



Rules and Requirements

Eligibility

- Full-time or part-time students must be enrolled in a U.S. college or university in the academic year ending in **June 2026**.
- In the case of a team, all team members must be enrolled as full-time or part-time students in a U.S. college or university in the academic year ending in **June 2026**.
- Non-U.S. citizens are eligible as long as they are enrolled in a U.S. college or university and can meet student eligibility status, and are legally eligible to provide a completed and [signed W-9](#) prior to payout.
- Entries are ineligible if (1) the invention has already been patented or disclosed by another party/inventor, or (2) you have been issued a patent for the invention more than one year prior to the date of your submission to the competition.
- Teams chosen as Finalists must have at least one representative present at the Final Round Judging and Awards Ceremony in October.
- If Applicant is awarded competition winnings of \$2,000 or more, a 1099 will be issued to Applicant at the conclusion of the tax year. Applicant must be legally eligible to provide a completed and signed W-9 prior to payout. Please see the following link for details and instructions: <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-9>. All awards of \$2,000 or more will be issued the required 1099-MISC form at the conclusion of the tax year.

Application

The application requires: General student information, an abstract, a description of the invention, a letter of recommendation from the faculty adviser or a professional reference and a literature/patent search and summary. Any relevant supporting or supplemental materials (examples: charts, graphs, videos, articles, samples, etc.) are optional. The entry must be written in English.

Each entry must be the original idea and work of the student or student/adviser team and must not have been (1) patented or disclosed by another party/inventor, or (2) issued a patent for the invention more than one year before the date of your submission to the competition.

The invention must be a reduced-to-practice idea or working model/prototype and must be the work of a student or team of students, either as a class project or an independent project. The invention must be capable of being reproduced.

Adviser/Professional Reference

If you do not have an adviser, you must designate an individual to serve in the capacity of an adviser/professional reference for purposes of the competition. That person must submit a letter on



your behalf. Your adviser may be a counselor, faculty member or professional connection who knows you and with whom you feel comfortable describing your invention/research.

Public Disclosure

Entering the Collegiate Inventors Competition® does not require you to make any “enabling” disclosures; that is, we do not ask you to give us information that would allow a person of ordinary skill to duplicate your invention. As such, we do not view your entry as a public disclosure. In addition, all individuals including judges who are reviewing your entries are bound by nondisclosure agreements that require them to keep the details confidential. The National Inventors Hall of Fame® only uses the titles and very short descriptions of the inventions for publicity purposes.

For more information about eligibility requirements, see the FAQ document or contact collegiate@invent.org.