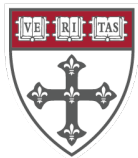


Questions for HSIL

Hack-a-thon April 2026

1. Eligibility & Participation

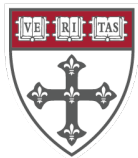
- Can mature innovations that have already been piloted and are awaiting scale also participate in the hackathon?
 - Teams at all levels can join the Hackathon, although the hack might be more useful for people who have an idea and want to build a team, or for established teams at earlier stages.
- Will participating teams identify a health system challenge during the two-day hackathon and develop an innovative solution, or will they be presenting pre-identified solutions and ideas?
 - Teams will indeed identify a challenge during the Hackathon or can sign up with a pre-established idea related to health and AI. We prepared 11 priority challenges for teams to focus on, but this is not mandatory.
- Are there specific eligibility criteria that teams must meet?
 - We recommend 3-5 people per team and encourage people to focus on forming diverse teams where people can bring in different skills.
- What are the requirements for startups in terms of registration—non-profit/for-profit, or can it be a group of individuals with an idea?
 - The specific requirements are up to the Hub, but overall, we encourage to accept participants joining individually, as a team, or early-stage teams. Teams can work on non-profit or for-profit venture ideas.
- Are there specific criteria for students vs. professionals?
 - No specific criteria, the last years we had students, young professional and more experienced professionals join.
- Can faculty members participate?
 - If they are keen on joining this would be possible. They can also join as local mentors or judges if they meet the expertise requirements.
- Will there be country quotas or a limited number of participants per university?
 - There are no country quotas. The optimal number of participants will depend on the organizational capacities and venue of the Hub. We encourage Hubs to accept around 35-130 participants to keep the size of the event energetic hence manageable. The number of winning teams who will move on to the next round will depend on the total number of participants (also see further information in the slide deck).
- Is there an expectation for universities to engage industry partners? Should they seek collaborations with local hospitals, startups, or government bodies?
 - There is no need for universities to engage industry. However, it can be a nice opportunity to involve industry partners to support with prizes, be involved in an incubation program, or be present on site to present on their work related to AI and



health. We leave it up to the Hubs to decide on potential prizes (no requirement) and local post-hackathon programs.

2. Hackathon Structure & Format

- Will participants be provided with specific challenges to work on, or will they be developing their own solutions based on their identified areas of interest? How will the format be structured?
 - See earlier question. We prepared 11 priority challenges for teams to focus on, but this is not mandatory.
- How do local hubs integrate with the main event in Boston?
 - We will have a common online kick-off session (one to accommodate South & North America, Europe and Africa time zones, one to accommodate Asia and Australia time zones), consisting of welcome by Rifat Atun. In addition, we will provide two recorded panel sessions on opportunities and considerations for AI and health that hubs can freely integrate into their schedule. We will also launch a Slack channel that will be used by all participants across Hubs, where we share resources and offer a space for teams to connect. Each Hub is in charge of structuring the local program and organizing the pitches + judging panel at the end of the hack. We will provide a draft program for guidance and will support Hubs with optimizing their local program.
- How is participant selection handled? Participants apply to an Airtable application and select for which specific Hub they apply. Coordinators from each Hub have access to the back end of the Airtable application list and can select applicants. Each Hub is responsible for making the selection and sending out local invites. We do offer templates and guidance on the process.
- The dossier mentions 10+ collaborators, including Microsoft, Novo Nordisk, Novartis Foundation, and Roche. Could you share the names of the other collaborating organizations involved?
 - We can provide a list of collaborators closer to the date ones all have been finalized.
- The hackathon encourages participants to address pain points across the 10 key components for building a well-functioning, value-based, inclusive, and resilient health system. Are the focus areas limited to Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Cancer, and Global Surgery, or will additional areas be included?
 - The teams are free to choose any topic related to health systems and AI and we encourage teams to take into consideration local context and challenges when developing their ideas.
- The application form asks for a brief discussion on specific topics and ideas. Beyond the panel discussions, what other activities will take place at the local hubs during the two-day hackathon? Could you also share insights into the structure of previous years' hackathons?
 - More information on the program is provided in the slide deck and information materials (see "Hackathon Overview").

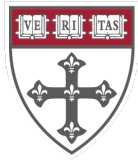


3. Mentorship & Judging Criteria

- Will HSIL provide a pool of mentors/judges, or do local hubs recruit their own?
 - Each Hub is expected to select local mentors and judges.
 - We have guidelines prepared for you but expect Hubs to reach out to mentors/judges.
- The dossier mentions that hackathon participants will receive support from local mentors. Does this mean that each local hub is responsible for identifying its own mentors?
 - Correct. We noticed during the last Hackathons we organized that it's best to have local mentors on-side that can support the teams. We will share a guide for mentors with important information on what's expected from mentors.
- What are the judging criteria for hackathon projects?
 - You can find the juror criteria in the "Applications and participant materials" folder.
- Are there predefined categories or tracks for competition?
 - This year, there are no predefined categories or tracks.
- Must teams present fully working prototypes, or are concept-stage ideas allowed?
 - There's no need to present fully working prototypes. During the pitches the judges should get a clear understanding of how a prototype should work, the teams can be creative in deciding on the best presentation.

4. Funding & Logistics

- What are the key benefits for local hubs that choose to get involved in hosting and supporting the hackathon?
 - Sharing deep expert knowledge on health systems and venture development, tapping into a rich network of international collaborators and working with students from different disciplines to develop promising AI solutions, and much more.
- Is there any funding support for universities/hubs?
 - We are not able to provide funding from Harvard at the moment, but we can support with finding local funding opportunities.
- Should accommodation be provided?
 - There is no need to provide accommodation. Hubs could consider recommending accommodation if appropriate.
- Is there a limit to the number of entries for regional hub hackathons?
 - There's no limit, but the optimal number of entries will depend on the organizational capacity.
- Can we extend the deadline as we're already in mid-February 2025?
 - Yes, we posted an initial deadline to encourage people to apply early on but will extend the deadline to make sure every Hub has enough time to secure the desired number of participants.
- What promotional materials are available for universities to recruit participants?



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- Yes, we provide a toolkit with Hub-tailored promotion materials such as posters, digital flyers, email templates, etc.

5. Post-Hackathon & Venture Incubation

- Could you provide more details on the Venture Incubation Program, including its exact date, format, process, and any requirements for teams advancing from the local hubs?
 - An overview of the Venture Incubation Program format can be found in the “Mentors and Judges” folder. Winners from local hubs (< 50 participants: 1 winning team, 50-100 participants: 2 winning teams, >100 participants: 3 winning teams) will advance to a two week bootcamp to further refine their pitches and ideas. These winning teams will enter a focused two-week bootcamp, a critical phase aimed at refining their pitches and shaping their groundbreaking ideas. A selective Health Systems Innovation Lab judging panel will then invite 20 top teams to an extended bootcamp for deeper guidance and development. Following this, teams will present their innovations to an esteemed global judging panel. Eight exceptional teams will be chosen to participate in our rigorous 4-week online Venture Incubation Program, which includes specialized seminars, interactive workshops, and dedicated 1:1 mentoring. The journey culminates in a Demo Day, where final winners will present their innovations to a selected group of venture capitalists, opening doors to future possibilities. Local hubs also have the flexibility to recognize additional winners and explore unique ways to support them beyond the program.