The Fordham Law ACtech Challenge
Description and Rules – Updated October 15, 2026

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Competition Mission

The Fordham Law ACtech Challenge (the "Challenge") is a simulation-based competition in which teams of graduate students take on the roles of senior professionals inside an institution facing a fast-moving crisis created by advanced technology, and advise that institution's leadership in real time. Student teams receive a case file containing a closed set of records a real organization would actually have amidst a nascent crisis such as internal documents, outside reports, press coverage, and regulatory correspondence. The students must work out what happened, what is at stake, what their organization (the "client") should do, and the order of priority for such actions. The Challenge culminates in a two-day in-person event at Fordham University School of Law in New York City, where students will present their findings and recommendations to the client's leadership and respond to additional developments to the crisis on the ground.

The client changes from year to year. It may be a company, a government agency, a university, a hospital system, a nonprofit, or any other institution that builds, buys, or depends on technology. Clients may be internal, such as the board of an employer or the head of an agency, or external, such as a company paying for advice. What does not change is the position teams are put in: advising a decision-maker who needs an answer before the facts are complete. Teams must integrate legal, technical, regulatory, policy, financial, operational, and communications considerations to develop an institutional response, on an incomplete record, while circumstances change around them.

The Challenge is intentionally cross-disciplinary and experiential. While it focuses on the role of lawyers in professional environments, it is designed to engage students from multiple fields, including business, finance, communications, organizational psychology, engineering, public policy and social sciences. Any graduate student from an accredited school is eligible. In addition to the formal competition rounds, the two-day event will include programming designed to deepen student learning and professional engagement.

Importance of the Rules

All participants are responsible for reviewing and complying with the competition rules. Apart from the official rules contained in this document, teams must also review the Instructions provided with the Case File for the current competition and comply with all applicable requirements and submission instructions. In the case of any ambiguity or

tension between these rules and the Instructions distributed with each Case File, the Instructions govern.

Teams are also responsible for monitoring official communications from the competition organizers for updates, announcements, and changes to competition procedures. Any questions regarding the interpretation or application of the rules or Instructions should be directed to the competition organizers.

Competition Contact

If you have any questions or require clarification on the rules of the competition, please contact techchallenge@atlanticcouncil.org

Defined Terms

The following terms carry the same meaning throughout these rules, the Instructions, and all materials issued to teams, judges, and consultants.

The **organizers** are the Atlantic Council's Cyber Statecraft Initiative and Fordham University School of Law, acting through the competition's staff.

Round One comprises the closed-universe period that begins with the distribution of Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities to teams selected to compete in the Challenge and ends at the close of Day 1.

Round Two comprises everything from the close of Day 1 through the close of Day 2.

Case File 1 is the record of fictional primary-source material distributed to selected teams at the opening of Round One, described in Rule 1.

Case File 2 is the material distributed at the close of Day 1 in two layers—a shared printed document and the oral seat-specific read-outs—described in Rules 1 and 7.

The **Closed Universe of Authorities** is the compilation of real-world legal and regulatory authorities—statutes, regulations, executive orders, cases, agency guidance and advisory opinions, congressional reports, and law review articles—distributed with Case File 1, on which teams build their legal analysis. Technical standards, industry literature, and other non-legal real-world sources reach teams as material in Case Files.

The **Instructions** are the document accompanying each Case File that carries the operative word limits, formatting requirements, and submission procedures for the current competition.

The **Board Memo** and the **Supplementary Appendix** are the Round One written submissions required by Rule 6. The **Revised Board Memo** is the Round Two written submission.

A **Board Briefing** is a team's oral presentation to the judging panel, given once in each round.

A **seat** is the role on the client's internal working group to which a team member is assigned under Rule 4.

A **session** is the scheduled two-hour block in which a team delivers its Board Briefing, as set out in Rule 6.

A **seat-specific read-out** is the scheduled oral briefing team members receive individually, depending on their assigned seat, from consultants at the close of Round One. During these read-outs, consultants share information about the Scenario that would be realistically available to that seat at that juncture. This information is pertinent to successful analysis of issues for Round Two.

An **artificial intelligence system** is any system, service, tool, or product feature that generates, drafts, rewrites, summarizes, translates, or synthesizes content in response to a prompt, query, or document. This includes standalone assistants, chatbots, language models, computer vision, agentic systems, and other related systems. and chatbots as well as generative features embedded in word processors, browsers, email clients, note-taking applications, search engines, and legal and technical research platforms. Generative features built into word processors, email clients, videoconferencing and note-taking applications, search engines, and legal research platforms are also artificial intelligence systems. This definition includes products, services, and embedded features an employer or institution provides, or turns on by default, to its students or faculty.

The **Application Period** is the period from the publication of the application questions until the team submits its application.

The **Restricted Period** is the period that begins the moment Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities are distributed to a team and ends when final scores are announced at the close of the competition weekend.

The **Judging Period** is the period that begins when a judge first receives the judging materials and ends when final scores are announced at the close of the competition weekend.

Rule 10 lays out the categorical prohibition on the use of artificial intelligence systems during the Application Period, the Restricted Period, and the Judging Period.

The competition materials are Case File 1, Case File 2, the Closed Universe of Authorities, the Instructions, consultant responses and read-outs, and the other material the organizers issue in connection with the Challenge, including these rules; they are provided for the exclusive use of the receiving team.

The judging materials are the materials the organizers provide to judges for their service, including the summary of the scenario, the legal primer, persona notes, the account of what teams can and cannot establish from the record, the rubrics and scorecards, and any part of Case File 1, Case File 2, or the Closed Universe of Authorities a judge receives.

The team is scored on its written submissions—Board Memo, Supplementary Appendix, and Revised Board Memo—and two oral Board Briefings.

Competition Rules

Rule 1. Scenario

The Challenge presents teams with a dynamic problem scenario at the intersection of law, technology and society that unfolds over two rounds. As the scenario evolves and new developments emerge, teams must evaluate the changing circumstances, revise their recommendations and priorities, and effectively communicate their response through a series of oral presentations and written submissions.

Round One — ANALYZE and ADVISE

Once teams have been selected to compete, each team will receive Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities.

- Case File 1 gives teams what an insider would have to work with: who the institution is and how it is organized, what it was trying to achieve and under what pressures, the contracts and policies that bound it, the internal correspondence and records made as the situation developed, and what was reaching the institution from the outside as events unfolded—press coverage, inquiries and correspondence from counterparties, regulators, customers and other stakeholders.
- The real-world legal and regulatory authorities the analysis has to rest on, arrive separately in the Closed Universe of Authorities.

Case File 1: Scenario facts are not provided in summary form, but rather they must be gleaned from the material contained in artifacts included in the case file. These artifacts are presented as realistic versions of the types of material available to teams, given their roles and the nature of the scenario. The client and everyone in it are invented.

Closed Universe of Authorities: Legal authorities are provided as excerpts of real-world laws, statutes, cases, agency guidance, and other sources that carry legal force. Every real-world legal authority the case file relies on is genuine, accurately characterized, and correctly cited.

Artifacts pertaining to the fictional universe are clearly distinguished from documents representing the Closed Universe of Authorities students are expected to analyze and apply. The closed universe ensures that every team works from an equal informational baseline and emphasizes skill development rather than prior subject-matter familiarity. Teams work from the case file and the supplied sources alone: outside research is not permitted, and **no authority may be cited that does not appear in those materials.**

Teams have eight weeks from the release of Case File 1 to the written-submission deadline, which falls approximately one month before the competition weekend.

Round Two — ADAPT

Round Two begins at the close of Day 1 and concludes on Day 2. It requires every team to respond to Case File 2, which escalates and develops the events presented in Case File 1. Every team receives Case File 2 in printed form within one hour of the close of Day 1. Case File 2 has two layers: a shared document telling every team what the client decided in the interim and what has happened on the ground since Case File 1, and the seat-specific read-outs described in Rule 7 delivered orally to each teammate separately according to their roles. No written documents accompany seat-specific read-outs; students are permitted to take hand-written notes. Information provided during seat-specific read-outs is critical to the analysis required to prepare the Revised

Board Brief and members are expected to communicate information learned during their seat-specific read-outs to the rest of their teams for deliberation.

Rule 2. Application

To be considered for participation in the competition, interested teams must submit all required application materials by the stated application deadline. Application materials consist of team information, and the team's answers to screening and substantive questions..

The application questions are designed to test the knowledge and analytical skills the competition develops. They bear no relation to the competition scenario, which remains confidential until Case File 1 is released. Teams may consult any outside resource other than an artificial intelligence system in preparing their responses; Rule 10 governs the Application Period and categorically prohibits the use of artificial intelligence. The registration form identifies the team's coach, if it has one.

An institution may enter more than one team. A student may be a member of only one team, and a student named on more than one registration will be asked to choose before selection decisions are made.

Following the registration deadline, teams selected to compete will receive confirmation of their acceptance, along with the applicable competition materials and instructions. Late registrations may be considered at the discretion of the organizers, subject to availability and the competition's capacity limits.

Rule 3. Eligibility

All students who are currently enrolled in a graduate, doctoral, or professional program as of the registration deadline are eligible to compete.

Each team must include at least one student enrolled in a law program, including a JD, LLM, or equivalent graduate law degree program. There are no curricular prerequisites to participation. Teams are encouraged to include students from multiple academic disciplines in order to bring diverse perspectives and areas of expertise to the competition.

Rule 4. Team Composition

Each team must consist of exactly four (4) students. There are no restrictions on team composition, beyond the requirement that one member be enrolled in a law program, based on the academic major, field of study, or level of education of team members.

Each team member is assigned to one of the roles on the client's internal working group identified in Case File 1. Teams must record their role assignments when they file their Round One written submission. Those assignments govern which seat-specific read-out each member attends at the close of Day 1 and may not be changed after filing.

A team may replace a member at any time before the Round One written submission deadline by notifying the competition organizers and providing the replacement member's details. No substitution is permitted after that deadline, because role assignments and the written submission are fixed at filing of the Round One written submission. A team that appears at the competition weekend with fewer than four members competes with the affected seat uncovered, attends only the seat-specific read-outs for the seats it fills, and is scored under the same criteria as every other team.

Teams are strongly encouraged, but not required, to designate a faculty member, expert, or practitioner to serve as a team coach and mentor. Coaches may assist team members in preparing their written submissions and oral Board Briefings, before and during the competition, outside the team's own sessions, as Rule 9 provides.Coaches do not take part in a session and do not attend the seat-specific read-outs. A coach may observe their own team's Board Briefings, and no other team's, but may not provide comments, guidance, or other assistance during the team's oral presentation, question-and-answer period, or feedback session.

Rule 5. Team Selection and Notification

Teams shall be selected based on application materials submitted in accordance with Rule 2. Selected teams shall be notified by email of their acceptance to participate in the competition. Teams selected to participate may be required to provide additional information prior to the competition as necessary to facilitate their participation.

The competition organizers reserve the right to modify or alter the selection criteria as is relevant for the competition. Teams are selected on the basis of their team information, the CVs of their members, their answers to questions about how and why the team formed as it did, and their responses to the substantive application questions, with the greatest weight given to the substantive responses.

The substantive application responses are evaluated stripped of any information identifying team members or their institutions.

Rule 6. Competition Structure

The competition will focus on a single evolving scenario across two rounds. Teams must respond to developments as they unfold and integrate legal, technical, regulatory, policy, financial and operational considerations to develop and communicate effective institutional responses.

At all stages of the competition, scenario information and associated tasks shall be distributed to all teams simultaneously and in a manner designed to ensure that each team has an equal opportunity to review the information, prepare its response, and participate in the Competition.

Round One

For this round, each team will receive Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities. Teams must review and analyze the materials and complete the following tasks, addressing the key issues and implications arising from the events presented.

- *Board Memo*
    - A client-facing analysis written for the client's board, identifying the issues at stake, the team's analysis of them, the options available with their tradeoffs, and a recommended path. The Board Memo is not a survey of everything the team found: teams are expected to decide what the board must read and to give each issue only the depth its importance warrants. The Board Memo is generally capped at approximately 2,500 words, inclusive of footnotes. The operative limit for a specific scenario, formatting requirements, and submission procedures are set forth in the "Instructions" document accompanying Case File 1.

- *Supplementary Appendix*
    - An appendix, outside the Board Memo's length limit, carrying the issues the team identified and chose not to put in front of the client. For each issue it covers, the appendix conveys the issue, the team's analysis of it, the reason for setting it aside, and what would change that assessment. The appendix is generally capped at approximately 5,000 words, inclusive of footnotes. The operative limit for a specific scenario, formatting requirements, and submission procedures are set forth in the "Instructions" document

accompanying Case File 1. Teams may refer to the appendix during an oral briefing when asked about an issue outside the scope of the Board Memo.

Teams shall adhere to Bluebook citation and style requirements for all written submissions.

The organizers will anonymize all written submissions before sending them to judges for scoring.

- *Board Briefing One*
    - Teams shall have twenty (20) minutes to deliver their Briefing, followed by thirty (30) minutes of questions from the panel of judges. Each Day 1 session is scheduled as a block of two hours and runs in this order: five (5) minutes of instructions from the Timekeeper; fifteen (15) minutes in which the judges read the team's Board Memo, which the organizers will distribute to judges in advance of each session; the twenty-minute Briefing; the thirty-minute question period; fifteen (15) minutes in which the judges score; a twenty (20) minute feedback session with the judges; and a fifteen-minute buffer. Teams are not permitted to distribute any material to judges. No document other than the Board Memo is handed to the panel; they will not have access to the Supplementary Appendix. The Briefing presents the analysis the team has already submitted and introduces no facts outside Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities. Teams may not use visual aids of any kind during their Briefing, including but not limited to slideshow presentations, media, and handouts, though teams may have printed or handwritten versions of their own written submissions and notes with them. Judge questioning may press on the team's analysis, the assumptions behind it, the reasoning supporting its recommendations, and what the team left out of the Board Memo and why. Teams should expect questions about issues and facts the closed universe does not address, and are expected to meet that uncertainty professionally and substantively rather than to speculate. The Timekeeper's cues govern each timed segment under Rule 14.

Round Two

- *Revised Board Memo*
    - A memo to the board revising the team's recommendations in light of Case File 2 and the seat-specific read-out. The Revised Board Memo is capped at approximately 600 words, inclusive of footnotes, and is due at 7:30 a.m. on Day 2. There is no appendix in Round Two. The team puts the memo in front

of its panel at the start of its Day 2 session, and the operative limit, formatting requirements, and submission procedures are set forth in the "Instructions" document accompanying Case File 2.

Written submissions for Round Two are not anonymized.

- *Board Briefing Two*
    - Each Day 2 session is scheduled as a block of two hours and the structure of each session is identical to the Day 1 session: five (5) minutes of instructions from the Timekeeper; fifteen (15) minutes in which the judges read the team's Revised Board Memo, which the team puts in front of the panel at the start of the session; a twenty (20) minute Briefing, presenting the team's revised analysis and recommendations and defending what it changed and what it chose not to change; thirty (30) minutes of questions from the panel; fifteen (15) minutes in which the judges score; a twenty (20) minute feedback session with the judges; and a fifteen-minute buffer. Teams are not permitted to distribute any material to judges. No document other than the Board Memo is handed to the panel. The conditions for Round Two's briefing are otherwise the same as those of Round One: no visual aids, though teams may have their own printed or handwritten written submissions and notes with them. The Timekeeper's cues govern each timed segment under Rule 14.

Rule 7. Expert Consultants

The competition organizers engage practitioners to serve as in-scenario expert consultants. Consultants hold specialized knowledge the client would ordinarily retain outside advisers to supply, and they play a role within the scenario rather than speaking as themselves.

In Round One, consultants are available by email to respond to questions from competing teams on an ad hoc basis. Requests for consultant input are submitted to the official email account for the Challenge and are not made directly to the consultants; responses from consultants will also be submitted to teams via the formal email account for the Challenge. A consultant responds only to the team that has asked, answers only within that consultant's own area, and may disclose only information the consultant has been authorized to disclose. Consultants answer substantively on questions of fact bearing on the analysis, but they do not provide analytic conclusions. Teams should assume that a consultant will not volunteer information and that what a team learns depends on the quality of what it asks. None of the information a consultant has is

required for successful analysis in Round One, but teams that ask precise questions get more than teams that ask broad ones or teams that seek no supplementary material at all.

In Round Two, consultants deliver seat-specific read-outs at the close of Day 1, after the physical document disclosing information about their institution's decisions and developing facts on the ground has been distributed to all teams and they have had a period of time to process the information therein. These read-outs carry Case File 2's seat-specific layer: the information a person in that role could expect to have at that juncture. Teams separate for them: each team member attends the read-out for the role that member occupies, and no other member of that team, and no coach, is present. The read-outs are oral. No written material is distributed, team members may take handwritten notes and may put questions to the consultant, and consultants answer only what they are authorized to answer. What a team carries into its Round Two work is what its members heard, recorded, and reported back to the team. Unlike Round One, successful analysis in Round Two depends on appropriate communication, deliberation, and reconciliation of information obtained during role-specific read-outs with the rest of the team.

Consultant contact during the competition weekend is limited to these read-outs; the ad hoc channel closes when Round One written materials are submitted. Consultant responses and briefings are confidential competition materials governed by Rule 9.

Rule 8. Scoring and Final Rankings

Each written submission for Round One and Round Two must be accompanied by a certification, signed by a team member, stating the submission's word count. The count includes all text in the body, all headings, all block quotations, and all footnotes, and excludes the cover page, the certification, and the team identifier. Text beyond the stated limit will not be read or scored, and the organizers may apply a deduction.

A written submission filed after the stated deadline will be accepted for up to twenty-four hours, subject to a deduction, and will not be accepted thereafter. A team that has not filed a conforming written submission may not compete.

Written submissions and oral briefings are scored on separate rubrics, each focused on the elements that make that component successful given its medium and audience.

Written submissions are evaluated on:

- the extent to which the analysis reflects relevant disciplinary expertise and legal authorities
- evidence of cross-disciplinary collaboration within the team
- sophistication of problem analysis and recommendations
- effectiveness of the written submission in addressing the specific audience
- the quality of the team's triage—what it chose to put in front of the client, and how well it can account for what it set aside

The Supplementary Appendix is scored on the analysis it contains and, above all, on how that analysis supports the decision to deprioritize the issue.

Oral briefings are evaluated on:

- structure and delivery
- persuasiveness before a decision-maker
- responsiveness under questioning
- command of the record under pressure
- adaptation amid skeptical questioning
- realistic and effective use of the whole team

These criteria shall be evaluated using a standardized scoring rubric and scorecard provided to all judges. The numerical scores assigned by the judges shall be used to determine team rankings and the winners of the competition. Every issue on which a team can be scored is inferable from material findable in the Case Files and the Closed Universe of Authorities.

The relative weight given to the Round One Board Memo, the Round One Supplementary Appendix, Board Briefing One, the Round Two Revised Board Memo, and Board Briefing Two will be published with the scoring criteria before Case File 1 is released.

Cumulative Day One reflecting Round One's Board Memo, Supplementary Appendix, and Board Briefing One scores will be communicated to teams at the close of Day One; cumulative scores across both Rounds will be communicated to teams following the award ceremony at the close of Day Two.

There is no elimination in this competition. Every team competes in both rounds. At the end of Round One, each team's Board Briefing One score shall be combined with the score for its written submission to produce a Round One score.

Final rankings shall be determined on a cumulative basis, combining each team's Round One score with its Round Two scores for the Revised Board Memo and Board Briefing Two. The competition organizers shall announce the final placement of the top three teams (first, second, and third place). In the event of a tie in the cumulative standings, the team with the higher combined Round Two score, comprising the Revised Board Memo and Board Briefing Two, receives the higher placement; if the teams remain tied, the placement is determined by the organizers.

Rule 9. Permissible Assistance, Confidentiality, and Academic Integrity

During the Round One window, teams are encouraged to seek outside help, including but not limited to their coaches, in developing and revising their analysis and recommendations. Teams may not, however, rely on material outside Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities. The scenario is a closed universe: outside research is not permitted, no authority may be cited that does not appear in those materials, and facts not supplied do not exist. Submissions that rest on outside facts or outside authority will receive point deductions or, at the organizers' discretion, result in disqualification under Rule 11. An artificial intelligence system is an outside source, and its use by a team member or coach in breach of Rule 10 is subject to the same sanctions.

During the competition weekend, teams may consult their coaches, in person or by telephone or other electronic communication, at any time outside their own sessions, including the evening between Day 1 and Day 2. Coaches do not attend the seat-specific read-outs and do not take part in a session. Apart from their coaches and the seat-specific consultant briefings provided for in Rule 7, teams may not receive assistance from anyone outside the team from the opening of Day 1 until the conclusion of the competition, and may not confer with other teams about Case File 2 before their Round Two Briefing is complete. A coach consulted during the weekend remains bound by Rule 10, and the team attests to the coach's compliance alongside its own when it files the Revised Board Memo.

Competition materials are provided for the exclusive use of the receiving team. A team may not reproduce, photograph, scan, transmit, or otherwise share any part of Case File 1, Case File 2, or the Closed Universe of Authorities with any person outside the team other than its coaches, who are bound by this Rule.

During a session, teams may not use electronic devices of any kind. Outside sessions, teams may use computers and other devices, subject to these rules.

The use of artificial intelligence systems in connection with the Challenge, by teams, coaches, and judges, is governed by Rule 10, and every team and every judge attests to compliance with it as that Rule requires. During the Application Period, no team member and no coach may use an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the team's application. During the Restricted Period, no team member, coach, or other person who assists a team may use an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the Challenge. During the Judging Period, no judge may use an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the judge's service. Rule 10 sets out the consequences of a breach.

Rule 10. Artificial Intelligence

This Rule is the Challenge's governing policy on the use of artificial intelligence systems. Artificial intelligence is defined within the Defined Terms section of these rules and regulations. This rule binds every member of a registered team, every coach, faculty adviser, mentor, or other person who assists a team in any capacity, whether or not that person is affiliated with the team's institution, and every judge. It applies during the Application Period, the Restricted Period, and the Judging Period. The requirements governing attestation of compliance with Rule 10 as well as the consequences of breach are laid out herein. The terms it uses are defined in the Defined Terms.

Prohibited AI Use by Teams and Coaches Applying and Competing

During the Application Period, no team member, and no coach, may use an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the team's application. Teams may otherwise consult any outside resource in preparing their responses.

During the Restricted Period, no participant may use any artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the Fordham Law ACtech Challenge. The prohibition is absolute. It reaches research, issue identification, brainstorming, outlining, drafting, editing, revising, proofreading, summarizing, translating, citation formatting or citation checking, document formatting, preparation of oral briefings, rehearsal or simulated questioning, and any other use whatsoever, whether or not the output is incorporated into anything a team submits or says. It binds every member of a registered team and every coach, faculty adviser, mentor, or other person who assists a team in any capacity, whether or not that person is affiliated with the team's institution, including a coach the team consults during the competition weekend under Rule 9.

A team may not obtain through another person what its members are forbidden to do themselves, and each team is accountable for the conduct of everyone who assists it.

The competition materials are the copyrighted work of the organizers. Entering, uploading, pasting, transcribing, photographing, scanning, or otherwise submitting any portion of the competition materials, or any paraphrase or derivative of them, to an artificial intelligence system is a violation of copyright law and of the terms on which the materials are provided, independent of the prohibition set out above.

Prohibited AI Use by Judges

During the Judging Period, no judge may use an artificial intelligence system in any way in evaluating or scoring written submissions or oral briefings, or in preparing questions for teams. The prohibition is absolute. It reaches reading, summarizing, or analyzing a team submission; checking its citations, its characterization of authority, or its word count; preparing to play the judge's role; preparing questions; taking, transcribing, or organizing notes on a submission or a Board Briefing; drafting scores, scorecard comments, or feedback; casting award votes; and any other use connected to the judge's service, whether or not anything the system produces is relied on.

A judge may not obtain through another person, including a colleague, assistant, or clerk, anything this Rule forbids the judge to do.

Judging materials and team submissions are provided to judges for their service alone. The judging materials are the copyrighted work of the organizers, and the team submissions are the confidential work of the teams. Entering, uploading, pasting, transcribing, photographing, scanning, or otherwise submitting any portion of them, or any paraphrase or derivative of them, to an artificial intelligence system violates the terms on which they are provided, independent of the prohibition set out above.

Attestation of Compliance

Teams. A team attests to its compliance with this Rule when it submits its application, when it files its Round One written submission, and when it files its Round Two written submission. The attestation is made once for the team, on the form through which the submission is made, by the team member who submits it, and it covers every team member and every coach, adviser, or mentor who has assisted the team.

By making it, the submitting member attests, for the team, that:

- (a) every team member and coach has read this Rule and understands that the prohibition applies to them;

- (b) no team member or coach has used an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the team's application, and, if the Restricted Period has begun, for any purpose connected to the Challenge at any time from the start of the Restricted Period to the date of the attestation;
- (c) no team member or coach has entered, uploaded, pasted, transcribed, photographed, scanned, or otherwise submitted any portion of the competition materials, or any paraphrase or derivative of them, to an artificial intelligence system;
- (d) no team member or coach has obtained through any other person, or asked or allowed any other person to do on their behalf or the team's, anything this Rule forbids;
- (e) the team knows of no use, or intended use, of an artificial intelligence system by any person bound by this Rule that has not been reported to the organizers, and will report immediately any such use that it learns of; and
- (f) no team member or coach will use an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the Challenge for the rest of the Restricted Period, which, if it has not begun, begins when the team receives Case File 1 and the Closed Universe of Authorities.

A submission is not complete until the attestation that accompanies it has been made, and a written submission filed without it is not scored.

Judges. A judge attests to compliance with this Rule with each set of scores the judge submits: the Board Memo, the Supplementary Appendix, Board Briefing One, the Revised Board Memo, and Board Briefing Two. The attestation is made on the form through which the scores are submitted.

By making it, the judge attests that:

- (a) the judge has read this Rule and understands that the prohibition applies to the judge;
- (b) the judge has not used an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the judge's service at any time from first receipt of judging materials to the date of the attestation, including in evaluating or scoring the written submissions or oral briefings the scores cover, in preparing questions, feedback, or comments, or in casting award votes, and the scores, comments, and votes submitted are the judge's own;
- (c) the judge has not entered, uploaded, pasted, transcribed, photographed, scanned, or otherwise submitted any portion of the judging materials or of any team submission, the judge's notes on either, or any paraphrase or derivative of them, to an artificial intelligence system;

- (d) the judge has not obtained through any other person, or asked or allowed any other person to do on the judge's behalf, anything this Rule forbids;
- (e) the judge knows of no use, or intended use, of an artificial intelligence system by another judge or by any person bound by this Rule that has not been reported to the organizers, and will report immediately any such use that the judge learns of; and
- (f) the judge will not use an artificial intelligence system for any purpose connected to the judge's service for the rest of the competition, through the announcement of final scores.

A judge's scores enter the tabulation only when the attestation that accompanies them has been made. A judge who cannot make the attestation should not submit the scores it would accompany and should contact the organizers at once.

Reporting. Any participant who learns that a person bound by this Rule has used or intends to use an artificial intelligence system in connection with the Challenge must report it to the organizers immediately.

Consequences. Evidence that a team member or coach used an artificial intelligence system in connection with the team's application during the Application Period, or that any person bound by Rule 10 used an artificial intelligence system during the Restricted Period, will result in point deductions or, at the organizers' discretion, the disqualification of the team, whether the use is discovered before selection, during the closed-universe round, during the competition weekend, or after final scores are announced. A team disqualified under this Rule forfeits all scores and any award or recognition it would otherwise have received and is withdrawn from the remainder of the competition. If a judge has used an artificial intelligence system in connection with the judge's service, the organizers may set aside that judge's scores, comments, and award votes for the affected teams, determine those teams' scores from the scores of the remaining judges or by having the work rescored, and withdraw the judge from the remainder of the competition; no team is penalized for a judge's use of an artificial intelligence system. Determinations under this Rule rest with the competition organizers and are made under Rule 11.

Rule 11. Determinations and Penalties

Deductions and penalties under these rules are set by the competition organizers in their discretion, taking account of the nature and extent of the violation, and are not subject to appeal.

Determinations that a team must be disqualified under these rules rest with the competition organizers. Before a team is disqualified, the organizers will notify the team

of the basis for the determination and give the team an opportunity to respond in writing. The organizers' determination is final and not subject to appeal.

Rule 12. Judges

Each round of the competition is judged by a panel of judges who appear in role as the client's decision-makers. Judges question teams from the client's chair and press on the analysis and prioritization of issues across law, technology, policy, finance, communications, and organizational judgment, as well as the practical consequences of what a team recommends. The feedback period at the end of each session is conducted out of role. To standardize scoring and encourage consensus, all judges score the teams on a common scorecard in accordance with Rule 8. Judges score the Round One written submissiona, the Round One Board Briefing, the Round Two written submission, and the Round Two Board Briefing separately, and vote on the awards provided for in Rule 16.

The use of artificial intelligence systems by judges is governed by Rule 10, and judges attest to compliance with it with each set of scores they submit.

Judges and expert consultants disclose to the competition organizers their institutional affiliations and conflicts of interest that may prevent them from fairly and neutrally scoring a particular team. No judge affiliated with an institution fielding a competing team may sit on a panel hearing that team. A person serving as a coach to any team may not serve as a judge.

Rule 13. Observers, Media and Promotion

Teams may not observe competition rounds. Coaches may observe only their own team's oral briefing sessions. Competition organizers will make reasonable efforts to ensure that observers do not interfere with the conduct of the competition. Should competition organizers learn of an observer communicating information about rounds they observe to any competitors, they will be asked to leave the competition. Observers must leave the room at any time if requested to do so by a timekeeper, judge or competition official.

All participants and observers are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner throughout the event. The Atlantic Council and its competition partners may photograph or record participants and observers during the event for promotional purposes. Photographs and footage may be used in marketing materials, on websites, and on social media channels. No personally identifiable information,

including names, name tags, titles, or other personal details, will be disclosed in promotional materials. Any participant or observer who wishes to opt out of the use of photographs or footage captured by the Atlantic Council or its competition partners for promotional purposes can do so directly on the competition registration form or reach out to techchallenge@atlanticcouncil.org

The Challenge reserves the right to partner with members of the media and other competition partners to provide coverage of the event. In such cases, a separate media disclosure and consent form will be provided, through which participants and observers may opt out of media coverage.

Rule 14. Timekeeping

A designated **Timekeeper** will be present throughout each session and will be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the allotted time for each segment of the session. Teams and judges must listen carefully to the instructions the Timekeeper gives at the beginning of each Board Briefing session, and follow all time cues accordingly. The cards are displayed in each timed segment of a session—the judges' reading period, the Briefing, the question-and-answer period, the judges' scoring period, and the feedback period. Notification of remaining time is provided by using a "green-yellow-red" card system:

- **Green Card:** With five minutes remaining in a timed segment, the timekeeper will display a green card.
- **Yellow Card:** With one minute remaining in a timed segment, the timekeeper will display a yellow card and provide a verbal warning.
- **Red Card:** At the expiration of the allotted time, the timekeeper will display a red card and provide a verbal notice.

Teams that exceed the allotted time limit will be subject to a deduction set by the competition organizers under Rule 11. Judges do not have the discretion to grant teams more time either in their initial presentation or in the Q&A session following the presentation.

Rule 15. Participation in Associated Programming

All teams are expected to remain at the competition for its duration. All teams are welcome and encouraged to participate in the networking opportunities, keynotes, panel discussions, and other programming associated with the competition.

Rule 16. Prizes and Awards

Prizes are awarded on the basis of cumulative scoring across both rounds, together with round-specific and competition-wide awards on which the judges vote.

The teams finishing first, second, and third in the cumulative standings each receive a plaque and other prizes A tie in the cumulative standings is broken as provided in Rule 8.

Four round-specific team awards are given, each by the judges' vote. Two recognize written work: best Round One written submission, comprising the Board Memo and the Supplementary Appendix, and best Revised Board Memo. Two recognize oral advocacy: best Round One Board Briefing and best Round Two Board Briefing. A team may receive more than one of these awards, and a team need not place in the cumulative standings to receive any of them.

One award is given, by the judges' vote, for best teamwork across the competition, recognizing the team that most effectively integrated the expertise of its four seats and drew on each of its members where doing so served the client.

Two awards are given for best overall oralist, to individual participants, by the judges' vote. Votes are cast independently of the oral rubric and do not enter any team's cumulative standing, and no team may receive both awards.

All award determinations rest with the organizers, on the votes cast by the judges, and are final. Awards are announced at the close of the competition weekend. A team or participant disqualified under these rules forfeits any prize or award, whether or not it has already been announced.

Rule 17. Notification of Rule Changes

The rules set forth in this document are subject to change. The Challenge reserves the right to modify the competition rules as necessary to address logistical, technical, or other operational considerations. If changes are made to the competition rules, an updated version of this document will be posted and distributed to all teams before the start of the competition. All participants are responsible for reviewing and understanding the rules before participating in the competition. Because teams will be evaluated based on a combination of written and oral tasks, a thorough understanding of the competition rules is essential to successful participation.