

Judging Criteria & Final Round

Every eligible project is evaluated using the same five-part rubric. Judges consider what the team attempted, what the project actually delivers, and how well the team understands the work it presents.

Execution	How well does the project work? Judges consider implementation quality, completeness, reliability, and how effectively the team delivered on the problem it chose.	30%
Originality	Is the idea, framing, or implementation meaningfully distinctive? Judges reward useful originality, not novelty for its own sake.	25%
Financial relevance	Does the project address a meaningful problem or opportunity in finance, investing, markets, financial decision-making, or supporting infrastructure?	20%
Analytical depth	Does the project use reasoning, evidence, experimentation, data, mathematics, economics, or other analysis appropriately for the problem?	15%
Communication	Can the team clearly explain the problem, the solution, how the project works, the important decisions behind it, and why the work matters?	10%

Projects are judged relative to what they attempt.

A complicated system is not automatically stronger than a focused one. Ambition matters when it is matched by thoughtful execution.

How Judges Apply the Rubric

Working results	Judges evaluate what the submitted project actually does. Future plans, unsupported projections, or features described but not demonstrated do not substitute for working execution.
Complexity	Technical or mathematical complexity is valuable only when it improves the project. Unnecessary complexity does not earn additional credit by itself.
Evidence	Claims should be supported at a level appropriate to the project. Evidence may include testing, benchmarks, data, experiments, user reasoning, simulations, financial analysis, or other relevant validation.
Design	Visual polish can strengthen communication and usability, but it does not replace functionality, sound reasoning, or understanding of the underlying system.
AI and third-party tools	Using AI, APIs, libraries, or platforms is allowed under the Competition Rules. Judges may consider how thoughtfully the team integrated those tools and whether the team can explain the resulting system.
Team understanding	Teams should understand the important parts of what they submit. Judges may ask about architecture, data, assumptions, testing, tradeoffs, limitations, and material external dependencies.
Scope and judgment	Choosing what not to build can be a strength. A focused project that solves the chosen problem well may outperform a broader project that is incomplete or poorly justified.

Finalist Presentation & Evaluation

Approximately 8-10 teams may be invited to the live final round. The final is a demonstration and technical or product discussion, not a separate pitch-deck competition.

5 minutes - project demonstration

Show the submitted project, its core workflow or result, and the problem it is designed to solve. Prioritize the parts that matter most to the judging criteria.

Up to 5 minutes - judge Q&A

Answer questions about implementation, data, testing, assumptions, tradeoffs, financial relevance, AI use, limitations, and other material decisions.

What finalists should be ready to explain

Problem

Why this problem matters

Who or what the project is for, what it improves, and why the chosen problem is worth solving.

Build

How the project works

The key technical, analytical, or product decisions and how the major components fit together.

Evidence

What supports the team's claims

Testing, data, analysis, experiments, simulations, or other evidence appropriate to the project.

Limits

What the team knows is incomplete

Important assumptions, constraints, failure modes, tradeoffs, and reasonable next steps.

The same rubric applies in the final round.

There is no separate score for pitch-deck quality or presentation polish. The live session gives judges additional evidence about the project and the team's understanding of it.