodies the purpose and goals of *FIRST*.

## **Are there other benefits to participating?**

Young people gain the skills and knowledge to fill one of the more than two million STEM-related positions available in the U.S. today. Sponsors benefit by finding future employees and interns. Mentors benefit from renewed inspiration and a reminder as to why they chose science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) as a career. Volunteers are recognized as an integral and vital part of the way in which young people connect to the real world, in their own communities and in the world at large.

The majority of *FIRST* Robotics Competition participants participate in key STEM activities on the team and experience gains in a number of outcomes, for example\*:

- 92% expressed an increased interest in going to college
- 88% expressed an increased interest in doing well in school
- 97% expressed an increased desire to learn more about STEM
- 92% gained self-confidence
- 99% increased teamwork skills
- 95% increased leadership skills
- 99% felt better able to solve unexpected problems

\*Source: Cross-Program Evaluation of the *FIRST* Tech Challenge and the *FIRST* Robotics Competition (2011)



## Appendix C

### **FIRST® SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS & BLOGS**

Official *FIRST* channels include:

- Facebook:
  - [FIRST](#)
  - [FIRST Robotics Competition](#)
  - [FIRST® Tech Challenge](#)
  - [FIRST® LEGO® League](#)
- Twitter:
  - [FIRST](#)
  - [FIRST Robotics Competition](#)
  - [FIRST Tech Challenge](#)
  - [FIRST LEGO League](#)
- LinkedIn: [FIRST](#)
- Instagram: [FIRST](#)
- TikTok: [FIRST](#)
- Twitch: [FIRST](#)
- YouTube:
  - [FIRST](#)
  - [FIRST Robotics Competition](#)
  - [FIRST Tech Challenge](#)
  - [FIRST LEGO League](#)
- Blogs:
  - [FIRST Community Blog](#), *FIRST* blog featuring stories from the *FIRST* community, Q&As, tips, and a wide range of topics meant to inspire and educate
  - [FIRST Robotics Competition](#), News from *FIRST* Robotics Competition Headquarters
  - [FIRST Tech Challenge](#), The official blog for *FIRST* Tech Challenge
  - [FIRST LEGO League](#), Community Stories as contributed by *FIRST* LEGO League official correspondents



## APPENDIX: D

### Press Materials – Samples & Templates

#### CONTENTS

- Calendar Alert Template
- Media Advisory Template
- Pre-competition Press Release Template
- Post-competition Press Release Sample
- *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Boilerplate

Note: For brand and company identity purposes, it is important to communicate the proper use of *FIRST* by consistently using it correctly in all press materials. *FIRST* should always appear in all capital, italicized letters.

The first time *FIRST* appears on a page the ® symbol should be used as follows: *FIRST*<sup>®</sup>. (See Appendix F for additional information regarding *FIRST* trademarks.) Editors may download high-resolution logos and photos for all programs at [www.firstinspires.org/brand](http://www.firstinspires.org/brand). Program photos can be found and downloaded in the [FIRST Press Room](#).

**\*\*\* Calendar Alert \*\*\***

**The following is a sample template. Calendar Alert should be customized [see highlighted areas] with Regional information and emailed to calendar sections at local dailies 4 weeks prior to event kickoff. Some media outlets require the information be submitted online at their site.**



CONTACT: [NAME]  
[NUMBER]  
[EMAIL]

**Local Students Compete to Qualify for Global Robotics Championship at  
FIRST® Robotics Competition [Regional or District] Event**

**Event:** FIRST® Robotics Competition [REGIONAL or DISTRICT NAME]

**What:** More than [NUMBER OF TEAMS] area high schools will compete in the FIRST® Robotics Competition [REGIONAL or DISTRICT NAME] event. This high-tech sporting event will produce excitement and energy for participants and spectators alike, as teams compete for honors and recognition that reward design excellence, sportsmanship, teamwork, and more.

CHARGED UP<sup>SM</sup> presented by Haas is part of the 2023 FIRST® ENERGIZE<sup>SM</sup> presented by Qualcomm season. In CHARGED UP, teams are inspired to see the potential of energy storage in a new light as they compete to charge up their communities. Using renewable energy can transform our communities, but only if it is effectively stored and delivered to those who need it. The power of engineering can help make a meaningful difference. This year's challenge addresses global challenges related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #7 -- focused on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

*FIRST*® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a not-for-profit organization, founded by inventor Dean Kamen, dedicated to preparing young people for the future. The *FIRST* Robotics Competition is a program that challenges high school students – working with professional mentors – to design and build a robot to compete in matches that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration and the determination of students.

**When:** [INSERT DATE]  
**Time:** [INSERT TIME] a.m. – [INSERT TIME] p.m.  
**Where:** [LOCATION]  
[STREET ADDRESS]  
[CITY, STATE]

**Details:** Admission is free. More information: [www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org)

**About FIRST®**

*FIRST*® is a robotics community that prepares young people for the future through a suite of inclusive, team-based robotics programs for ages 4-18 (PreK-12) that can be facilitated in school or in structured afterschool programs. Boosted by a global support system of volunteers, educators, and sponsors that include over 200 of the Fortune 500 companies, teams operate under a signature set of [FIRST Core Values](#) to conduct research, fundraise, design, build, and showcase their achievements during annual challenges. An international not-for-profit organization founded by accomplished inventor Dean Kamen in 1989, *FIRST* has a [proven impact](#) on STEM learning, interest, and skill-building well beyond high school. [Alumni](#) of *FIRST* programs gain access to exclusive scholarships, internships, and other opportunities that create connections and open pathways to a wide variety of careers. Learn more at [firstinspires.org](http://firstinspires.org).

\*\*\* Media Advisory \*\*\*

The following page is a sample template. Media Advisory should be customized [see highlighted areas] with Regional information and emailed to broadcast assignment editors and photo desks at local dailies and broadcast stations at least 3 days ) prior to event kick-off.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [NAME]  
[NUMBER]  
[EMAIL]

**High School Students Put Robots to the Test, Compete to Qualify for Global *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Robotics Championship at [Regional or District] Event**

[#] Local Teams to Compete for Awards, Qualification for International Championship

**Who:** Student teams from local school districts and [#] surrounding states will participate in the *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition [REGIONAL OR DISTRICT NAME] for an opportunity to win regional recognition for design excellence, sportsmanship, teamwork, and more, and advance to the *FIRST* Championship competition. The public is encouraged to attend, catch the excitement of this intense competition, and cheer on their favorite teams. Admission is free.

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[LIST NOTABLE GUEST HERE] will be in attendance to [DESCRIBE INVOLVEMENT, TIME & LOCATION]

Teams from [cities/states] will be competing, including [LIST LOCAL TEAMS/SCHOOLS].

**What:** The *FIRST* Robotics Competition is a program that challenges high school students – working with professional Mentors – to design and build a robot to compete in matches that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration, and the determination of students. Teams in the *FIRST* Robotics Competition [REGIONAL or DISTRICT NAME] Regional will vie for regional awards and a spot at the *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Championship to be held April 19-22 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas. The competition is part of *FIRST*, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preparing young people for the future.

**When:** **Thursday, [DATE]** 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. - Robot testing and inspection  
**Friday, [DATE]** 9:00 a.m. – 9:20 a.m. - Opening ceremonies  
9:20 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. - Qualifying matches

To learn more about *FIRST*, go to [www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org)

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**Saturday, [DATE]** 9:00 a.m. – 9:20 a.m. - Opening ceremonies and Sponsor keynotes  
9:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Qualifying matches  
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Final rounds matches  
3:00 p.m. – Awards & closing ceremonies

**Where:** [LOCATION]  
[ADDRESS]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

**Photo Opp:** Students testing, tuning up, and competing with their robots. Watch as student teams of two alliances operate their robots to complete obstacles and score points in fast-paced game-play. Mentors, school groups, school mascots, family, and fans are cheering on the teams.

**About *FIRST*<sup>®</sup>**

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**\*\*\*Pre-Competition Press Release\*\*\***

*The following page is a sample template. Release should be customized [see highlighted areas] with Regional/District information and emailed to the media day of event.*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [NAME]  
[NUMBER]  
[EMAIL]

**[LOCATION] HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPETE TO QUALIFY FOR *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> INTERNATIONAL ROBOTICS CHAMPIONSHIP**

*Students Learn Problem-Solving and Teamwork in Addition to Designing and Building Robots by Working with Professional Mentors to participate at [Regional Event Name], [Date]*

**[CITY, STATE, DATE, 2023]** — High-school students from [XX] states and [CITY]-area schools will have the opportunity to showcase their hard work after an intense six weeks of designing and building an original robot in the *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition ([www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org)). This week, at **[VENUE LOCATION]**, [#] teams of students and engineering and technical mentors will demonstrate their skill for science, mathematics, and technology. They will compete for honors and recognition that reward design excellence, competitive play, sportsmanship, and high-impact partnerships between schools, businesses, and communities.

Founded by inventor Dean Kamen, *FIRST* (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a robotics community preparing young people for the future. More than [#] students will compete at the **[REGIONAL or DISTRICT NAME]** to earn a spot at the international *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Championship to be held April 19-22 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas.

CHARGED UP<sup>SM</sup> presented by Haas is part of the 2023 *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> ENERGIZE<sup>SM</sup> presented by Qualcomm season. In CHARGED UP, teams are inspired to see the potential of energy storage in a new light as they compete to charge up their communities. Using renewable energy can transform our communities, but only if it is effectively stored and delivered to those who need it. The power of engineering can help make a meaningful difference. This year's challenge addresses global challenges related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #7 -- focused on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

"Our events are the culmination of countless hours of preparation by our teams of students, coaches, and mentors," said Collin Fultz, Senior Program Director of *FIRST* Robotics Competition, adding, "The event

is part competition and part celebration of what our teams have achieved this year. While only a few teams at the event will be crowned champions, all of our participants will leave the season as better problem-solvers, more gracious professionals, and more prepared to tackle the challenges of the future.”

<REPLACE OR SUPPLEMENT WITH QUOTE(S) FROM LOCAL ORGANIZER OR SPONSOR>

With a limited timeframe, students work with professional engineering mentors to design a robot that solves a problem using a Kit of Parts and a standard set of rules. Once these young inventors create the robot, their teams participate in regional competitions that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration, and the determination of students.

*FIRST* Robotics Competition [REGIONAL or DISTRICT NAME] sponsors and volunteers come from some of the most highly regarded organizations in the area, including [REGIONAL SPONSORS]. Sponsors provide resources including time and talent from professional Mentors, services, equipment, financial contributions, and volunteers.

For more information about *FIRST* in [REGION], please contact [CONTACT INFO] or visit [LOCAL WEBSITE].

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**\*\*\*Post-Competition Press Release\*\*\***

***The following is a sample from a previous FIRST Robotics Competition Boston Regional. Release should be emailed to the media immediately following the Closing Ceremonies. Follow up with a phone call and/or send a photo to the editor.***



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [NAME]  
[NUMBER]  
[EMAIL]

**[LOCATION] HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS QUALIFY FOR INTERNATIONAL ROBOTICS CHAMPIONSHIP**

*Students Advanced Following Competitions Putting Custom-Built Robots to the Test; Others Win Honors for Design, Sportsmanship, Partnership [Sample Only]*

**[CITY/STATE, DATE, 2023]** – Attended by thousands of fans, families, educators and industry leaders, the *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Robotics Competition **[EVENT NAME]** awarded several teams with honors that rewarded design excellence, competitive play, sportsmanship and high impact partnerships between schools, businesses and communities. Held at the **[VENUE NAME]** on **[DATES], [XX]** high school student teams competed to earn a spot at the *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Championship, to be held April 19-22 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas.

With the hope of winning one of the several coveted awards, high school students worked with professional Mentors to design and build a robot over a six-week period that solved a problem using a kit of parts and a standard set of rules.

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“Each team clearly demonstrated teamwork, professionalism and strategic thinking in solving the competition’s challenges,” **[LOCAL FIRST CONTACT]** “The noise level from the audience cheering on the teams was tremendous. Students, school groups, community members and professional team mentors

filled the stands and helped to bring a level of fun and excitement to the competition. With the sustained support of the [Boston] community, this robotics competition will continue to grow and inspire students to study math, science and engineering.” [USE OR REPLACE WITH QUOTE FROM APPROPRIATE REGIONAL/DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE]

[FIRST has a proven impact](#) to significantly improve students’ attitudes towards math, science and teamwork.

Winners of the *FIRST* Robotics Competition 2023 **EVENT NAME Awards** include [LIST AWARDS/TEAM NAMES/SCHOOLS]:



For more information about *FIRST* in [REGION], please contact [CONTACT INFO] or visit [LOCAL WEBSITE].

#### **About *FIRST*<sup>®</sup>**

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**\*\*\* FIRST Boilerplate \*\*\***

***Include this brief explanation of FIRST at the end of any FIRST-related press release.***

***Note: This boilerplate should be used as is, and should not be edited in any way.***

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## APPENDIX: E MEDIA GUIDELINES

These guidelines are for print, broadcast and electronic media, photographers, videographers, production crews, and corporate communications staff attending a *FIRST* event.

### MEDIA GUIDELINES TEMPLATE

2023 *FIRST*® Robotics Competition  
<Regional Name>  
<Date>  
<Location>

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We welcome media and communications individuals to capture images/footage at our events for the purpose of promoting *FIRST*®. Images/footage obtained at *FIRST* events may not be used for commercial gain or the advertisement of any commercial product. *FIRST* cannot guarantee that every attendee has consented to your use of their likeness. User assumes any risk/responsibility of using images/footage obtained at the event.

#### Required Registration

All media and communications individuals are required to register and receive a Media Pass at the <check-in location> before beginning any coverage of the event. Proper credentials and a photo ID are required for a Media Pass to be issued.

#### Media Pass

Media Passes must be worn at all times within the <name of facility>. Media and communications individuals without a Media Pass will not be permitted onto the playing field or the pit area. Passes are not transferable.

#### No Access Permitted

Media are not permitted on the actual playing field surface; in areas marked off for human players; on any stage area during opening and closing ceremonies or other special presentations/events; in private venues; VIP areas; Volunteer areas; or judges' areas.

#### Access

Playing Fields: Media are permitted in designated access areas around the playing field. Media are not permitted in areas marked off for human players. **Interviews are permitted in the playing field area but must not block robot entry and exit paths.**

Pit Area: Media are permitted in the Pit Area at all times during the event. Interviews and photography/videography are permitted.

Gracious Professionalism® is an important value at *FIRST*. Media are asked to conduct themselves consistent with *Gracious Professionalism*. Please respect the competitors, Volunteers, and your colleagues as you cover the event. Allow teams the physical and mental

space needed to compete fully and freely. At times, the Pit Area may also require team members to be free from distraction. Please be sensitive during filming and always ask permission to shoot and/or conduct interviews.

**Contacts**

<List Media contact(s) – name, email, telephone number>

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**APPENDIX: F**

[Policy on the Use of \*FIRST\*® Trademarks and Copyrighted Materials \(including \*FIRST\* and The LEGO Group Intellectual Property\)](#)

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**APPENDIX: G**

*FIRST*<sup>®</sup> Branding & Design Standards available online at  
<http://www.firstinspires.org/brand>.

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**APPENDIX: H**

*FIRST Impact Data* available online at <http://www.firstinspires.org/about/impact>

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