

FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

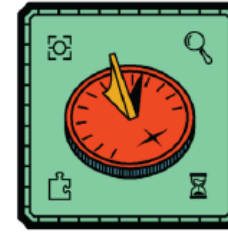
firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

JUDGE ADVISOR FOR 2025

MIKE HOLMAN

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ELECTRONICS AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS

BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE

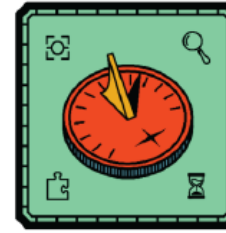


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- **Judge Advisor (JA)**

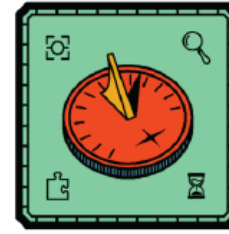
- The Judge Advisor coordinates the judging process, which includes facilitating group deliberation sessions, ensuring the award decisions are made, and the awards script is written. Sometimes the Judge Advisor trains judges and can help in scheduling the judging interviews. The Judges, Judge Advisor Assistant, and Judge Match Observers look to the Judge Advisor for training materials, schedules, and other general questions throughout the event.
 - -Facilitates judge deliberations to help the judges in deciding which teams deserve which awards.
 - -Review expectations for the day and the schedule with the Judges and Judge Advisor Assistants.
 - -Receive list of teams registered for the event and any that have received the Inspire award.
 - -Secure match scores and rankings from the Scorekeeper to provide data to Judges throughout the event as needed (**scores and rankings not used for Judged Awards**)



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

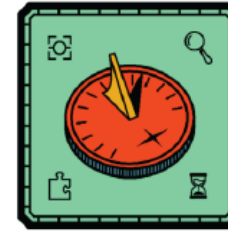
- **Judge**
- The primary role of a Judge is to interview teams, and to decide which teams deserve an award based on team interviews, the robot, match play, and the engineering portfolio. Judges are paired in groups of 2 - 3 to interview a set number of teams before the competition begins as well as interviews in the pit area.
- -Interview and watch teams in the judging rooms, the pit, and on the playing field.
- -Take part in the judging panel to decide team award recipients.



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

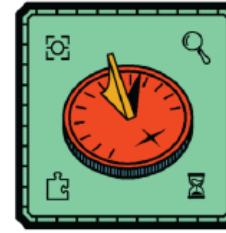
-
- **Judge Match Observer**
 - Most of the Judges will be involved in the judge interviews and will not have much time to see the robots in action. Two or three Judges should be asked to serve as Judge Match Observers.
 - -Watch the action on the field
 - -Collect data on the quality of the robot's performance.
 - **scores and rankings not used for Judged Awards**



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

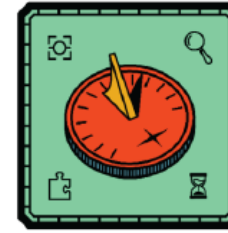
- In 2026 for the DECODE™ presented by RTX season, we will be welcoming 336 teams to the FIRST Championship, up (31%) from 256 teams' last season
- Under the new advancement system, teams will accrue advancement points throughout an event. At the end of the event, the top N teams according to advancement points will advance. Advancement points are gained over the course of a single event, so teams are only being compared with other teams at their event when considering advancement. This system will be used at all events for the 2025-2026 season - Qualifying Tournaments, League Tournaments, Super Qualifying Tournaments, and Regional Championships.



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

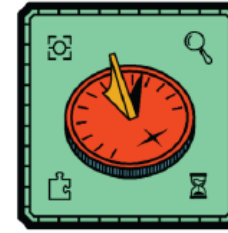
-
- a. JUDGES are strictly instructed to only consider information from the current event and the current season and cannot consider information from outside what they have seen or heard at the current event.
 - b. This means that the following information will NOT be considered:
 - a. past performance (good or bad)
 - b. personal knowledge of a team
 - c. external sources like websites and social media are not considered.
 - c. JUDGES also do not consider ROBOT performance (for example, how many scoring tasks are completed) in an award unless it is specifically listed as part of the required or encouraged evaluation criteria.
 - d. A team's ROBOT placement in a competition (winner or finalist, etc.) or qualification ranking is not considered when evaluating teams for a judged award.



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- Updates to scoring
 - Qualifying Round Points
 - Alliance Points
 - Playoff Advancement Points
 - Team Judged Award Points



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

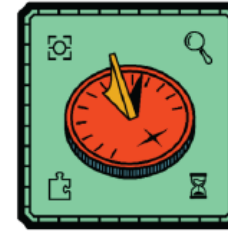
-
- **Qualifying Round Points Table base on number of teams participating**
 - (16 points max, 2 points min - regardless of event size) At the end of qualification matches, the top ranked team will receive 16 points. The lowest ranked team receives a minimum of 2 points. All other teams fall on a distribution within that range based on their rank.
 - The next slide has a table of points breakdown based on the rule.



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

-
- **Alliance Captains and Draft Order Acceptance:**
 - These points are awarded at the END of alliance selection. Teams may earn advancement points for being an alliance captain, or for being drafted and accepting an invitation to join an alliance - they cannot receive points for both.
 - Points base on alliance on next slide

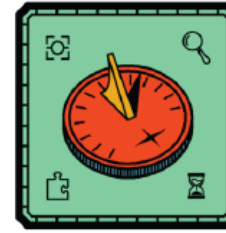


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

Alliance Captains and Draft Order Acceptance:

- **1st alliance 20 points**
- **2nd alliance 19 points**
- **3rd alliance 18 points**
- **4th alliance 17 points**

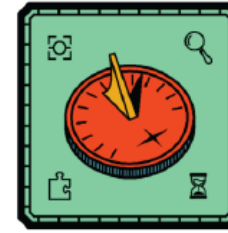


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

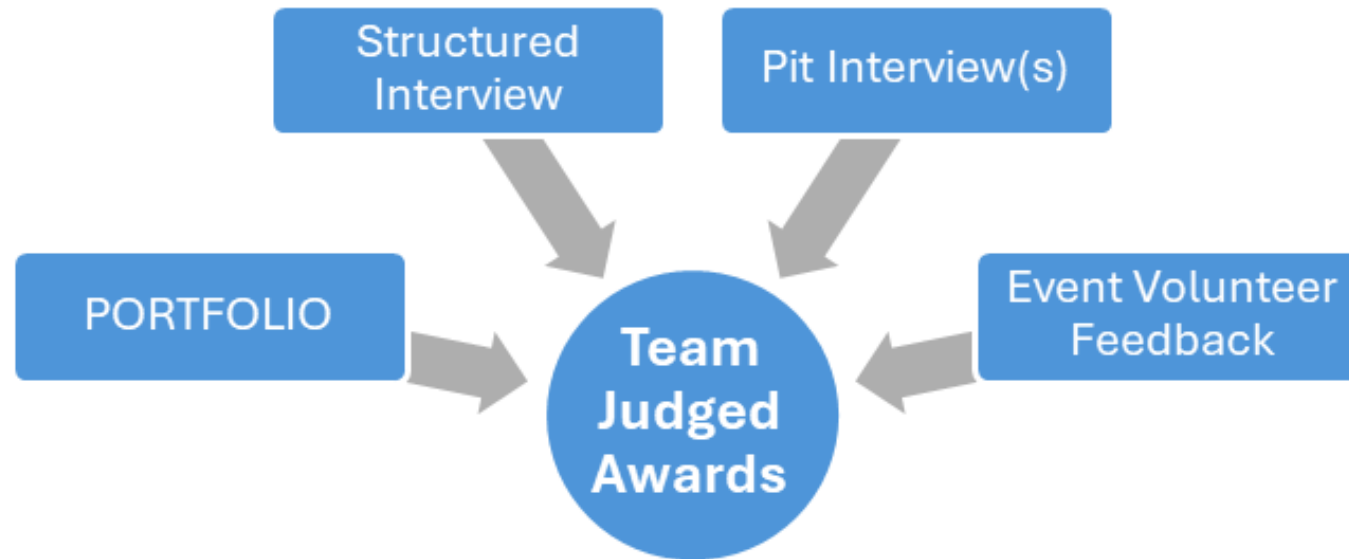
firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

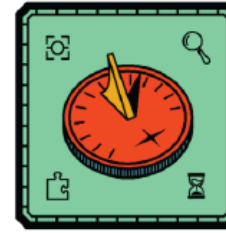
Playoff Advancement: (40, 20, 10, 5, or 0 points) The further into the playoffs an alliance progresses, the more points the teams on that alliance receive. All teams on an alliance receive the same number of playoff advancement points

- 1st Place (Winner): 40 points
- 2nd Place (Finalist): 20 points
- 3rd Place: 10 points
- 4th Place: 5 points
- 5th and below: 0 points



• TEAM JUDGED AWARDS



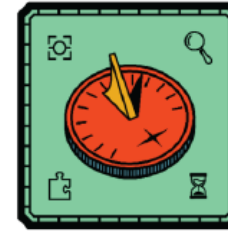


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

• Awards Eligibility Rules

- To be eligible for team judged awards a team must attend their assigned structured interview time (A203).
- For some awards submitting a PORTFOLIO as requested by the Event Director (A202) is also a required prerequisite.
- Complete details and rules about *FIRST* Tech Challenge awards can be found in section 6 Awards (A)

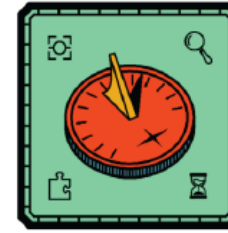


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

• PORTFOLIOS

- LIMITS:
 - 1 COVER PAGE INCLUDING TEAM NUMBER
 - OPTIONALLY TEAM NAME, Table of Content, Team Organizations, sponsors, logo, motto, and picture of Robot and/or team
 - NO MORE THAN 15 PAGES OF JUDGED CONTENT
 - (If front and back, 8 sheets including the cover page.)
 - Any content past 15 pages will not be reviewed.
 - USE ONLY US LETTER SIZE PAPER
 - (8.5: X 11”) OR A4 (210mm x 297mm) size paper
 - MUST INCLUDE:
 - Progress, challenges and accomplishments since January 1, 2025.
- PORTFOLIOS MUST BE SUBMITTED ON TIME AND AS REQUESTED.

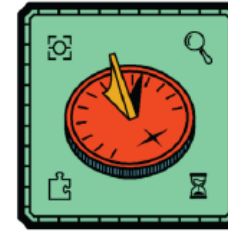


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

• PORTFOLIOS

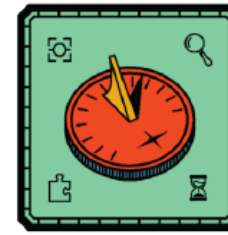
- A portfolio is required to be awarded the following awards:
- Inspire Award
- Think Award
- Control Award



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

-
- INTERVIEW SESSION
 - TEAMS MUST ATTEND A STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SESSION TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ANY JUDGED AWARD



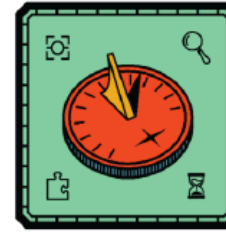
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- Structured Interview



- 1. Team arrives and JUDGES welcome the team.
- 2. Teams may present to the JUDGES uninterrupted for up to 5 minutes.
- 3. JUDGES will ask open ended questions to the team for the remaining of the scheduled structured interview time up to 5 minutes.
- 4. Team departs from the interview space.
- 5. JUDGES discuss the structured interview and complete the feedback form.
- 6. JUDGES welcome the next team into the structured interview location and repeat the process.
-

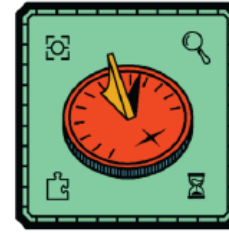


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

• PIT INTERVIEWS

- After all the judging panels have finished, the JUDGES compare notes and may elect to follow up with the teams in the pit area during the competition and conduct informal pit interviews.
- During pit interviews, teams have the opportunity to expand upon materials presented in the structured interview and share additional content with the JUDGES (for example, ROBOT prototypes, design artifacts, and photos or letters from outreach events).
- A team does not need to prepare another presentation for a pit interview but should be ready to answer questions from the JUDGES.



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

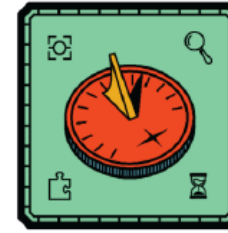
•Team Judged Awards:

- (60 max points) Teams earn advancement points when they receive recognition from the Judges.
- As the top award in FIRST Tech Challenge, the Inspire Award is given more points.
- However, all other awards receive the same number of points (including the Judges' Choice Award).



DECODE

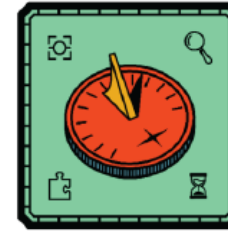
PRESENTED BY  RTX



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

-
- INSPIRE AWARD, 1ST 60 POINTS, 2ND 30 POINTS, 3RD 15 POINTS
 - THINK AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - INNOVATE AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - CONNECT AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - CONTROL AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - DESIGN AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - DESIGN AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - NEW AWARDS THIS YEAR
 - REACH AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - SUSTAIN AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS
 - Optional Award
 - JUDGES' CHOICE AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS



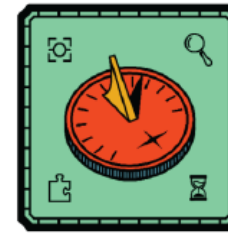
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- INSPIRE AWARD, 1ST 60 POINTS, 2ND 30 POINTS, 3RD 15 POINTS

Inspire Award Criteria

Required	1	Team must submit a PORTFOLIO.
Required	2	The Inspire Award celebrates the strongest qualities of all the judged awards. A team must be a strong contender for at least one award in each of the following judged award categories: A. Machine, Creativity, and Innovation Awards, B. Team Attributes Awards, and C. Think Award.
Required	3	Team must be positive and inclusive, and each team member contribute to the success of the team.
Required	4	Team is able to describe, demonstrate, document, or display their experiences and knowledge to the JUDGES.



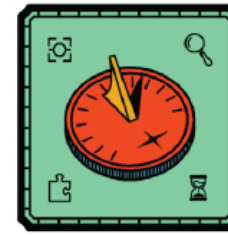
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- THINK AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Think Award Criteria

Required	1	Team must submit a PORTFOLIO. The PORTFOLIO must include engineering content which includes at least one of the following: A. evidence of use of the engineering process, B. lessons learned and implemented related to the design of their ROBOT, C. trade off analysis /cost benefit analysis, and/or D. mathematical analysis used to make design decisions.
Encouraged	2	Team PORTFOLIO may include information about resources which includes any number of the following examples: A. how the team learns from team mentors, and/or a development plan for team members to learn new skills, B. how the team recruited new people into <i>FIRST</i> , and/or C. how the team identified goals and tracked progress towards their goals throughout the season.
Encouraged	3	PORTFOLIO information is organized in a clear and intuitive manner



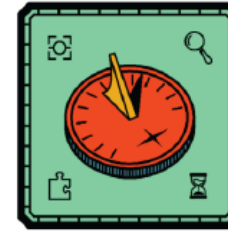
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- INNOVATE AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Innovate Award Criteria

Required	1	Team must describe, display, or document examples of the team's engineering content that illustrate how the team arrived at their design solution.
Required	2	ROBOT or ROBOT MECHANISM is creative and/or unique in its design.
Required	3	The innovative element must be stable, robust, and contribute positively to the team's game objectives most of the time.
Encouraged	4	Designs often come with risks, the team should discuss, describe, display or document how they mitigated that risk.



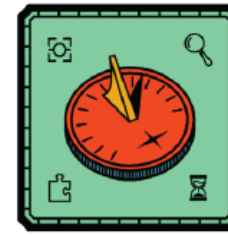
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- CONNECT AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Connect Award Criteria

Required	1	Team must describe, display, or document a team plan that covers all of the following: A. The team's goals for the development of team member skills, and B. The steps the team has taken or will take to reach those goals
Encouraged	2	Provide examples of developing in person or virtual connections with individuals in the engineering, science, or technology community.
Encouraged	3	Provide examples of how it actively engages with the engineering community.



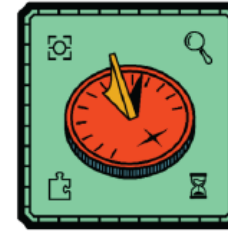
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- CONTROL AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Control Award Criteria

Required	1	Team must submit a PORTFOLIO. The PORTFOLIO must include all of the following: A. hardware and/or software control COMPONENTS on the ROBOT, B. which challenges each COMPONENT or system is intended to solve, and C. how does each COMPONENT or system work.
Required	2	Team must use one or more hardware or software solutions to improve ROBOT functionality by using external feedback and control.
Encouraged	3	The control solution(s) should work consistently during most MATCHES.
Encouraged	4	Team could discuss, describe, display, or document how the solution may consider reliability either through demonstrated effectiveness or identification of how the solution could be improved
Encouraged	5	Use of the engineering process to develop the control solutions (sensors, hardware and/or algorithms) used on the ROBOT includes lessons learned.



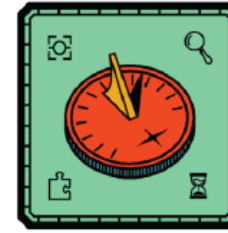
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- DESIGN AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Design Award Criteria

Required	1	A team must be able to describe or demonstrate how their ROBOT is elegant, efficient (simple/executable), and practical to maintain.
Required	2	The entire machine design, or the detailed process used to develop the design, is worthy of this recognition, and not just a single COMPONENT.
Encouraged	3	The ROBOT distinguishes itself from others by its aesthetic and functional design.
Encouraged	4	The basis for the design is well considered (that is inspiration, function, etc.).
Encouraged	5	Design is effective and consistent with the team's game plan and/or strategy.



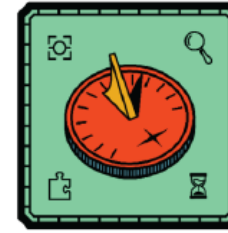
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- **There are two new judge awards this year.**

Reach Award

Sustain Award

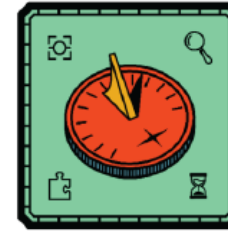


FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- REACH AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Reach Award Criteria		
Required	1	Team must discuss, describe, display, or document their outreach objectives and how their outreach activities support the <i>FIRST</i> community.
Required	2	Team must discuss, describe, display, or document their successful recruitment of new teams, or coaches, or mentors and/or volunteers who are not otherwise active within the <i>FIRST</i> community.
Encouraged	3	Is an ambassador for <i>FIRST</i> programs in a way that makes <i>FIRST</i> loud.
Encouraged	4	Has a creative and evolving approach to outreach materials that market their team and <i>FIRST</i> .



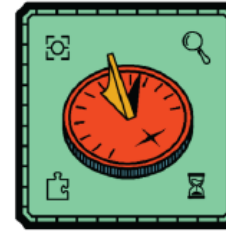
FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- SUSTAIN AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

Sustain Award Criteria

Required	1	Team must discuss, describe, display, or document their plan(s) which includes at least one of the following: A. finances and financial sustainability plan, B. season project planning, and/or C. team sustainability plans and/or objectives.
Required	2	Team must discuss, describe, display or document how a team tracks their progress towards their plan(s) listed above.
Encouraged	3	Team has clear team roles for all members of the team and a process for developing leadership.
Encouraged	4	Team can discuss, describe, display, or document how they manage the team's constraints and/or risks.



FIRST® AGE™
presented by Qualcomm

firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc

- JUDGES' CHOICE AWARD, 1ST 12 POINTS, 2ND 6 POINTS, 3RD 3 POINTS

• Judges' Choice Award

- This award is optional and not given at all *FIRST* Tech Challenge events.
- 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 other award categories. To recognize these unique teams, *FIRST* offers a Judges' Choice Award.