

Award Categories Framework

How to use this framework

Use this document to plan your awards before the event, brief judges and the emcee on the day, and prepare winner announcements.




Select the category awards relevant to your event's themes. Not all categories need to be used – select 4–6 to keep the ceremony manageable.

Assign prizes and budget per category before the event. See guide Ch. 2.1.5 for budget guidance.

Event: [Event Name] | Date: [Date] | Jury lead: [Name]











PRIMARY AWARDS (score-based)

Awarded to teams based on overall jury scores from the Judging Score Sheet (see Annex 4.4).

Award	Symbol	Criteria	Prize suggestion	Budget allocated	Winner team
1st Place – Grand Prize		Highest total jury score (out of 100)	€200–500 vouchers / tech items	[€__]	[]
2nd Place – Runner-Up		Second highest total jury score	€100–300 vouchers / subscriptions	[€__]	[]
3rd Place – Honourable Mention		Third highest total jury score	€50–150 vouchers / books	[€__]	[]

CATEGORY AWARDS (optional – select relevant ones)

Category awards celebrate excellence in specific dimensions and ensure more teams leave with recognition. Select the categories that fit your event's themes and jury composition.

Award name	Icon	What it recognises	Award criteria	Include this year?	Winner team	Prize budget
Most Innovative Solution		Most creative and original approach · Novel use of technology or methods	Highest Innovation & Creativity score	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Best Social Impact		Greatest potential for positive change · Addresses an urgent social need	Highest Impact & Value score	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Best Technical Implementation		Highest quality technical execution · Impressive coding, design, or functionality	Highest Feasibility & Implementation score	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Best User-Centred Design		Deepest understanding of user needs · Most intuitive and accessible solution	Evidence of user research + design quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Best Pitch & Presentation		Most compelling storytelling · Professional and engaging delivery	Highest Presentation Quality score	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Sustainability Champion		Best environmental solution · Strongest sustainability or circular economy impact	Theme Alignment score (sustainability)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Digital Literacy Leader		Innovative use of digital tools · Promotes digital access and skill development	Theme Alignment score (digital literacy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Inclusion Innovator		Most inclusive solution · Addresses accessibility or supports disadvantaged groups	Theme Alignment score (inclusion)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Most Improved		Greatest growth from start to finish · Overcame significant challenges visibly	Mentor observation + Day 1 vs Day 2 progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]
Best Team Collaboration		Exemplary teamwork · Inclusive and supportive dynamics throughout	Peer evaluation average + mentor observation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]

Award name	Icon	What it recognises	Award criteria	Include this year?	Winner team	Prize budget
Judge's Choice	★	Special recognition for a unique aspect that stood out to the jury	Jury discretion	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	[]	[]

UNIVERSAL RECOGNITION (all participants)

Recognition	Recipient	Format	Timing	Status
Certificate of Participation	Every participant who attended both days	Digital PDF + optional printed	Within 14 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate of Participation	Mentors and judges	Digital PDF + printed	Within 14 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate of Volunteer Service	Volunteers	Digital PDF	Within 14 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital badge – Hackathon Participant	Every participant	LinkedIn-shareable badge	Within 14 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital badge – Innovation Practitioner	Participants completing Solution Canvas	LinkedIn-shareable badge	Within 30 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project write-up	Every team	1-page PDF summary of their project	Within 1 week	<input type="checkbox"/>

CEREMONY SCRIPT (emcee guide)

Time	Section	Emcee script notes
15:00–15:05	Opening & gratitude	Welcome everyone back. Express pride in all participants. Build anticipation.
15:05–15:15	Acknowledgements	Thank participants, mentors, judges, organising team, sponsors, venue by name. Invite mentors and judges to stand.
15:15–15:25	Reflection highlights	Share key moments, a photo montage, or 2–3 quotes. Invite: 'Who learned something unexpected today?'
15:25–15:40	Category awards (if any)	For each: name the criteria, share a brief judge comment, invite team to stage, present, photograph.
15:40–15:48	Primary awards	3rd → 2nd → 1st. For each: name criteria, share judge highlight comment, invite team, present, photograph.
15:48–15:55	Closing inspiration	Congratulate all. Emphasise learning over winning. Share what happens next. Final group photo.
15:55+	Informal celebration	Refreshments, networking, media interviews if applicable.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Award	Type	Prize details	Budget	Actual	Notes
1st Place	Primary	[describe prize]	[]	[]	
2nd Place	Primary	[describe prize]	[]	[]	
3rd Place	Primary	[describe prize]	[]	[]	
Category awards (sum)	Category	[X] categories selected	[]	[]	
Certificates (printing)	Universal	[X] participants	[]	[]	
Digital badges (platform)	Universal	Free or [platform cost]	[]	[]	
TOTAL			[]	[]	

Non-monetary prize ideas

Non-monetary prizes are often more valued than cash equivalents:

- LinkedIn Learning / Coursera course credits
- Co-working space day passes
- Makerspace or lab access
- Conference or event tickets
- Mentorship sessions with industry professionals
- Letter of recommendation from a jury member
- Feature in press release and social media spotlights