

9.5 Award Categories

9.5.1 Inspire Award

This judged award is given to the *Team* that best embodies the ‘challenge’ of the *FIRST* Tech Challenge program. The *Team* that receives this award is a strong ambassador for *FIRST* programs and a role model *FIRST Team*. This *Team* is a top contender for many other judged awards and is a gracious competitor. The Inspire Award winner is an inspiration to other *Teams*, acting with *Gracious Professionalism*® both on and off the *Playing Field*. This *Team* shares their experiences, enthusiasm and knowledge with other *Teams*, sponsors, their community, and the judges. Working as a unit, this *Team* will have shown success in performing the task of designing and building a *Robot*.

Required Criteria for the Inspire Award:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must be a strong contender for several other judged awards. The Inspire Award celebrates the strongest qualities of all the judged awards.
- The *Team* must be an ambassador for *FIRST* programs. They demonstrate and document their work in their community.
- *Team* must be positive and inclusive, and each *Team* member contributes to the success of the *Team*.
- *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio*. The *Engineering Portfolio* must include engineering content, *Team Information* and a *Team Plan*. The entire *Engineering Portfolio* must be high quality, thoughtful, thorough, concise, and well-organized.
- *Robot* design must be creative and innovative, and the *Robot* performs reliably on the *Field*. The *Team* communicates clearly about their *Robot* design and strategy to the judges.
- *Team* interview session must be professional and engaging.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Inspire Award:

- The *Team* should be able to share or provide more detailed information to support the information in the portfolio.
- The *Team* should refer to the Award Definitions for judging outlined in Appendix F for outreach and be able to provide supporting documentation to the judges, where applicable.

9.5.2 Think Award

Removing engineering obstacles through creative thinking.

This judged award is given to the *Team* that best reflects the journey the *Team* took as they experienced the engineering design process during the build season. The engineering content within the portfolio is the key reference for judges to help identify the most deserving *Team*. The *Teams* engineering content must focus on the design and build stage of the *Team's Robot*.

The *Team* must be able to share or provide additional detailed information that is helpful for the judges. This could include descriptions of the underlying science and mathematics of the *Robot* design and game strategies, the designs, redesigns, successes, and opportunities for improvement. A *Team* is not a candidate for this award if their portfolio does not include engineering content.

Required Criteria for the Think Award:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio*.
- *Engineering Portfolio* must have engineering content. The engineering content could include

entries describing examples of the underlying science, mathematics, and game strategies in a summary fashion.

- The *Engineering Portfolio* must provide examples that show the *Team* has a clear understanding of the engineering design process including examples of lessons learned.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Think Award:

- *Team* must be able to describe or provide additional information to the judges about their portfolio content.
- *Engineering Portfolio* could summarize how the *Team* acquired new mentors or acquired new knowledge and expertise from their mentors.
- *Engineering Portfolio* could contain summary of overall *Team Plan*.
- *Engineering Portfolio* could contain information about the plans to develop skills for *Team* members.
- Portfolio format is less important but enables the judges to understand the *Team's* design maturity, organizational capabilities, and overall *Team* structure.
- Portfolio could reference specific experiences and lessons learned but should capture the summary of the status of the *Team* and their *Robot* design.
- Portfolio could also summarize experiences and lessons learned from outreach with concise tables of outcomes.
- The *Team* should refer to the Award Definitions for judging outlined in Appendix F for outreach and be able to provide supporting documentation to the judges, where applicable.

9.5.3 Connect Award

Connecting the dots between community, *FIRST*, and the diversity of the engineering world.

This judged award is given to the *Team* that most connects with their local science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) community. A true *FIRST Team* is more than a sum of its parts and recognizes that engaging their local STEM community plays an essential part in their success. The recipient of this award is recognized for helping the community understand *FIRST*, the *FIRST* Tech Challenge, and the *Team* itself. The *Team* that wins the Connect Award actively seeks and recruits engineers and explores the opportunities available in the world of engineering, science, and technology. This *Team* has a clear *Team Plan* and has identified steps to achieve their goals.

Required Criteria for the Connect Award:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio*.
- Portfolio must include a *Team Plan* that covers the *Team's* goals for the development of *Team* member skills, and the steps the *Team* has taken or will take to reach those goals. Examples of what the plan could include are timelines, outreach to science, engineering, and math communities, and training courses.
- Portfolio must include a summary of how the *Team* acquired new mentors or acquired new knowledge and expertise from a mentor. Working with mentors from *FIRST's* Mentor Matching site is an acceptable way to learn from mentors.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Connect Award:

- *Team* provides clear examples of developing in person or virtual connections with individuals in the engineering, science, or technology community.
- *Team* actively engages with the engineering community to help them understand *FIRST*, the *FIRST* Tech Challenge, and the *Team* itself.
- The *Team* should refer to the Award Definitions for judging outlined in Appendix F for outreach and

beable to provide supporting documentation to the judges, where applicable.

9.5.4 Innovate Award sponsored by Raytheon Technologies

Bringing great ideas from concept to reality.

The Innovate Award celebrates a *Team* that thinks imaginatively and has the ingenuity, creativity, and inventiveness to make their designs come to life. This judged award is given to the *Team* that has the most innovative and creative *Robot* design solution to any specific components in the *FIRST* Tech Challenge game. Elements of this award include elegant design, robustness, and 'out of the box' thinking related to design. This award may address the design of the whole *Robot* or of a sub-assembly attached to the *Robot*. The creative component must work consistently, but a *Robot* does not have to work all the time during *Matches* to be considered for this award. The *Team's Engineering Portfolio* must include a summary of the design of the component or components and the *Team's Robot* to be eligible for this award. Entries must describe how the *Team* arrived at their solution.

Required Criteria for the Innovate Award sponsored by Raytheon Technologies:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio*.
- The *Engineering Portfolio* must include examples of the *Team's* engineering content that illustrate how the *Team* arrived at their design solution.
- *Robot* or *Robot* sub-assembly must be creative, elegant, and unique in its design.
- Creative component must be stable, robust, and work reliably most of the time.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Innovate Award sponsored by Raytheon Technologies:

- The portfolio could inspire the judges to ask the *Team* about the specific detailed engineering information.

9.5.5 Control Award sponsored by Arm:

Mastering *Robot* intelligence.

The Control Award celebrates a *Team* that uses sensors and software to increase the *Robot's* functionality in the field. This award is given to the *Team* that demonstrates innovative thinking to solve game challenges such as *Autonomous* operation, improving mechanical systems with intelligent control, or using sensors to achieve better results. The control component should work consistently in the *Field*. The *Team's Engineering Portfolio* must contain a summary of the software, sensors, and mechanical control, but would not include copies of the code itself.

Required Criteria for the Control Award, sponsored by Arm:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must apply for the Control Award by filling out the Control Award Submission Form, located in Appendix E. The Control Award Submission Form must not exceed 2 pages.
- The *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio*. The *Engineering Portfolio* must include engineering content that documents the control components.
- Control components must enhance the functionality of the *Robot* on the *Playing Field*.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Control Award, sponsored by Arm:

- Advanced software techniques and algorithms are encouraged, but not required.

- Control components should work reliably.
- Learnings from the *Team* about what they tried and what did not work with regards to sensors, hardware, algorithms, and code could be included in the *Engineering Portfolio*.

9.5.6 Motivate Award

Sparking others to embrace the culture of *FIRST*!

This *Team* embraces the culture of *FIRST* and clearly shows what it means to be a *Team*. This judged award celebrates the *Team* that represents the essence of the *FIRST* Tech Challenge *Competition* through *Gracious Professionalism* and general enthusiasm for the overall philosophy of *FIRST* and what it means to be a *FIRST* Tech Challenge *Team*. This is a *Team* who makes a collective effort to make *FIRST* known throughout their school and community, and sparks others to embrace the culture of *FIRST*.

Required Criteria for the Motivate Award:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio*. The *Engineering Portfolio* must include a *Team* organization plan, which could describe their future goals and the steps they will take to reach those goals. Examples of what the plan could include are *Team* identity, fund-raising goals, sustainability goals, timelines, outreach, finances, and community service goals.
- The *Team* must be an ambassador for *FIRST* programs.
- *Team* must be able to explain the individual contributions of each *Team* member, and how these apply to the overall success of the *Team*.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Motivate Award:

- *Team* takes part in their presentation, and actively engages with the judges.
- *Team* shows a creative approach to materials that market their *Team* and *FIRST*.
- *Team* can clearly show the successful recruitment of people who were not already active within the STEM community.
- *Team* could also summarize experiences and lessons learned from outreach.
- The *Team* should refer to the Award Definitions for judging outlined in Appendix F for outreach and be able to provide supporting documentation to the judges, where applicable.

9.5.7 Design Award

Industrial design at its best.

This judged award recognizes design elements of the *Robot* that are both functional and aesthetic. The Design Award is presented to *Teams* that incorporate industrial design elements into their solution. These design elements could simplify the *Robot's* appearance by giving it a clean look, be decorative in nature, or otherwise express the creativity of the *Team*. The *Robot* should be durable, efficiently designed, and effectively address the game challenge.

Required Criteria for the Design Award:

- *Team* must show respect and *Gracious Professionalism*® to everyone they meet at a *FIRST* Tech Challenge event.
- *Team* must submit an *Engineering Portfolio* with engineering content. This could be CAD images or *Robot* drawings of the *Team's* overall design and/or components.
- *Team* must document and implement strong industrial design principles, striking a balance between form, function, and aesthetics.

Strongly Suggested Criteria for the Design Award:

- Distinguishes itself from others by its aesthetic and functional design.
- Basis for the design is well considered (that is inspiration, function, etc.).
- Design is effective and consistent with *Team Plan* and strategy.
- The portfolio could inspire the judges to ask the *Team* about specific detailed engineering information.

9.5.8 Promote Award (Optional)

This judged award is optional and may not be given at all *Tournaments*.

The Promote Award is given to the *Team* that is most successful in creating a compelling video message for the public designed to change our culture and celebrate science, technology, engineering, and math. *Teams* must submit a one-minute-long public service announcement (PSA) video based on the PSA subject for the season.

Team may win the Promote Award only once at a Championship level event and only once at a qualifying *Tournament* or league *Tournament* level event.

PSA Subject for 2023-2024 season:

“The best thing about *FIRST* Tech Challenge is...”

Required criteria for the Promote Award:

- Video must follow *FIRST* branding and design standards.
- Video cannot be longer than 60 seconds.
- Video must be of a high quality, as submissions may be used later to promote *FIRST*.
- *Team* must have rights to the music used in the video.
- Music and permissions must be listed in video credits.
- Video must have strong production value.
- Video must be submitted by the deadline given by the tournament director.
- *Team* must present a thoughtful and impactful video which appeals to the public.
- Creativity in interpreting the yearly theme is required.
- Follow [video award submission guidelines](#).

9.5.9 Compass Award (Optional)

A beacon and leader in the journey of the *FIRST* Tech Challenge.

This judged award is optional and may not be given at all *Tournaments*.

The Compass Award recognizes an adult coach or mentor who has given outstanding guidance and support to a *Team* throughout the year and demonstrates to the *Team* what it means to be a *Gracious Professional*. The winner of the Compass Award will be chosen from candidates nominated by *FIRST* Tech Challenge *Student Team* members, via a 40-60 second video submission. The video must highlight how their mentor has helped them become an inspirational *Team*. We want to hear what sets the mentor apart.

Required criteria for the Compass Award:

- Video must follow *FIRST* branding and design standards.
- Video cannot be longer than 60 seconds.
- Video must be of a high quality, as submissions may be used later to promote *FIRST*.
- *Team* must have permission from the copyright owners for the music used in the video.
- Music and permissions must be listed in video credits.
- Video must be submitted by the deadline given by the tournament director.
- Video highlights the mentor's contribution to the *Team* and demonstrates what sets the mentor apart.

9.5.10 Judges' Choice Award

This award is optional and may not be given at all *Tournaments*.

During the *Competition*, the judging panel may meet a *Team* whose unique efforts, performance, or dynamics merit recognition, but does not fit into any of the existing award categories. To recognize these unique *Team*, FIRST offers a customizable Judges Choice Award. The judging panel may select a *Team* to be honored, as well as the name of the Judges Choice Award. The Judges Choice Award recognizes a *Team* for their outstanding efforts but does not factor into the advancement criteria.

9.5.11 Winning Alliance Award

This award will be given to the winning *Alliance* represented in the final *Match*.

9.5.12 Finalist Alliance Award

This award will be given to the finalist *Alliance* represented in the final *Match*.

10.0 Dean's List Award

In an effort to recognize the leadership and dedication of the most outstanding secondary school *Students* from FIRST®, the Kamen family sponsors awards for selected 10th or 11th grade* *Students* known as the FIRST® Robotics Competition and the FIRST® Tech Challenge FIRST Dean's List Award.

Similar to the very prestigious National Merit Scholarship Award, there are three (3) levels of FIRST Dean's List Award *Students*.

1. **FIRST Dean's List Semi-finalists** – comprised of the two (2) *Students* in their 10th or 11th school year* nominated by each *Team*.
2. **FIRST Dean's List Finalists** - The *Students* selected for each Regional Championship.
3. **FIRST Dean's List Winners** - comprised of the ten (10) FIRST Robotics Competition and ten (10) FIRST Tech Challenge *Students* selected from the applicable FIRST Dean's List Finalists.

The *Students* who earn FIRST Dean's List status as a Semi-finalist, Finalist or Winner, are great examples of current Student leaders who have led their *Teams* and communities to increased awareness for FIRST and its mission while achieving personal technical expertise and accomplishment. It is the goal of FIRST that all Dean's List Semi-finalists, Finalists and Winners will continue, after high school, to stay engaged with FIRST as alumni. Additionally, in 2019, the Woodie Flowers Memorial Grant was established for Dean's List Award Winners pursuing STEAM fields of study.

For more information on the Dean's List Award, and to see past FIRST Tech Challenge winners, please visit our website! <http://www.firstinspires.org/Robotics/ftc/deans-list>

10.1 Eligibility

Every registered FIRST Tech Challenge *Team* can submit up to two (2) *Students* as FIRST Dean's List Award Semi-Finalists.

- *Students* must be a sophomore (grade 10) or junior (grade 11) to be eligible for this award.
 - Note: For regions of the world that do not use grade levels such as this to identify years of schooling: This award is intended for *Students* who are two (2) to three (3) years away from entering college or university. *Students* that would be attending college or university in the next academic year are not eligible. Mentors will be asked for the year of graduation during the nomination process.
- The coach or mentor nominating the *Student(s)* must submit an essay explaining why the *Student* should receive this award. The essay must be 4,000 characters or less.

10.2 Criteria

Criteria will be released 9-9-2023.

10.3 Dean's List Nominations

There are specific instructions on how to submit Dean's List Nominations. There are two sets of instructions, The Dean's List Nomination Guide – US, and the Dean's List Nomination Guide – International. Please visit our [website](#) for a copy of the guides, which provides in depth information about the Dean's List, and step by step visual aids to complete the nominations.

During the *Team's* interview, the judges want to know highlights about the *Team*; what the *Team* learned during the *Competition* season; and the experiences that were gained. *Team* representatives' abilities to answer the questions or elaborate on *Robot* design functions or qualities are evaluated during the *Team* interview.

9.4.4 Coaches Involvement in Interviews

Check with the tournament director to see if mentors and coaches can watch the *Team* interview. Mentors and coaches may not contribute to the judging interviews. Mentors and coaches should always keep in mind that *FIRST* Tech Challenge is a *Student*-centered activity. It is about giving the *Students* a unique and stimulating experience in all aspects of the program.

9.4.4.1 Coaches Involvement in Interviews Exceptions

FIRST Tech Challenge will make exceptions for coaches who are needed to translate for *Students*, for coaches of *Students* with different abilities, and other exceptional circumstances. Please let the tournament director know in advance if your *Team* would like to be considered for an exception.

9.4.5 Video Award Submission Guidelines for Compass and Promote Awards

The submission process for this award may vary by *Competition*. The compass and promote awards are not offered at all events. Please check with the tournament director for details. Winning videos will be submitted to *FIRST* and used to promote the higher values of *FIRST* Tech Challenge. *Teams* can also send their promote videos directly to *FIRST*; however, these submissions will not be formally judged. If you would like to send your promote video to *FIRST*, please email firsttechchallenge@firstinspires.org with the subject line "Promote Award Video".

- The video must be submitted at least one week before *Competition* day. Instructions for submitting videos may vary from *Competition* to *Competition*. Please check with the tournament director for details.
- Videos must be submitted in AVI, WMV, MOV or better format. Submission through use of a streaming service such as YouTube is not acceptable. Remember the winning video may be shown on a large screen during the awards ceremony. *Teams* should use the best resolution available for the final version.
- Only one video submission per *Team* will be considered. *Teams* may submit new or updated videos at each *Competition*.
- *Teams* must have permission from the copyright owners for music used in the video and indicate this in their video.