

# Judge Advisor Manual

Revision History		
Revision	Date	Description
1.0	11/15/2024	Initial 2024-2025 Release

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## Overview

**Roles Covered:** Judge Advisor

### Job Description

The Judge Advisor trains, directs, and supervises Judges throughout the event. Judge Advisors oversee the judging processes and procedures to make sure they are in accordance with *FIRST* Tech Challenge judging guidelines.

Requirements	
Technical	Low to Medium
Physical	Medium to high
Administrative	Medium to high
Communication	High
Facilitation	High
Pre-event Training	High

Judge Advisors also consult the “Judge Advisor Pre-event Training List” under the [Training and Certification](#) section of this document for a full list of required, encouraged, and optional

documents to review. Volunteers in this role are also responsible for communicating with the Event Director or Program Delivery Partner to check for additional requirements, such as attending any meetings before the event.

Meetings held prior to an event may include discussions with the other key volunteers (Head Referee, Lead Queuer, Lead Robot Inspector, and others), creating a [Public Schedule](#), and/or run-throughs of the venue to understand key areas (the pits, the competition area, judging and deliberation rooms, and other important spaces).

Judge Advisors must be at least 23 years of age, and at least 3 years removed from participating as a student member of a *FIRST* Tech Challenge team. If a Judge Advisor has any team affiliation, they must disclose the affiliation to the Judges at the event.

### Time Commitment

The Judge Advisor should expect to spend 10-12 hours at a full day event. Approximately 6-15 hours of pre-event training and planning is required.

Below is a breakdown of the time commitment for a Judge Advisor:

- About 8 hours of training before the event for the Judge Advisor role including encouraged participation in monthly *FIRST* Judge Advisor discussion calls.
- About 8 hours of planning for the event.
- About 2 hours training the Judging team.
- At least one full day for the event, about 12 hours.

Larger events could span multiple days. Be sure to check with your Volunteer Coordinator or Event Director for more information about the hours needed for the role.

### Attire

- Comfortable closed-toe, closed-heel shoes, much of the day will involve moving between the pit area and the deliberation room.
- ANSI Z87.1 certified safety glasses are required in the pit and competition areas.
- As one of the event leaders, comfortable professional wear is encouraged.
- Judge Advisors who are affiliated with a team must not wear team-affiliated clothing at the event.
- If team swag is present and Judges or Judge Advisors accept the swag, Judges and Judge Advisors must be willing to accept pins and other branding items from all teams.

### Training and Certification

Volunteers must create an account on [www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org) and apply to the role. If you apply to an event role requiring training and certification, the 'Roles Missing Certification' section will appear on your Volunteer Dashboard. Click on 'Review Outstanding Tasks,' then click the 'Resolve' button. This will

take you directly to the training site. Alternately, you may also click on the 'Trainings/Certification' button on the top right of the screen. If you have applied for a role but have not received access to the training, please email [FTCTrainingSupport@firstinspires.org](mailto:FTCTrainingSupport@firstinspires.org). A separate confirmation of the role assignment will come later.

Judge Advisor Pre-event Training List	
Requirement	Resource
Required	Complete the FIRST Data Protection and Privacy Training in BlueVolt
Required	The Judge Advisor Volunteer Manual (this document)
Required	Read the Competition Manual – specifically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Section 6</a> - Awards</li> <li>• <a href="#">Section 4</a> - Advancement</li> </ul>
Required	Complete the Judge Advisor Certification Test in BlueVolt
Required	Read the Judge Volunteer <a href="#">Manual</a>
Required	Review the <a href="#">Award Terms and Definitions</a>
Required	Review the Judging Questions Bank Document
Required	Review the <a href="#">Conflict-of-Interest Description</a>
Encouraged (New this season)	<p><b>(Judge Advisors Only)</b> <a href="#">Volunteer Q&amp;A System</a> - The Q&amp;A serves as a space for these volunteers to ask questions and receive official answers from FIRST Staff and our Global Key volunteers about the Competition Manual and its expected implementation.</p> <p>To access the Q&amp;A volunteers must have an active <a href="#">FIRST Dashboard account</a>, have applied to volunteer in the specific role for the current season, and have a signed consent and release form.</p>
Encouraged	Attend the monthly <a href="#">Judge Advisor calls</a>
Encouraged	Complete the <a href="#">Strategies for Inspiring Success for All modules</a> .
Optional	Watch the game animation <a href="#">video</a> for a general understanding of the game
Optional	<a href="#">FTC Q&amp;A System</a> - This is a resource for teams; however, you may also find these useful for judging clarifications.

All Volunteers are expected to read and comply with the [Volunteer Handbook](#).

## Roles and Responsibilities

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**FIRST is fun for all.** The most important role of a volunteer is to provide a safe, fun and welcoming environment for all FIRST participants. When executing the duties of your role, always make decisions with the team experience in mind. Ask for help from event leadership if you feel your required duties conflict with the best team experience.

### Judge Advisor

The primary role of a Judge Advisor is to facilitate Judge deliberations and decision-making after all the team interviews have been completed for the day. The Judge Advisor does not take part in the interviews and does not select teams for awards. The Judge Advisor collaborates with the Judges to help guide them in selecting the teams that best fit the award criteria. The Judge Advisor should not bring any outside knowledge of any team to the Judges, unless it occurred at the event, as this can influence their final decisions. The Judge Advisor keeps the group of Judges moving forward with award decisions. The Judge Advisor ensures decisions are made on time, and that scripts are written when needed by the Event Director. Other responsibilities may vary from region to region. This manual will give the Judge Advisor information about many aspects of their role.

The Judge Advisor's role is to make sure all the *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams have a high-quality experience with the judging process. Every team should feel like they were treated fairly and given the opportunity to show the Judges their accomplishments. The key to a high-quality experience is planning well for the event.

### Prerequisites for Judge Advisor

Judge Advisors must be at least **23 years** old, and at least 3 years removed from participating as a student member of a *FIRST* Tech Challenge team. Judge Advisors should have some judging experience with one of the *FIRST* Programs. A person with strong facilitation skills and a thorough understanding of the judging and Judge Advisor role could be an excellent candidate for this role. Judge Advisors who have a team affiliation must disclose that affiliation to the Judging volunteers at the event.

### Philosophy of Judging

*FIRST* recognizes both on-field performance, and the characteristics that help *FIRST* achieve its mission to change the culture by inspiring young people. Competition awards are earned by teams for their ability to play the game, while judged awards celebrate teams mostly for their off-field performance. Please review [Section 6](#) of the Competition Manual to learn more about the award categories.

It is important that both Judges and students have a positive judging experience. The awards are a method *FIRST* uses to inspire students and help provide insight into their future endeavors. The goal of judging is to recognize students for their achievements, help them celebrate their successes, and to cheer them on in their journey through the *FIRST* programs.

### Modeling Gracious Professionalism

As a Judge Advisor, you serve in a visible role at an event. You will guide Judges to celebrate teams and listen to their stories, challenges, and accomplishments that took place throughout the season. Many students see judging interviews as a stressful time, publicly speaking to new people in an unfamiliar environment. Judges are there to put the team at ease by taking notes and asking questions that will allow teams to demonstrate how they have grown throughout the season. It is important for Judge Advisors to help Judges understand the impact that Judges can have on students through their interactions.

Judges are role models who are professionals across many different industries outside of the *FIRST* setting. Judges are important volunteers and are vital to the judging process and are frequently front and center. As such, the Judges actions are very noticeable to teams, coaches, mentors, and parents. While Judges are responsible for determining awards, Judges must never publicly comment about a team's attributes, compare teams, or make comments that would be considered negative or condescending to a team.

Judges are responsible for celebrating the accomplishments of all teams, and while Judges may only be able to award a few teams, Judges act as a cheerleader to all teams in *FIRST* Tech Challenge. You should make sure to keep a professional demeanor in collaborating with the entire Judge crew. A light-hearted, friendly personal style in the interview room and around the pits should help to keep the interactions with everyone, including the teams, friendly and cordial.

## Before the Event

Before the event, Judge Advisors have a list of responsibilities they must complete, the list includes the following actions:

Requirements	
Required	Meet with the Regional Lead Judge Advisor
Required	Meet with the Event Director to build or gather both a <a href="#">Public Schedule</a> and Formal Interview schedule
Required	Determine the time award decisions and scripts must be provided, and who they should be provided to
Required	Get a list of Judges and their contact information from the Event Director or Volunteer Coordinator for the event as early as possible
Required	Communicate with the Judges in advance
Required	With Event Director, determine the role that Judges will play in Opening and Award Ceremonies, and the timeline for each
Required	Judge Advisor selects 2 questions from the Judging Questions document as a baseline for all interviews.
Required	With Event Director, determine physical placement of Judges for Opening and Award Ceremonies
Encouraged	Participate in Monthly Judge Advisor Webinars

### Communicating with Judges Prior to an Event

Judge Advisors should ask the Event Director or the Volunteer Coordinator for a list of Judges assigned to the event. Using this list, Judge Advisors should contact the Judges to communicate the important details about their role. A high-level list of details that should be communicated is included in the table below

Advance Communication Responsibilities
Confirm the responsibilities of the role of a Judge
Ensure the Judges complete the required trainings outlined in the Judge Manual
Ask about <a href="#">Conflict of Interest</a>
Ask about technical expertise the Judges have
Ask if the Judges require any specific accommodations
Ask if the Judges have specific Award preferences (Team Attribute, Think, or Machine, Creativity, or Innovation)
Confirm Judges understand the time commitment
Provide the Judges with an event schedule
Provide the Judges with the time they should arrive
Provide the Judges with the expected time for the event to end
Provide contact information to the Judges so you can be reached on the day of the event.
Advise the Judges about pre-event responsibilities, including additional orientation provided by the Judge Advisor

## Creating the Formal Interview Schedule

The Judge Advisor along with the Event Director and the Lead Robot Inspector is often responsible for building the Formal Interview schedule.

- At a traditional event, judging, robot inspections, and field inspections all happen at the same time, and it is important to leave teams enough time to prepare for each of their scheduled appointments, and to make sure that teams are not double booked.
- At a REMOTE or HYBRID event, judging is held independently of the competition component.

It is important to allow time between interviews for Judges to make and compare notes, to review the portfolio (if provided), fill out the Judging Summary form and Judging [Feedback form](#). The [Feedback Form](#) is not used by Judges during the deliberation process.

- At a traditional event, we recommend 10 minutes for the interview and 10 minutes between interviews, although the event schedule, the number of teams, and the number of judging panels may dictate a longer amount of time.
- For REMOTE and HYBRID Events, it is even more important to allow extra time, both for the interviews themselves, and in between interviews. Consider extending the team interview portion to 15 minutes, to allow for a better flow of conversation between multiple people.

Scheduling Tips for Formal Interviews
Each panel must have at least two Judges
Each panel must spend at least 10 minutes with the team, 15 minutes is recommended. The team will use the first 5 minutes of the interview to make their formal presentation if they have one, without any interruptions.
Each panel must have at least 10 minutes between Formal Interviews to review the portfolio, if provided, and compile their notes to complete both the Judging Summary form and Judging <a href="#">Feedback form</a>
Judges should see at least four teams
Judges must not see more than eight teams <b>For REMOTE Events:</b> Each panel requires at least 30 minutes to complete the judging process from start to finish. Judges should not be scheduled to see more than five teams in a day.
The schedule may include a break or two for the Judges
Prepare the schedule, without deciding panels in advance
Assign panels on the day of the event, using Conflicts of Interest and Judges area of expertise

**Judge Advisors should not assign Judges to interview panels until they fully understand which volunteers might have a [conflict of interest](#) with a team.**

## Training Judges

Whenever possible, we recommend that the Judge Advisor offers additional training for Judges before the event. This will help to clear up any questions the Judges might have, instill confidence in new



Judges, and help you to ensure that the Judges for your event have completed the training provided by *FIRST*. The Judge Advisor can choose to provide this training in any way that is convenient for them.

## Event Day

### Report Time

The Event Director or Volunteer Coordinator will confirm the time you should arrive typically via email the week before the event. In most cases, Judge Advisors should arrive at the earliest time volunteers are told to report.

When you arrive onsite check-in with the volunteer check-in table, or Volunteer Coordinator and Event Director.

### Set-up

Meet with the Event Director to
Get the schedule for the day and note any changes
Discuss queuing path and plan for Formal Interviews – this conversation should include the Lead Queuer
Learn if there are additional teams who are not eligible for award consideration – See Section 4 and <a href="#">Section 6</a> of the Competition Manual
Learn if the event is awarding a Judge’s Choice award
In addition to the awards described in <a href="#">Section 6</a> of the Competition Manual, are other optional awards being given out?
Confirm the timing for playoff matches to determine when award decisions and scripts are due.
Who should receive award scripts?
Where will portfolios and judging feedback forms be returned to the teams?
Who should receive the Award Record Sheet

### Preparing the Interview Rooms

The Judge Advisor should visit the area where interviews will be held. Be sure that the rooms are numbered and marked with a sign, are large enough to fit up to fifteen students, and each has a table and at least two chairs for the Judges (add more chairs if the panels are larger).

### Meet with the Lead Queuer

Go over scheduling expectations and provide a Formal Interview schedule to ensure Queuers understand where teams should go for their interview.

### Preparing the Deliberation Room

The Judge Advisor should check the deliberation room to make sure there are enough chairs for all the Judges, and enough tables (usually set up in a U formation) to accommodate all of the chairs. Additional tables may be added to the deliberation room to hold portfolios, if submitted, and other important paperwork, if applicable.

### Selecting Two Questions to Ask All Teams

A Judge Advisor will collaborate with the Judges to select two questions from the Judging Question Bank which will be the first questions asked to all teams during their interview. One question must be chosen to focus on the Team Attribute category and the second question must focus on the Machine, Creativity, and Innovation category. Asking these two questions ensures consistency across all the Formal Interviews and can be valuable during initial nominations and final deliberations.

After a judging panel asks these two questions, Judges may ask their own questions or use the Judging Question Bank to learn more about a team.

Judge Advisors should remind Judges that they must not ask teams about religion, politics, gender, disabilities, or how the students are doing in school. These topics have no bearing on any *FIRST* award criteria.

### Supplies and Equipment

Supplies for Judges	
Pens	One per Judge plus extras
Clipboards	One per Judge
Lined paper for Judges notes	Several pages per Judge
Projector	One Per deliberation room
Computer	One per deliberation room
Flip Chart/Whiteboard, markers/eraser	Several per deliberation room
Printer	One per deliberation room
Extension Cords and Power Strips	One or more per deliberation room
Safety Glasses/side shields	One pair per judge
Snacks	If not provided by venue (check with Event Director about allergies)
Gum and Mints	If not provided by venue
Coffee/water/soda/juice	If not provided by venue
<a href="#">Judging Packets</a>	One per judge, plus one per JA, one per Judge Advisor Assistant

### Formal Interview Schedule

Provide a Formal Interview Schedule to Pit Admin, Lead Robot Inspector, Field Supervisor, Lead Queuer, and Event Director.

The Judge Advisor should put at least two large flip charts on the wall or utilize a whiteboard and ensure the room has whiteboard or flip chart markers. On the flip charts or whiteboard, create a table with five columns.

As Judges enter the room, ask them to put their name in column A, the teams they are affiliated with in column B, and mark either the technical (column C) or non-technical (column D) column. Panels, seen

in column E, are assigned by the Judge Advisor. Formal Interview panels are assigned after conflicts are known. Award panels are assigned after the first round of deliberations are completed.

Judges Name	Team Affiliations	Technical	Non-Technical	Interview Panel/Award Panel
Frank Smith	323, 14056	X		
Julia Roberge		X		
Jose Alvarez	5893, 12384		X	
Anna Jackson	8933, 862		X	

This table serves as a reminder to all the Judges in the room of where conflicts exist, and which skills each Judge has experience in.

### Judging Packets

The Judge Advisor or Judge Advisor Assistant assembles the judging packets.

Judging Packet Contents	
Competition Match Schedule – may not be available until all teams have checked in	One per Judge
Judging <a href="#">Summary Sheet</a>	One copy per judge, per team, plus extras
Judging <a href="#">Feedback Form</a>	One copy per team, plus extras
Pit Map – if available	One copy per Judge
Event Schedule – with final decision and script deadlines highlighted	One copy per Judge
Judging Question Bank with required questions highlighted	One copy per Judge
Formal Interview schedule, sorted by panel	One copy per judging panel, one copy per queuer, plus extras
<a href="#">Section 6</a> of the Competition Manual	One copy per judging panel
<a href="#">Award Terms and Definitions</a>	One copy per judging panel
<a href="#">Conflict of Interest</a> form and description	Several on hand

### Conduct an Orientation Meeting

An orientation meeting is held before any judging takes place. This gives the Judge Advisor the chance to discuss the day's flow, provide training where needed, and provide the event day schedule. It is also a terrific opportunity for the Judges to see the event layout and where the interviews and deliberations will take place.

This meeting is a good time to inform Judges that no team should be disqualified from award consideration due to an individual's behavior (for example: students, coaches, mentors, or parents) without first contacting the Judge Advisor. If there is team behavior that should be addressed, please follow the steps outlined in the [Team Interaction and Support](#) section of this manual.

The Judge Advisor will ask Judges about any [conflict of interest](#) they have with a team and request that the Judges add their name, affiliated teams, and technical or non-technical experience to the flip chart or whiteboard set up for that information. Conflicts of interest can cause teams to feel the process is not fair, and we strive to avoid any perception of unfairness at *FIRST* Tech Challenge events.

The Judge Advisor should be sure to cover the following topics:

Orientation Meeting Topics
Thank the Judges for volunteering their time and expertise
Go over the schedule for the day
Outline the expectations for the Judges
Give a brief overview of the awards and award criteria
Outline the judging process for the day
Give basic guidelines for interviews
Give the Judges the two required, baseline interview questions and remind Judges that these questions are not optional
Remind Judges that as a part of their role, they should work to put the students at ease. Teams could be extremely nervous about their interview
Leave time for questions

Every judging panel must ask every team two baseline questions. Baseline questions provide Judges with information used to compare teams during the initial nomination process. Baseline questions are not optional and must be asked of every team in the Formal Interview. The questions will be determined in advance by the Judge Advisor and will be given to each judging panel during the morning orientation meeting.

Judge Advisors should remind Judges that teams who have not built a robot or have a robot that has not passed robot inspection are still allowed to participate in judging and are eligible for award consideration.

### Create Formal Interview Panels

The Judge Advisor then assigns Judges to Formal Interview panels, making sure that Judges who are affiliated with teams are not assigned to a panel scheduled to interview those teams, matching experienced Judges with inexperienced Judges, and technical Judges with non-technical Judges.

Once the number of awards has been determined (see [Section 6](#) of the Competition Manual) and confirmed with the Event Director and any Conflicts of Interest disclosed, the Judge Advisor should assign pairs or trios of Judges to interview teams. Judges must not interview teams they have a [conflict of interest](#) with.

When making assignments for the team interviews, keep in mind each Judge's skill set and interests. Try to create interview panels in a way that balances different skill sets and personality types, creating

a broad scope of perspectives among each interview panel. Doing this will create a balance of objectivity when each team is interviewed.

### **Pairing Technical and Non-Technical Judges**

Some of the awards are more technical, while other awards are less technical. Pairing a non-technical Judge with one who is technical to Judge a technical award (or vice versa) can expose each volunteer to learn a new skill. Make sure all the Judges feel comfortable with these assignments before solidifying the assignment. Regardless of their area of expertise (technical or non-technical) Judges should actively participate in all discussions of a team.

### **Pairing Experienced and Inexperienced Judges**

Many events pair experienced Judges with non-experienced Judges. This training or apprentice system allows a new Judge to learn the process with someone who has Judged at other events. Similarly, a new Judge may offer a fresh perspective to a Judge who has volunteered for multiple events.

### **Alumni**

We strongly encourage alumni to volunteer. They have valuable skills, and unique insights, however, it can be difficult, especially for volunteers who recently participated as a team member. It is common for a new alum to personalize their experience and compare the teams at this specific event to what they remember about their team or other teams. All Judges must be 21 years old or older and removed for 3 years from participating as a team student. Volunteers over 18 years old and post-high school may request to be assigned to a Judge role, and the request will be reviewed for consideration by FIRST Headquarters staff.

### **Managing Personality Types**

Within the pool of Judges, there will be many different personality types. One Judge may be more apt to voice their thoughts and opinions, while another Judge may not be so forthcoming with feedback. Try to find ways to match each Judge pair in a way that they complement one another. A Judge who tends to follow the award criteria exactly may be best paired with a Judge who has more subjective views and might see something great about a team that otherwise may not have been noticed.

## **Final Preparations Before Formal Interviews**

After the interview panels are formed, Judge Advisors have a few more items to complete before dismissing Judges to their interview rooms. Many of the sections below are topics or reminders that Judge Advisors should give to Judges before they conduct Formal Interviews.

### **Providing Feedback to Teams**

All teams will receive feedback from the Judges. Judges will conduct the Formal Interview, review the portfolio submitted by the team (if one was submitted), and complete the [Feedback Form](#). One form is filled out per team, but all Judges in a panel should work together to fill out the form.

The Judge Advisor should inform judging panels to complete the Feedback Form immediately following their Formal Interview with the team. No written feedback will be provided outside of the questions asked on the form. While the Feedback Form is an important document used in the judging process, it should not be used as the basis to determine winners or finalists for any awards since the form is only used to gauge a judging panel's first impression of the team.

Judge Advisors should collect all the forms at the conclusion of the Formal Interviews or may elect to delegate the collection of these forms to a different volunteer, for instance a Judge Advisor Assistant. It is important that a Judge Advisor reviews the Feedback Forms to ensure no written feedback is provided. If written feedback was provided, the Judge Advisor should provide the judging panel with a new form.

When filling out the [Feedback Form](#), Judges must not consider content provided outside of the initial Formal Interview. Feedback provided pertains to the first impression teams give to the judging panels in their interview and does not include impressions of their portfolio, if one was submitted.

### **Information Judges Should and Should Not Consider**

Judges should be reminded that they can consider content that is relevant to the current season, and information that a team shares with them during their interview processes. This could include stories from previous seasons that a team shares to illustrate their growth.

If a Judge has knowledge about a team from previous events or previous seasons that is outside of what a team has shared during the event, the information is not relevant to the judging process and should not be a part of the judging discussion.

Judges should be reminded that only a document that is allowed to be considered from a team during a Formal Interview is the portfolio, if one is submitted. Additional handouts, pamphlets, or packets provided by teams should not be considered during this phase of judging and should not be kept with the Judges when a team leaves the room.

In the portfolio, Judges should be reminded not to consider any information found on the cover page of a portfolio or found after the first fifteen pages of content. The cover page is not considered the first page of content. In addition to information outside of the fifteen pages of content, Judges should not follow links, which include QR codes, provided in a portfolio that links to content outside of fifteen pages of content. Please refer to [Section 6](#) of the Competition Manual for a full description of what is allowed and not allowed in a team's portfolio.

### **Artificial Intelligence in FIRST Tech Challenge**

Teams are permitted and encouraged to use AI to assist in the creation of their portfolio and in their robot code. A team who uses all the tools available to them can be an important aspect to discovery and innovation and is a valuable part of the learning and growth process for teams. *FIRST* views AI resources as tools available to students in the same way that CAD programs, programming languages, and 3D printers are tools available for their use. Teams using AI to assist with code or content generation are expected to provide proper credit and attribution, and respect intellectual property rights and licenses. Proper credit could look like this: "Portfolio Content created, or code enhanced by Team 1000 and ChatGPT."

### **Other Considerations for Portfolios**

Judges who receive a portfolio without a team name and number on the cover page should instruct the team to add the information onto the front of the document. This enables Judges to help associate a portfolio with a specific team.

If Judges have questions or concerns about language or content they have found in the portfolio, they should speak with the Judge Advisor. In this situation, the Judge Advisor must contact the *FIRST* Support Line at 603 206 2412 to get further guidance.

Judges may not disqualify a portfolio or a team from Judging consideration without discussion with the Judge Advisor. Judge Advisors must never disqualify a team from consideration without calling the *FIRST* support line. No event official has the authority to disqualify a team from consideration from judging without a consultation with the *FIRST* on call staff.

For awards that do not require a Portfolio, the portfolio carries equal weight to what the team has discussed, displayed, or demonstrated with or to the Judges.

During the Formal Interview, Judges should focus their attention on engaging with the team, listening to their presentation, if they have one, and participating in the Q&A session. A portfolio, if submitted, should be reviewed after the Formal Interview has concluded and the team has left the room. The Formal Interview schedule will have time set aside between interviews to review the portfolio and complete all of the necessary paperwork.

### **Supporting Judges During Formal Interviews**

While the Judges are responsible for interviewing teams through the Formal Interviews, it is important that the Judge Advisor remains available to help Judges with any questions they may have about the process or content they observed during the interviews.

The Judge Advisor should inform Judges how they can reach out and ask for help. This can be accomplished by including routine visits with all the interview panels, where Judge Advisors check on the panels in between interviews, or by identifying a volunteer who may be present near the interview rooms that can contact the Judge Advisor. This volunteer may be a Judge Advisor Assistant, Queuer, or other volunteer.

### **Initial Nominations**

Immediately following the Formal Interview process, Judges return to the deliberation room to nominate teams for Award Categories.

#### **The Inspire Award**

Make sure you do NOT select teams for the Inspire Award during the nomination process. Nominate teams for the categories where they best meet the award criteria.



Judges, working in a panel with other Judges, will have a short list of teams that they have interviewed who have met the criteria for each award. Generally, each Formal Interview panel will be asked to provide up to 2 nominations for each award (except for the Inspire Award).

The required criteria can be found in [Section 6](#) of the Competition Manual.

The short list could look like this:

Think Award	Connect Award	Innovate Award	Control Award	Motivate Award	Design Award
A	A	A	A	A	A
B	B	B	B	B	B
		C	C	C	C
D	D	D	D	D	D
E	E	E	E	E	E
F	F	F	F	F	F
G	G	G	G	G	G
H	H	H	H	H	H
I	I	I	I	I	I
J	J	J	J	J	J

After Judges have made their initial nominations, the Judge Advisor reviews the list and identifies teams with a portfolio who have also been nominated for at least one Team Attribute award, and at least one Machine Creativity and Innovation award. These teams are added to the Think column as well. In the example above, if Team C submitted a portfolio, they would be added to the Think Award column because they were nominated for at least one award in both categories.

Important: The Judge Advisor, working with the Event Director, will determine in advance how many awards will be presented. This is based on the number of teams registered for the event. Please see [Section 6](#) of the Competition Manual for more information.

### Create Specialized Award Panels

Once the Formal Interviews have been completed, and initial nominations have taken place, it is time to reorganize the Judges into panels for each award. The Judge Advisor should already have a good idea of each Judge's skills and interests. Each specialized panel will be responsible for deciding on the winner and finalist (if applicable) for the award they have been assigned to.

The Judge Advisor should match the Judge panels with the specific award that fits the skills and interests the Judges provided for the pre-event. Judge Advisors should not place Judges on a panel



solely because a Judge has a strong wish to be a part of that award panel. A technical Judge should be paired with a technical award such as the Control Award, while a non-technical Judge may feel more comfortable assigned to the Connect Award. It is possible that a Judge panel may be assigned to review the nominations for multiple awards.

Whenever possible, Judges who have direct conflicts of interest with teams at the event should be assigned to the Judges' Choice award panel, if the award is available. These Judges will interview the teams who have not been nominated for awards in the pits to learn more about their accomplishments in consideration for a Judge's Choice award.

In instances where it is not possible to remove Judges with conflicts of interest from the pit interview or deliberation process, the Judge Advisor must be diligent in watching for and managing bias, the perception that Judges are advocating for or against teams in award categories, or other concerns about the fairness and integrity of the judging process. Judge Advisors are encouraged to call the *FIRST* staff support person on call if they have any concerns about conflicts or the integrity of the process. The staff support number can be found at the end of this manual.

### Next Steps After Forming Award Panels

After award panels are established, there are a few activities that Judges may perform to create their final rankings. Depending on the award, a Judge may perform only one activity or may use any combination of the following activities: reviewing portfolios, conducting pit interviews, and/or observing matches.

As a Judge Advisor, it is important to remind all award panels when they need to have their final decisions and report back to the deliberation room. If an award panel is using pit interviews to assist in the decision-making process, a Judge Advisor should provide each panel with a [pit map](#), if available, and a [match schedule](#). The pit map will help Judges locate teams and the match schedule will help Judges understand when a team may be queuing for a match, competing in a match, or available for an interview in the pits.

Prior to the start of pit interviews or observing a match, the Judge Advisor should remind Judges to be mindful of what information may be available to teams, either through written notes or verbal conversations between Judges. To prevent the inadvertent disclosure of deliberation information, the following practices should be followed:

- Judges should conceal any written notes with a cover page (for example, a blank piece of paper) to prevent any one from reading notes over the Judge's back or reading upside down (when face-to-face with teams).
- Judges should be careful when talking to other Judges. During pit interviews and observing matches, it may be necessary to hold an informal discussion about a specific team, or how one team compares to another team. If these conversations need to take place, Judges should find a place that is away from the teams, coaches, mentors, and parents to prevent anyone from overhearing these discussions.

After Judges are dismissed by the Judge Advisor to review portfolios, conduct pit interviews, and/or observe matches, the role of the Judge Advisor may vary event-to-event. Judge Advisors may be in the deliberation room, or may be in the pits, checking on the progress of pit interviews and obtaining

feedback from field personnel. A future section will describe the process of soliciting feedback from volunteers.

Since the Judge Advisor may leave the deliberation room, remember to never leave the deliberation room unattended and have a method to conceal any deliberation notes that may be displayed on flip charts, a whiteboard, or projector. This may be as simple as putting an empty flip chart over nominations written on a wall or locking your computer's display. Having a method to obscure the deliberation notes will help avoid the possibility of someone who is not a Judge walking into the room and having access to the nomination lists.

### **Reviewing Portfolios**

Award panels can review the portfolios of any team that is on their nomination list. The portfolio is only required for the Control Award, the Think Award, and the Inspire Award. A portfolio is optional for all other awards. Judges may find it beneficial to review the portfolios to form a list of questions, but the priority should be conducting pit interviews, with the exception being the Think Award panel.

The Think Award Judges review the portfolios of each team on the Think Award list and compare their contents to the criteria for the award. Think Award Judges may need to interview teams in their pit area to evaluate the encouraged criteria, if needed, to help them better understand the portfolio content.

### **Ensuring All Teams an Opportunity for a Pit Interview**

Pit interviews are an important component of judging in *FIRST* Tech Challenge. The interviews are conducted as an informal question and answer session with the team and allow Judges to gain valuable insights about a team that may not have been present in the Formal Interview or in the portfolio if one was submitted. Pit interviews also allow Judges to ask questions to explore details that make a team a nominee for one or more awards. All teams will have the opportunity to participate in a pit interview, regardless of the number of nominations that they have received and regardless of their participation in a Formal Interview.

As a Judge Advisor, it is important to review the list of teams and the nominations and determine which teams have not been nominated for any award. Teams who are not nominated for any Judged award may not have the opportunity to be interviewed by the Judges in the pits. As previously mentioned, those teams may be eligible for a pit interview for the Judge's Choice award, if it is awarded. Judge Advisors should also pay attention to teams who have been nominated only for the Think Award, since Judges in that award panel may not have time to visit the pits after they finish reviewing portfolios.

A Judge Advisor should compile a list of teams who have not been nominated for any award or may have been nominated for the Think Award. To ensure each team has the opportunity to be visited at least once in the pits, Judge Advisors may add a few teams from this list to one or more award panels to ensure a pit interview is conducted with all teams.

Judge Advisors should remind Judges that it is important that they visit every team on their list and recognize and celebrate the work the team has done. Team interactions with Judges are a valuable part of the *FIRST* experience!

### **Observing Matches**

Some award panels may be asked to observe robot game matches to understand robot performance, and the contribution of their design, control, or innovative solutions they have described. The robot's

performance is not related to the win/loss record or their ranking in the robot competition. The match schedule will help Judges understand where and when teams are playing their matches. Judges should be aware of where they are standing. Referees need to be focused on the field, and Audio/Visual volunteers who have cameras need to be focused on streaming and projected images. Please do not stand in their way.

### Feedback from Field Personnel

As the Judge Advisor, it is important to regularly check in with other key volunteers about interactions they may have had with teams throughout the day. Often volunteers such as head referees, pit administrators, or queuers may have feedback about a team – good or bad – that they would like to share. Sometimes these volunteers cannot leave their respective areas of the competition, so it is best to try to visit as many of these volunteers as possible. These visits should not be limited to the end of the day. If a volunteer has concerns about a team, the Judge Advisor should make sure that the information being relayed is first-hand information, rather than rumor.

Ask broad questions such as “Have you met any teams that you would like to share information about with me?” Keeping questions open-ended ensures the feedback is not driven in any way. The field personnel can respond to any team they would really like the Judge Advisor to know about.

Talk with the Event Director or Volunteer Coordinator if any of the field personnel have conflicts of interest with teams competing at the event. Knowing this ahead of time will help the Judge Advisor keep the feedback in context when speaking with an event volunteer who may have a team competing at the event.

If there is team behavior that should be addressed, please follow the steps outlined in the [Team Interaction and Support](#) section of this manual.

### Final Deliberations and Allocating Awards

After the portfolio reviews, pit interviews, and match observations are complete, the Judge Advisor serves a key role in the judging process as a facilitator of the final deliberations and awards allocation process. This section will outline the process and important principles that should be followed to ensure as many teams as possible are recognized for their hard work.

Judges, working in a panel with other judges, will have a short list of teams that have done a deeper evaluation for each of the awards except for Inspire.

### Create Nominations for each Award

Each award panel will rank the teams, and depending on how many awards will be given out the ranking can be the top five teams to the top eight teams. It is ok for there to be ties at this point.

The goal is to have an equitable distribution of award winners and finalists with no team being mentioned more than once for all judged awards during the Award Ceremony. A team may be mentioned for a judged award and also receive a competition award (for example, Winning Alliance Captain).

In the example below, we are only assigning winners with no second or third choice award mentions. The same methodology is used at events where finalists are determined.

Award Category:		Think	Team Attribute		MCI		
Rank		Think Award	Connect Award	Motivate Award	Innovate Award	Control Award	Design Award
1st		G	A	C	E	I	E
2nd		A	G	A & D	B	B & D	B
3rd		B	B		D		I
4th		D	F	B & G	J	H	D
5th		I	D		G	A	A

This is the information that only the Judges and Judge Advisor have. *FIRST* does not allow this information to be shared.

The advancement order of awards can be found in Section 4 of the Competition Manual. The number of awards given is based on the number of teams participating at the event.

### Recognition Principles

Judges must not list the same teams as award finalists in multiple award categories. No teams should be listed more than once for any Judged Award, nor may they be listed as a winner or finalist for a Judged award. If the Judge Advisor has questions about this, or has difficulty with identifying unique teams, they must contact *FIRST*'s on call support line for guidance.

New this season: The number of Awards given at each event is scaled for the number of teams participating in the event. Please see [Section 6](#) of the Competition Manual for more information.

As a group, the focus should be on celebrating exceptional work and celebrating as many teams and students as possible. The next few sections of this manual will demonstrate how to apply the recognition principles mentioned above.

Judges should determine awards based on the award criteria, and on the order of advancement to the next level of competition. The Inspire Award winner is the first team to advance from any level of event. The next teams to advance are:

- Captain of the Winning Alliance
- Winning Alliance Partner

The full Advancement order can be found in [Section 4](#) of the Competition Manual.

### Selecting the Inspire Award Candidates

From this list, the Inspire Award candidates are selected, based on the number of times they appear in the initial nominations for the other awards. All the Inspire candidates must appear in the Think category, at least one Machine, Creativity, Innovation category, and in at least one Team Attributes category. This is important and required. Inspire Award teams are strong contenders as an all-around team, which requires a nomination in both types of categories to meet that award requirement. This will form the initial nominees for the Inspire Award. The Judge Advisor will form the initial Inspire Award Nomination List based on these requirements. Once this list is created, record where teams are nominated for clarity later.

Category:		Think	Team Attribute	MCI	MCI	Team Attribute	MCI	# Awards a team is ranked in	Sum of the highest rank per category for teams that are in Top 5 rank in all the 3 categories
Team		Think Award Rank	Connect Award Rank	Innovate Award Rank	Control Award Rank	Motivate Award Rank	Design Award Rank		
A		2	1	-	5	2	5	5	$2+1+5 = 8$
B		3	3	2	2	4	2	6	$3+3+2 = 8$
C				-	-	1	-	1	
D		4	5	3	2	2	4	6	$4+2+2 = 8$
E		-	-	1	-	-	1	2	
F		-	4	-	-	-	-	1	
G		1	2	5	-	-	-	3	$1+2+5 = 9$
H		-	-	-	4	5	-	2	
I		5	-	-	1	-	3	3	
J		-	-	4	-	-	-	1	

From the initial nominations, record which teams show up in more than one award category and which categories. Teams should show up in the portfolio category, MCI category and TA category as this demonstrates a well-balanced team for the Inspire Award.

In the example above, there are four teams that are ranked in the top five across all categories: A, B, D, and G. Of these teams, G is the weakest as it is only ranked in 1 TA and one MCI category. The other six teams are not ranked in all three categories.

The last column is a measure of strength - it is the highest rank for the team in that category. Team A for example is ranked 1st and 2nd in Team Attributes so they get a "1" for that category. It is just a point of reference as you look for overall stronger teams across as many awards as possible and then strength within a category. This allows you to compare teams more easily where they may show up in only one award in either the MCI or TA categories.

### Allocating the Inspire Award

Once the judging panels have their top five teams ranked, use this information to help determine your Inspire Award 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners. Use this information to determine if you can eliminate any teams from contention for the Inspire Award or if Judges need to go back and interview the teams in the pits.

Category:		Think	Team Attribute	MCI	MCI	Team Attribute	MCI		# Awards a team is ranked in	Sum of the highest rank per category for teams that are in Top 5 rank in all the 3 categories
Team		Think Award Rank	Connect Award Rank	Innovate Award Rank	Control Award Rank	Motivate Award Rank	Design Award Rank			
A		2	4	-	5	2	5		5	2+1+5 = 8
B		3	3 WINNER	2	2	4	2		6	3+3+2 = 8
C				-	-	1 WINNER	-		1	
D		4	5	3	2	2	4 WINNER		6	4+2+2 = 8
E		-	-	1 WINNER	-	-	4		2	
F		-	4	-	-	-	-		1	
G		1 WINNER	2	5	-	-	-		3	1+2+5 = 9
H		-	-	-	4	5	-		2	
I		5	-	-	1 WINNER	-	3		3	
J		-	-	4	-	-	-		1	

### Equitable Distribution of Awards

In the example above, award conflicts have been removed, and decisions are made based on the teams remaining in each category.

Reminder – Teams may not receive more than one Judged award. Award winners must not be listed as a finalist for any other award. Teams may only be mentioned one time as an award finalist.

### End of the Day

After all the awards have been allocated, there are a few closing actions that need to be completed prior to the conclusion of an event.

### Record Keeping

When the awards have been decided, a crucial step is for the Judge Advisor to record the winners and finalists for all awards. This information should also be captured in the scoring system. This information will be provided to the scorekeeper or the Event Director later. Filling in an Awards Record Sheet should be done carefully by the Judge Advisor and then reviewed by the Judge Advisor assistant to ensure the data is correct. Extra care should be taken to ensure team names and team numbers are correct. It is easy to transpose team numbers, but this will cause confusion during the award ceremony.

The contents of the Awards Record Sheet should be treated as a closely held secret until after the award ceremony. Access should only be shared with the Scorekeeper, Judge Advisor Assistant, Event Director, and Emcee.

Pro-tip: The Judge Advisor or Judge Advisor Assistant should either take a photocopy of the sheet or use a mobile phone to take a picture of the sheet. It is easy to misplace this sheet and trying to reproduce this information later can be difficult.

As the Judge Advisor, you will usually pass the Award Record Sheet to the correct individual entrusted during the pre-event meeting with your Event Director. This is typically the Scorekeeper so the information can be entered into the scoring system. If in doubt, the Scorekeeper can be given the list since they will eventually need it.

### **Returning Documents to Teams**

At traditional events, Judge Advisors should collaborate with the Judges to collect all of the Judging Feedback Forms and team portfolios that were submitted. If a portfolio was submitted, the Feedback Form should be included inside of the portfolio or loosely attached to the outside of the portfolio, using a paperclip or other method. The Judge Advisor should work with the Judges to ensure no deliberation or other judging notes have been included with the portfolios and Judging Feedback Forms. Judge Advisors should work with the Event Director to determine when and where documents will be returned to teams. It is important to make sure that Feedback Forms are not accessible to teams before the awards are presented.

After a remote event, the Lead Coach/Mentor 1 for the team will receive a Judging Feedback Form completed by the event Judges.

### **Awards and Closing Ceremony**

Once the awards have been decided, and the award scripts have been written, the Judges will attend the awards and closing ceremony. At most events, the Judges will join the rest of the event volunteers and take part in the award ceremony.

When it comes time to announce the finalists and winners of each award, the Judges line up to applaud and congratulate the award winners. When the winner of each award is announced, the team will come up to the stage to pick up their trophy.

### **Notes Taken During Judging**

Notes that Judges take during interviews and deliberations should be treated as confidential and left with the Judge Advisor at the end of the day for secure disposal. This includes notes taken electronically. Under no circumstances are notes to be shared with people who are not a part of the judging pool, either intentionally or by accident. Notes should be disposed of in a manner that prevents the disclosure of any information to teams and other volunteers who did not serve on the judging panel.

### **Team Interaction and Support**

When interacting with teams please always consider the team's perspective. The teams have put significant time and effort into preparing for this event and may be feeling stressed about everything working out as they have planned. **Today is a very big deal for the team and we are here to help!**



While it is our job to help guide the teams to a successful event, it is their responsibility to follow the rules and be on time for judging and matches.

If you feel there is an issue with an individual or individuals from a team that warrants specific intervention beyond just a kind reminder, please ensure the correct stakeholders for the team are aware. Here is a generally acceptable process when working with a student or team who you need to change their behavior:

The ABCs of Managing Team Behaviors	
<b><u>A</u>sk for an Adult</b>	Do not directly reprimand a student one-on-one without an adult from their team present. Ask the student to bring an adult who is responsible for the team to meet you, before moving forward with any discussion about the concerns at hand.
<b><u>B</u>e aware of the Environment</b>	Is the environment conducive for the feedback you are about to give? Is it loud in the area where you are? Are there other teams around that may hear the reprimand? Moving the conversation to a quieter, more private space as needed can be helpful.
<b>(Offer a) <u>C</u>lear Explanation</b>	Explain the concern to the team and offer clear examples of the behavior that is concerning.
<b><u>D</u>iscuss any Questions</b>	Offer the opportunity for students and adults to ask clarifying questions
<b><u>E</u>xplain Next Steps</b>	Outline with the students and adults what the next steps are if the issue is not corrected. Certain behaviors may include the risk of yellow cards

**Note:** the only person at an event who can give an official warning or issue a yellow/red card is the head referee. Please refer these more severe issues to the Head Referee and notify the Program Delivery Partner.

Be cautious about passing on any negative feedback about any teams directly to the Judges or a Judge Advisor because it is not possible to know all the contributing factors around such a complaint or observation. If there are issues which are repeated or egregious follow the [Non-Medical Incident Reporting](#) process and inform the Program Delivery Partner. The Judge Advisor may seek feedback from the Event Director to determine if there is any relevant information to provide the Judges for their evaluation process.

Teams may only be completely disqualified from awards consideration for exceedingly rare egregious actions and only with approval from FIRST HQ. The Event Director and/or JA should call the on-call number to discuss the issue.



## Emergencies

The Program Delivery Partner, Event Director and the event host organization are responsible for having safety and security plans in place for each event. Included in the plan should be topics such as:

- A map of all the emergency exits.
- Knowledge of where on-site medical support is located.
- Shelter in place plans in case of severe weather.
- Evacuation plans.

Teams should have their own safety plans before attending the event. *FIRST* provides a few resources to help teams plan including:

- [Team Member Safety at Events](#)
- [Preparing to Safely Attend a \*FIRST\* Event](#)

Two important links to have handy are the issue reporting link and Youth Protection Policy pages:

### Report a Concern



[www.firstinspires.org/report](http://www.firstinspires.org/report)

### Youth Protection Policy



[www.firstinspires.org/ypp](http://www.firstinspires.org/ypp)

## Lost Children

*FIRST* Tech Challenge events can be very hectic, and it can be easy for a child to get lost amongst the shuffle of a busy event. Ensure you have a plan prior to the event in the instance of a lost child.

In some cases, the team roster will list Coach phone numbers which can be used to reunite team members, in some regions they collect “Day-of” cell phone numbers from each team at check in. Coordinate your plan with your Program Delivery Partner.

Code Adam Guidelines ([www.missingkids.com/CodeAdam](http://www.missingkids.com/CodeAdam)) are also a great resource.

## Medical Incident Reporting

Even volunteers are not responsible for diagnosing students, handing out medication, or first aid equipment. You and other event volunteers should refer medical issues and emergencies to a medical professional on site, such as an EMT. If an incident or illness occurs at an event, the Event Director, pit administrator, or another trained delegate should do the following:

- Call 911 if there is any question that the injured person/persons require medical attention.
- Respond to the scene immediately. Bring a clipboard, pen, or a tablet to complete the incident report on the [FIRST Reporting Portal](#).
- Complete the incident report for the injured party.

The Event Director or pit administration volunteers are responsible for completing incident reports. The incident reporting person should follow the best practices for incident reporting:

Best Practices for Incident Reporting	
<b>Be Calm</b>	Anyone managing incident reporting should have a calm demeanor. They should be able to collect information and talk to witnesses without assessing fault
<b>Be Concise</b>	In all conversations with the injured, witnesses, spectators, and/or media always say "the incident is being investigated" without any further comment. It is not the job of the report collector to provide any opinions on the situation at hand.
<b>Be Risk Conscious</b>	Do not imply liability or any payment, as no one knows for sure until all the facts are collected.
<b>Be Prepared</b>	Those taking in incident reports should be able to communicate with the insurance company if necessary. They should also be aware of who they need to share incidents with, including the local Program Delivery Organization or the Event Director.

Although most incidents will not result in a claim, it is better to act on the side of caution and report them. Should an incident result in a claim after the event, the documents will be on file, complete with witnesses and a written report.

### Non-Medical Incident Reporting

Issues that are non-medical but are of a concern to a participant/participants should be reported. Anything that happens during an event that made a volunteer, team member or spectator feel uncomfortable or threatened should be addressed.

As appropriate and if you feel safe doing to, speak directly to the offending party and try to defuse the immediate issue quickly and calmly. Call the Event Director and/or the Program Delivery Partner and inform them of the issue and seek assistance as needed with any immediate remediation of the issue.

Ensure all issues are reported in a timely manner using the [FIRST Reporting Portal](#). Have the participants select the correct category for their report:

- **Youth Protection Concern:** encompasses a wide variety of one-time or ongoing issues such as suspected abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination, questionable behavior, or violation to the FIRST Code of Conduct. Must involve a youth participate otherwise use the 'other' category.
- **Other:** For issues which do not fall under the Medical or Youth Protection Concern Categories.

### Safety

An important priority for all volunteers is to observe their event areas to help promote a safe and orderly space for all the participants. It is likely that various volunteers and event participants will bring concerns to your attention, but you should also be proactive in identifying areas of concern.

Prioritize collaborating with the teams to help identify and correct potential safety issues in the area. Please review the section about

[Team Interaction and](#) Support for the best ways to collaborate with teams on making changes.

### **Safety Glasses and Closed Toe Shoes**

All volunteers, teams, coach/mentors, and spectators are required to have safety glasses and wear closed toe shoes while in the pit and competition areas. It is important to watch out for anyone entering these areas without proper personal protective Equipment (PPE) and to ask them to put on proper PPE before entering. Some events will have volunteers staffed at the pit entrance with spare safety glasses to pass out. Other events may not have spares to provide.

### **Pit Spaces**

Specific rules governing what teams can have and do in their pit space are covered in the game manual, but the Event Directors may add additional restrictions which must be published before the event based on limitations set by the venue.

Common areas where teams need help to stay safe and within the rules:

- No open flames or sparks
- Power tools are permitted as long as they are not causing damage to the venue.
- Aisles, walkways, and doors should be clear of obstructions.
- Teams may set up practice spaces if they are fully within their designated space.
- No structure may be taller than 10'

## **After the Event**

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After the Event, the Judge Advisor should double-check the deliberation and interview rooms to make sure no notes have been left behind.

If the Judge Advisor has contact information from the Judges that participated in the event, a thank you email should be sent. Alternately, the Volunteer Coordinator or Event Director could send a thank you.

## Important Tools

### Public Schedule

The Program Delivery Partner or the Event Director should publish the public schedule of events before the event. This schedule will have a high-level overview of all the activities for the event. It is important that everyone at the event does their best to stay true to the public schedule so that teams and volunteers who have planned their day around these times have a good experience.

*Figure 1: Sample Public Schedule for a Typical FIRST Tech Challenge Event*

Time	Agenda
7:15am	Doors Open for Volunteers
8:00am	Doors Open for Teams
8:30am	Judging & Inspection Commences
10:35am	Inspection Deadline
10:40am	Opening Ceremony & Driver's Meeting
11:00am	Qualification Matches Commence
12:00am	Lunch Time
12:30pm	Qualification Matches Resume
3:15pm	Alliance Selection
3:45pm	Elimination Matches
5:30pm	Closing Ceremony, Awards and Advancement Announcement

On occasion things that happen out of the event's control may impact the schedule. In these cases, work closely with the Event Director to understand the updated agenda.

### Registered Teams List

The Registered Teams list should come from your Event Director.

### Volunteer Roster

A Volunteer Roster should come from your Volunteer Coordinator or Event Director.

### Event Layout/Map

The Program Delivery Partner and Event Director should publish a map of the venue before the event. In some cases, details on the map might not be available until the day of the event.

The Event Layout / Map should detail the following:

- Load-In Path
- Parking for Personal Vehicles and Busses
- Team Check-in
- Volunteer Check-in
- Competition Area
- Pit Area (May include the [Pit Map](#))
- Judging Room Locations (if applicable)
- Safety Details as available (Emergency Exits, AED, Shelter in Place Locations)

## Judging Schedule

A sample of what a Judging Schedule could look like:

Team Number	8:00	8:20	8:40	9:00	9:20	9:40
100	Panel 1					
101	Panel 2					
102	Panel 3					
103	Panel 4					
104		Panel 1				
105		Panel 2				
106		Panel 3				
107		Panel 4				
108			Panel 1			
109			Panel 2			
110			Panel 3			
111			Panel 4			
112				Panel 1		
113				Panel 2		
114				Panel 3		
115				Panel 4		
116					Panel 1	
117					Panel 2	
118					Panel 3	
119					Panel 4	
120						Panel 1
121						Panel 2
122						Panel 3
123						Panel 4

## Match Schedule

The match list will be generated the day of the event after the teams have been confirmed. This schedule will list which teams will play in which Alliance (Red or Blue) and it will also list a match start time see Figure 2. Some events will have more than one competition field and/or more than one division and each division will have its own schedule.

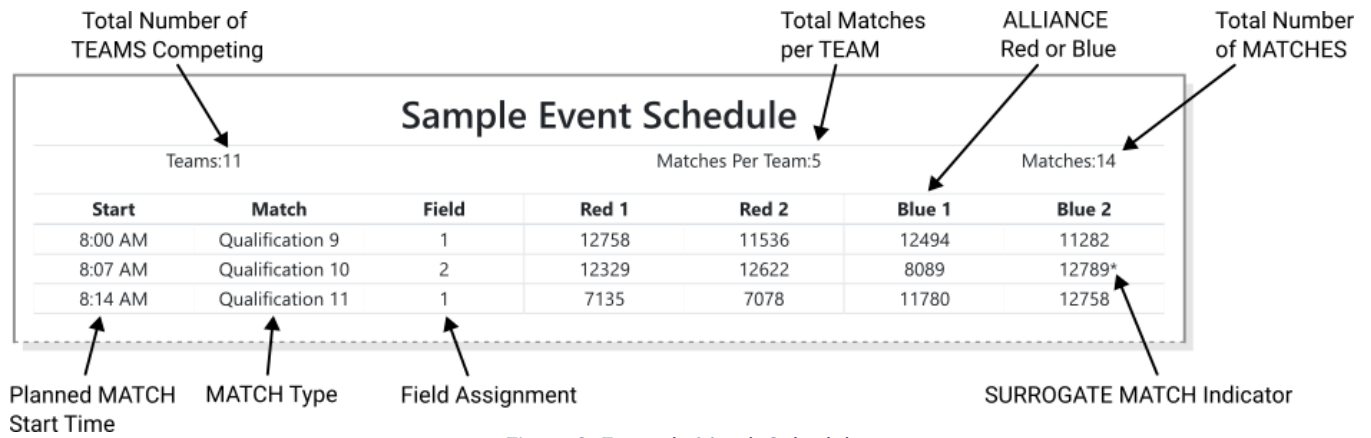


Figure 2: Example Match Schedule

## Pit Map

Pit maps are typically provided by either the Event Director or by the scorekeeper. Having a map of where each team is in the pit is key, as teams, parents or queuers might need to find. Below are two sample pit maps in Figure 3 and Figure 4:

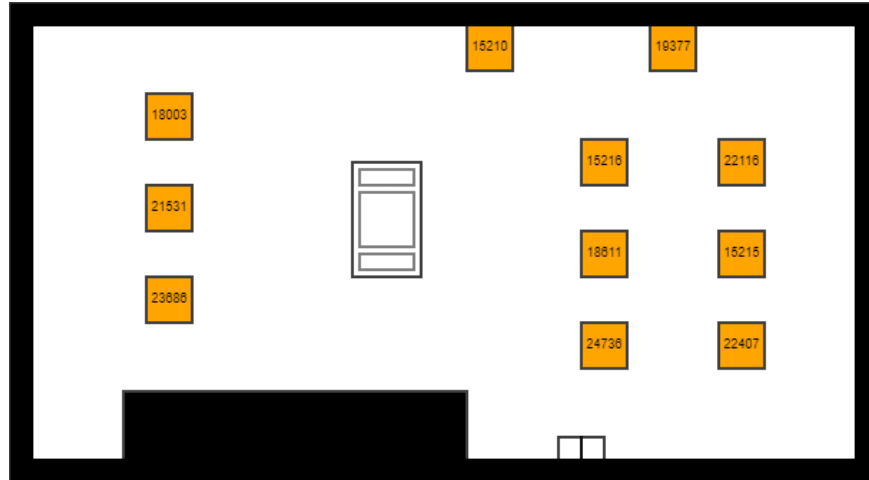


Figure 3: Example Pit Map for a small 12-team Qualifier Event

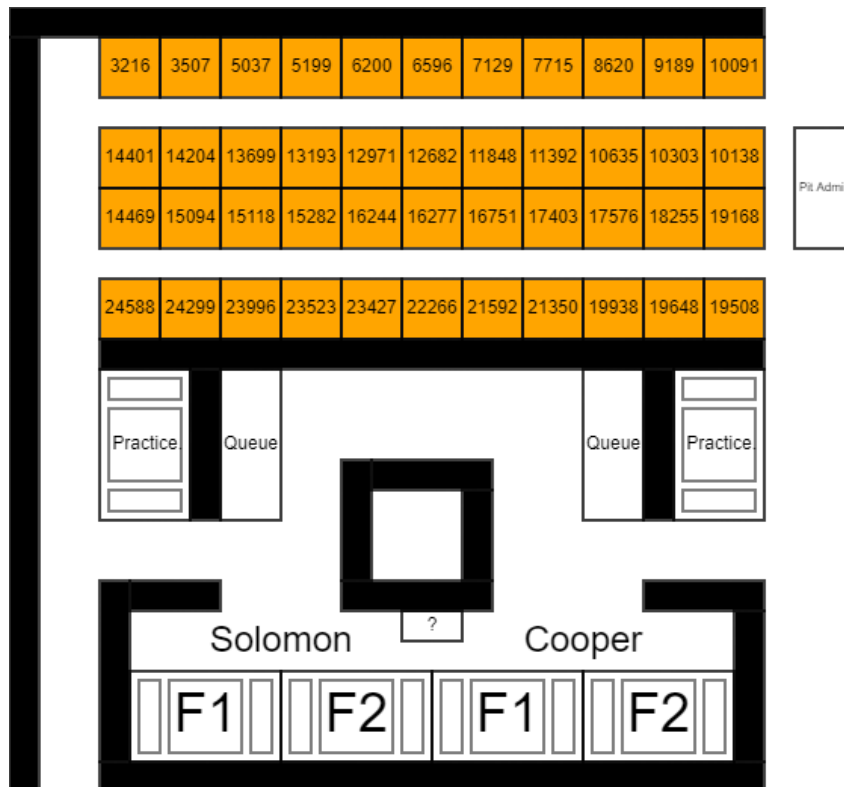


Figure 4: Example Pit Map for a Typical Regional Championship Event

## Useful Links and Information

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### On-Call Support Numbers

#### On-Call Support

These numbers are for *volunteer support only*. Teams should not use these numbers to call about rulings or technical assistance.

Administrative, Judge, Referee and Non-Technical Issues: (603)206-2412

Scoring System (FTC Live) or other Technical Issues: (603)206-2450  
Call or use the built-in chat feature on FTC Live

### Pre-Event Support

Mon – Fri 8:30am – 5:00pm Eastern Time (UTC-4 or UTC-5)  
Phone: (603)666-3906  
Email: [firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org](mailto:firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org)

### Program Resources



[FIRST Tech Challenge Website](#)



[Event Search](#)



[Game and Season Resources](#)



[FIRST Tech Challenge Blog](#)



[Volunteer Resources](#)



[Team Email Blasts](#)

### Feedback

We strive to create support materials that are the best they can be. If you have feedback about this manual, please email [firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org](mailto:firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org). Thank you!