



Frequently Asked Questions

Judging

Is there a clear, standardized explanation of the judging process?

Yes, those can be found in several places. The [Mentor Manual](#) has information under pages 39-41, the [Competition Manual](#) under Section 6, and the [Judges](#) and [Judge Advisor](#) manuals.

Does only one team advance from a judging room?

No. More than one team often advances from the same room.

Do judges stop evaluating teams after they leave a judging room?

No. Teams will still be evaluated during the following times

- The 10-minute period after the interview has concluded and the teams have left
- Initial deliberations
- Pit Interviews
- Game Play
- Final Deliberations

For more information, look in the [Judges Manual](#) under page 5.

Do teams miss out on interviewing for an award if they aren't available for a pit interview?

No. Teams will still get the opportunity to interview for an award after they have returned to their pit. Judges will make an effort to interview all teams in the pits. This is found in the [Judges Manual](#) on page 6.

If the allotted pit interview time is drawing to a close, judges may talk to teams in the game queue. Please talk to the judges if they approach you in the queue, or take them to the members who can answer their questions. - Judges cannot extend pit interview time because they have to have decisions and scripts in the system by the time alliance selection ends.

Can judges provide meaningful, clear, and concise feedback to teams?

Not at official qualifiers or events. Teams mentioned having written feedback in the past, which is true. However, in previous seasons, the written feedback was limited by FIRST to the quality of the presentation, not on the content. While the feedback forms this season comment on content, judges are still restricted from giving written feedback.

These are FIRST's rules, not Utah's. If we deviate too far from FIRST's rulings, our qualifiers and championship can get nullified by FIRST. If that happens, we could lose our advancement tickets.

Scrimmages, build days, and similar non-advancing events may choose to provide written feedback. That is up to the event host.

We have been made aware of incomplete feedback forms and are requesting FIRST make updates to the feedback forms to stop this from happening. Specifically, we asked them to add a function that prohibits incomplete forms from being submitted.

Gracious Professionalism

How are people made aware of Gracious Professionalism issues?

- Gracious Professionalism is still the heart of the competition. Here is the basic information:
- If there are issues with Gracious Professionalism off the field, the **coach** will be made aware of the issue to relay to their **team**.
- If there are issues on the field, the **Head Referee** will make the **students** aware of the problem. It will go to the **coach** if the behavior continues, and may result in penalties or a yellow/red card.
- Any issues will be kept between the **team, coach, and volunteer**; with the exception of yellow/red cards, infractions will not be announced to the **teams** or **general public**.

How do I report Gracious Professionalism issues?

Here are ways to go about reporting Gracious Professionalism issues during an event.

- **Volunteers**
 - Go to your **head volunteer** and they will report to the event host
- **Team Member**
 - Go to the question box and speak with the **Head Referee**.
- **Coach**
 - Send a **team member** to the question box. Another **team member, coach, or mentor** can accompany the team member. The **Head Ref** is only allowed to talk to the one person in the question box.
 - If you would like to not go through a team member, the **coach** should go to Pit Admin.
- **Audience**
 - Go to a **coach** and they will bring it to the appropriate place.

Remember, the person needs to go to the appropriate person during the event within a timely manner (within 10-15 minutes after the incident). It is difficult or impossible to resolve issues after the event ends.

Advancements

Advancements have seen the biggest change this year, alongside the introduction of Premier Events. This was the pilot year for Premier Events, and the application process is due for change. FIRST will be changing the application process, but as of March 31, 2025, we are unclear what changes will be made.

Why did the advancement order change this season?

The advancement order change, where Inspire 2nd now advances after the Winning Alliance Partner, had a critique. While we were not given a reason as to why it was changed, FIRST likely saw

how competitive the FIRST Championship has gotten and wants to keep nurturing that environment.

Events

How are event locations and dates determined?

Event locations and dates are determined by a few factors.

1. The biggest factor is an organization must offer to host an event and have a venue for the event. This is true for build days, scrimmages, and qualifiers.
2. Other than kickoff, dates are determined by each event host's availability for their venue. The qualifier hosts can host a qualifier at any time between November and the state championship.
3. One big obstacle that we try to avoid each season is overlapping our championship with FLL or the FRC regional. We have FTC teams that compete in FRC and volunteers that help out at all levels.

Funding

Teams have expressed some frustration finding funding, especially since certain sources that were available in previous seasons are no longer available. Due to recent political changes and the end of COVID grants, many of these options have ceased to exist. For example, grants provided at SUU in the past are no longer available because the funding sources they used are no longer available.

Here are some examples of where teams can find funding:

1. Utah STEM Action Center: <https://stem.utah.gov/educators/funding/>
2. Motorola Solutions:
https://www.motorolasolutions.com/en_us/about/motorola-solutions-foundation/annual-grants.html
3. FIRST Inspires Opportunities : <https://www.firstinspires.org/robotics/team-grants>
4. FIRST Inspires Fundraising Toolkit:
<https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/fundraising-toolkit>
5. Intuitive Foundation: <https://www.intuitive-foundation.org/first-robotics/>
6. DOW Corporate:
<https://corporate.dow.com/en-us/purpose-in-action/global-citizenship/grants-investments/first-robotics.html>
7. Bayer Fund:
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5717a5b162cd94792b6e1be3/t/5f442cbdc084412f3d1b36b5/1598303421825/FAQs-FIRST-Team-Grants-CURRENT-MASTER_aug2020v2.pdf
8. Hill AFB <https://datareporting.dodstem.us/339654?lang=en>
9. Gene Haas <https://www.ghaasfoundation.org/apply-now>

Volunteers

What if I have a concern about an event volunteer?

If you have any concerns with a volunteer, please contact the event's **volunteer coordinator** during the event.

Why isn't judging and refereeing 100% consistent from event to event.

Some have noticed that Judging and Refreeing are not 100% consistent from event to event. Our key volunteers, such as our Judge Advisors and Head Referees, do attempt to keep things as consistent as possible. Here are a couple reasons for the variation.

- The judges and referees can vary from event to event, both by name and experience. This causes variation, even though the judges and referees have been trained.
- This season the rules were evolving as time went on due to Team Updates.
- Judging: All teams improve from event to event. Some teams even completely change their presentation. This can appear to change the consistency.
- Refereeing: Referees are more lenient at the beginning of the season as teams are still learning the rules. Referees do become more strict from event to event to prepare teams for the championship.

How can we make judging and refereeing more consistent from event to event?

Consistent volunteers are key. The reality is event hosts only know so many people; and most of the time, they do not know the same people. This creates inconsistency between events. Here are a few ideas from other regions. We may or may not choose one or more of these methods. We just want you to know what we are looking at.

- Hybrid Event: Hybrid events are events where the initial judging (presentation judging) and initial deliberation are done on a weekday through video conferencing. Pit interviews and final deliberations are handled by a smaller group of judges. This would increase the likelihood of consistency because we could pull judges from a larger area.
- Pool of Volunteers: We could create a pool of volunteers that any qualifier or the championship can draw from. The trick here is to have enough volunteers who are willing to be in a pool.
- Team-supplied Volunteers: Some regions encourage or require teams to provide a volunteer for an event. Depending on the region, these volunteers either help at the specific event the team is competing at or go into a volunteer pool to be drawn from later. There are measures that can be taken to prevent conflicts of interest; we already take these measures at almost every qualifier. The advantages here are we would get a more consistent pool of volunteers and teams would have a mentor who understands the process well enough to know how to help their team.
 - This means there will be lots of conflicts of interest, which is what we try to avoid.