Participant Guide

$1M USD in Prizes for early-stage startups!

Deadline: January 29, 2021
cisco.innovationchallenge.com
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Overview

**Digitize. Do More Good.**

Cisco is committed to positively impacting 1 billion people by 2025. As part of our work, we seek to inspire and empower a generation of global problem solvers who will not only survive – but thrive – in our increasingly digital economy.

With the Internet of Things (IoT) and digital technologies connecting more devices and data than ever before, good ideas now have the ability to make a difference more quickly than ever before – and we’re here to help.

Our fifth annual Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge aims to recognize new business ideas that leverage technology for social impact from entrepreneurs around the world. Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue.

This year’s $1,000,000 USD prize pool will help accelerate the adoption of breakthrough technology, products, and services that drive economic development and/or solve social or environmental problems.

**Why Should You Participate?**

In addition to a cash infusion to develop your solution, it will be reviewed by Cisco technology experts and high-profile judges. You’ll receive peer and industry validation for your solution, as well as have a great opportunity for global recognition and publicity.

**Should You Enter?**

If your solution uses digital technology to positively impact society or the environment, consider entering. Areas of impact include, but are not limited to the following: critical human needs like water or food security, healthcare, financial inclusion, education, accessibility, and the environment. Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue. We look for projects with a dedicated team and that have completed a proof of concept for the core functionality of the product/service at a minimum. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules.

Submit your solution by January 29, 2021, at 5 pm PT.
$1,000,000 USD in Prizes

In 2021, for our fifth annual Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge, we are offering an expanded prize pool of $1 million USD, spread across 20 different awards. These prizes will recognize new business ideas that leverage technology for social impact from early-stage entrepreneurs around the world. Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue. For full eligibility requirements, please refer to the rules.

To apply you must submit your solution by January 29, 2021, at 5 pm PT.

- **$250,000 USD Grand Prize**
  - A single team will be designated the grand prize winner.

- **$75,000 USD Regional 1st Runners-Up**
  - Three teams from Americas, EMEAR and APJC will be designated the regional 1st runners-up and will receive $75,000 USD each.

- **$50,000 USD 2nd Runners-Up**
  - Three teams will be designated the Second Runners-Up and will receive $25,000 USD each.

- **$25,000 USD 3rd Runners-Up**
  - Three teams will be designated the third runners-up and will receive $25,000 USD each.

- **$10,000 USD 4th Runners-Up**
  - Three teams will be designated the fourth runners-up and will receive $10,000 USD each.

- **$10,000 USD People’s Choice**
  - The finalist entry that receives the most votes will receive the People’s Choice Award.

- **$10,000 USD Cisco Employees’ Choice**
  - The finalist entry that receives the most votes will receive the Cisco Employees’ Choice Award.
Special 2021 Prizes

In addition to the general prizes above, we are offering five special prizes, of $50,000 USD each, to support important solutions and focus areas. Additional details about each of these special prizes is provided below. To be considered for one of these prizes, complete the prize-specific question(s) within the application and ensure you submit your solution by January 29, 2021, at 5 pm PT.

Note: These Special 2021 Prizes are offered in addition to the general prizes listed above, and winning one of these Special 2021 Prizes does not preclude winning any of the other prizes.

- $50,000 USD HBCU Startup Prize
  A single team will be designated the winner of this prize.

- $50,000 USD Ethical AI Prize
  A single team will be designated the winner of this prize.

- $50,000 USD Pandemic Response Prize
  A single team will be designated the winner of this prize.

- $50,000 USD Greenhouse Gas Solutions Prize
  A single team will be designated the winner of this prize.

- $50,000 USD Digital Inclusivity Prize
  A single team will be designated the winner of this prize.
Greenhouse Gas Solutions Prize

The Greenhouse Gas Solutions Prize will be awarded to a startup using technology to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) in the Earth’s atmosphere. This GHG reduction may come from:

- reductions in GHG emissions released during a product or process life cycle,
- direct removal of GHG emissions from the atmosphere,
- economic use of removed emissions or byproducts,
- implementation of already proposed solutions (such as from Project Drawdown®),

or other innovations to stop the increase—or even reverse—GHG concentrations in the Earth’s atmosphere. The winner of the Greenhouse Gas Solutions Prize will be awarded $50,000 USD to accelerate the development of their solution.

Ethical AI Prize

The Ethical AI Prize will be awarded to a startup designing artificial intelligence in an inherently ethical manner so that the solution addresses social, environmental, or technological challenges. We believe the ethical use of AI and machine learning can radically accelerate social impact while also reducing unintended societal harm. This $50,000 USD prize is being offered by Cisco’s Emerging Technologies and Incubation Group. The winner of the Ethical AI Prize will also be offered the chance to present their solution and get feedback from the Emerging Technologies and Incubation team. This exclusive opportunity will include up to five hours of technical mentorship in an area of the winner’s choice, plus a session with our engineering team to help expand the solution’s technical scope.

Digital Inclusivity Prize

The Digital Inclusivity Prize will be awarded to a startup using technology to ensure that no one is left behind, and that underserved communities are enabled to thrive in an increasingly digital world. The winning solution will be focused on closing the digital divide by addressing issues such as accessibility, affordability, and digital literacy to build a more inclusive digital world. This $50,000 USD prize is offered by Cisco’s Emerging Technologies and Incubation Group in the spirit of our new purpose to Power an Inclusive Future for All. The winner of the Digital Inclusivity Prize will also be offered the chance to present their solution and get feedback from the Emerging Technologies and Incubation team. This exclusive opportunity will include up to five hours of technical mentorship in an area of the winner’s choice, plus a session with our engineering team to help expand the solution’s technical scope.

HBCU Startup Prize

Cisco’s Social Justice Beliefs and Actions framework commits to the strategic recovery, sustainability, and legacy of America’s historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), post–COVID and beyond. We believe in the importance of investing in African American/Black-owned startups. The HBCU Startup Prize will be awarded to a team with at least one founder who is a student or graduate of an HBCU, with an innovative technology solution that addresses a social or environmental problem. The winner of the HBCU Startup Prize will be awarded $50,000 USD to accelerate their solution.

Pandemic Response Prize

The Pandemic Response Prize will be awarded to a startup responding to COVID–19 or future pandemic crises. The winning team will have an innovative technology solution that accelerates the response to, or recovery from, COVID–19 and its physical, social, or economic impact. The winner of the Pandemic Response Prize will be awarded $50,000 USD to accelerate development of their solution.
Timeline

1. Applications Open
   October 27, 2020

2. Applications Close 5 pm PT
   January 29, 2021

3. Semi-Finalists Invited to Submit
   March 30, 2021

4. Semi-Finalists Submissions Close 5 pm PT
   April 23, 2021

5. Finalists Announced and
   People’s Choice Voting Opens
   June 2, 2021

6. People’s Choice Voting Closes
   June 18, 2021

7. Winners Announced
   June 29, 2021
How to Participate

The Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2021 is a worldwide search for early-stage technology solutions and services that can enable economic development and/or benefit society and/or the environment. Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue.

Register to Participate

You can participate as an individual, as part of a team, or as a business entity. Teams may have a maximum of 5 members. If you are registering as part of a team, your team leader will need to register first and then can invite you to register as a member of the team, using your email address. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules. Once you are ready, click here to register.

Prepare your Submission

There will be two distinct submission rounds.

Round one opens October 27, 2020 and closes January 29, 2021 at 5:00pm PT. To prepare your submission, you will need to complete an online questionnaire, which will cover the following topics:

- Defining the problem you are solving
- Explaining the solution, including:
  - Its benefits and how it uses IoT or digital technologies
  - How it is unique and will be taken to market
  - Risks associated with the solution

- 90-second pitch video explaining the solution

Once you are ready, click here to register (or login) and prepare your submission.

Submit your Solution

Once you’ve prepared and double-checked all your materials, be sure to login and submit them. You must upload all materials and submit them before January 29, 2021, at 5 pm PT. Remember, you must click submit before the deadline in order for your entry to be considered.

Please check your entry for completeness and ensure your video does not exceed 90 seconds. Also, do not use unlicensed images, music, or video content in your submission.

Judges evaluate submissions and are looking for ideas that are especially innovative and clearly articulate the use of technology, feasibility, and scale of impact.

On March 30, 2021, Semi-Finalists will be invited via email to submit a more detailed proposal. The round two application window opens March 30, 2021 and closes April 23, 2021, at 5 pm PT.

In addition to the information provided in round one, the online round two questionnaire for Semi-Finalists will include the following sections:

- Problem and solution summary explanation
- Detailed technical overview of solution
- Dependencies
- Timeline for the next 12-24 months
- Addressable market
- Financial model
- Team bios

If you are selected as a Semi-Finalist, be sure that your team leader logs in to the Challenge website before the April 23, 2021, 5 pm PT deadline to double check all of the materials and click submit in order to be considered for the final round.

Be sure to check that your content meets the submission guidelines, or your entry may be disqualified. It's also important to check for completeness, appropriate content, video length, and unlicensed images, music, or video. If your round two application is not submitted by the deadline, it will not be considered.

Vote and Promote

If you are selected as a Finalist, we recommend that you share your participation in the Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2021 with your supporters and invite them to vote for their favorite entries. Voting for the People’s Choice Award takes place from June 2-18, 2021.

Celebrate the Winners

Once the submission period closes our judges will begin evaluating the submissions, looking for solutions that are especially innovative and clearly articulate their use of technology, feasibility and scale of impact. Winners will be announced on June 29, 2021!

Maria Artunduaga, founder of Respira Labs; Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2020 $25K USD Second Runner-Up
2020 Winners
Read our official winner announcement here.

Savanna Circuit Tech
A solar chilling transit system with dairy management system for dairy businesses/cooperatives in sub-Saharan Africa to cut post-harvest losses.

$100,000 USD
Grand Prize

Cure
Cool and customizable 3D printed bionic arms for people with limb differences at an affordable price.

$75,000 USD
First Runner-Up

Gramhal
Gramhal builds smallholder farmers’ agency and increases their income by unlocking bundled post-harvest services of storage, credit and market linkage.

$25,000 USD
Second Runner-Up

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
INFIUSS
Infuss health is a blood sourcing platform, blood delivery service, and blood donor biobank.

$25,000 USD
Second Runner-Up

Respira Labs

$25,000 USD
Second Runner-Up

Intelligent Hives
Reduces bee extinction, increases beekeepers' income.

$10,000 USD
Third Runner-Up

Majicom
Majicom develops digital water ecosystems to supply affordable drinking water to communities across urban Africa.

$10,000 USD
Third Runner-Up

Watch the winners' videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
Neurafarm

AI-powered crop protection and management apps to identify plant diseases & pests, increase harvests, connect with experts, and tap into bigger markets.

Preemar

Real-time monitoring system of water parameters for aquaculture.

Caeli

Caeli is an advanced anti-pollution mask for chronic respiratory patients.

Sensegrass

Soil Intelligence diagnostic system for low income small farmers to improve yield through a patented IoT device.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
Caeli is an advanced anti-pollution mask for chronic respiratory patients.

Hydrotec Solutions
A community water treatment kiosk that utilizes the power of IoT (Internet of Things) to make clean drinking water available in a sustainable way.

PS-1925
Pesticide spraying drone for smart farming in India - 'Krishi PS-1925'.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
2019 Winners
Read our official winner announcement here.

Oorja: Oonnati Solar Pumping Systems
Oorja deploys and operates PAYG Community Solar Pumping Systems to provide affordable pay-per-use irrigation services to smallholder farmers.

Solar Freeze
Mobile cold storage units powered by renewable energy for rural smallholder farmers to help them reduce the huge challenge of post-harvest loss in much of the developing world.

Calla Health Foundation
A patient-centric cervical cancer screening technology with mHealth communication, patient data storage and artificial intelligence capabilities. (Previously: Calla Imaging)

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
Illuminum Greenhouses: Smart Greenhouses for Africa
Provides smallholder farmers with affordable greenhouses equipped with solar powered sensors, enabling IoT to penetrate and reach the base of the pyramid.

TrashCon: Automated Zero Waste Technology
A one-stop solution to sort and process any type of mixed municipal solid waste automatically into biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste.

BlakBear: Soil Sensing Platform
A soil-sensing, machine learning platform that increases the yield farmers can get from their land.

Neurobots: Exobots
Offers a treatment capable of allowing stroke patients to recover 30% of hand movement in two weeks by training the brain.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
Reeddi
Reeddi innovatively provides affordable, reliable, and clean energy to individuals and businesses operating in the energy poor regions of the world.

REALDRIP by TREPLABS
REALDRIP is a low cost infusion monitor device for simpler and safer blood transfusion and drip treatment.

Banoo
By integrating microbubble, IoT, and solar panels, Banoo provides smart aquaculture technology to help people in rural areas boost their food resilience.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
2018 Winners
Read our official winner announcement here.

**$100,000 USD Grand Prize**

**feton**

CareNX Innovations
Feton is portable, IoT-based fetal heart monitoring system.

**$75,000 USD First Runner-Up**

**Jara**

The Jara Unit is a personal crank+solar powered tablet that teaches geographically custom education.

**$25,000 USD Second Runner-Up**

**flux**

Flux is a smart water system that reduces water loss and increases transparency through better data management.

Watch the winners’ videos on [cisco.innovationchallenge.com](http://cisco.innovationchallenge.com)
Strados Labs has a wearable smart sensor and application to help people monitor lung health.

Powerstove is a smokeless, clean cookstove with cloud-based remote monitoring.

Flux Marine is developing zero-emissions electric boat motors.

M-Shule provides SMS-based personalized educational support.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
Innovex Uganda Limited
Remot enables pay-as-you-go and remote monitoring services to solar contractors.

UjuziKilimo Solutions
UjuziKilimo Solutions collects and analyzes data to help farmers make precise decisions.

Inventum–Pukio
Inventum–Pukio has developed a clean energy powered atmospheric water generator.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
2017 Winners
Read our official winner announcement here.

Project Vive
Project Vive's Voz Box: There are approximately 4.5 million people with cerebral palsy and ALS who cannot speak. The Voz Box is an affordable and wearable device that can give a voice to the voiceless.

DOT LEARN
Dot Learn makes video-based online learning work reliably and affordably on cheap smartphones and 2G connections, thereby expanding educational access for people that need it the most.

OmniVis
A smartphone-based disease detection platform that can quantitatively measure the level of pathogens in environmental and patient samples with real-time location data. (Previously: PathVis)

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
Forest Devices, Inc. is developing AlphaStroke, the first stroke screening device that can be used by all medical personnel in any environment.

Shyft Power Solutions
For millions of people globally who struggle with backup or alternative power sources, Shyft is a hardware/software platform enabling the next generation of distributed energy management. (Previously: Solstace Energy Solutions, Inc.)

Smart Bandage
Smart Bandage aims to improve the lives of people suffering from chronic wounds through inkjet printed patented sensors that provide real-time data to monitor early warning signs of chronic wounds.

BYU Village Pump
The Village Pump solution permanently provides water to villages that need it, thereby solving the problem of water pump failure.

Forest Devices, Inc.
Forest Devices, Inc. is developing AlphaStroke, the first stroke screening device that can be used by all medical personnel in any environment.

Watch the winners’ videos on cisco.innovationchallenge.com
MyBalanceSens
MyBalanceSens is developing smart glasses that enables older adults to reduce their fall risk by improving their balance.

Baby Bloom
Baby Bloom provides simple and effective lactation management through an IoT lactation tool that automatically tracks pumped milk production and uses machine learning to personalize lactation plans.

ODA Systems
ODA Systems is developing a service that efficiently measures lubricant oil quality in machines, thereby decreasing pollution and economic waste while boosting productivity.

Imagine your solution here!

Register Now!
Tae leads Cisco’s social investments and stewards CSR and sustainability across the business. She directs Cisco’s business, technical, and financial assets to accelerate global problem solving to positively impact people, society, and the planet.

Under Tae’s leadership, Corporate Affairs strives to inspire, connect, and invest in global problem solvers to nurture innovative solutions and catalyze an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports progress and inclusive growth. Corporate Affairs also invests in developing digital skills so everyone can participate in the digital economy and become a global problem solver. Corporate Affairs has committed to positively impact 1 billion people by 2025.

A founding Cisco employee, Tae pioneered Cisco’s Business Development – establishing new markets through partnerships for joint product and market development. Under her leadership, the Cisco Networking Academy program has become one of the largest ICT education programs worldwide, helping 1.2 million get jobs from 2005-2013. She is a Trustee of the Cisco Foundation, a member of the Service Year Alliance Board and of the World Economic Forum Global Future Council on Education, Gender, and Work.

Mary has over a decade experience leading various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and education initiatives for Cisco. She currently heads up Corporate Affairs Strategy, including new program development, Public Benefit Investment and the Cisco Foundation, and Research and Insights. As technology rapidly changes the world of work, local communities, and our daily lives, Mary’s team is proactively creating initiatives and supporting innovations that leverage technology and Cisco’s expertise at making connections to enable opportunity for all. By equipping a new generation of “global problem solvers” with the skills they need to survive and thrive in an increasingly digital future, Corporate Affairs hopes to impact 1 billion lives around the globe by 2025.
As Senior Vice President, Cisco Strategy and Emerging Technology & Incubation, Liz Centoni leads the team that incubates new business opportunities working on breakthrough, emerging solutions outside of the core and creates new markets and businesses for Cisco. She is partnered with the Executive Leadership team, General Managers, and functional leaders to drive the company’s overall strategic direction. She is a voting member for Cisco Investments group which directs company’s efforts with startups and the global venture community.

Liz is an accomplished business leader with deep technology experience and has transformed large-scale and highly complex businesses. She is recognized for developing and executing strategies, growing multi-billion dollar global businesses and teams.

Prior to this role, Liz was Senior Vice President and General Manager of Cisco’s Cloud, Compute, and IoT business where she drove the business and engineering strategy for this global portfolio. Liz was instrumental in developing, executing and evangelizing the strategy for Cisco’s IoT portfolio in Industrial IoT, Edge Intelligence and SaaS based cellular connectivity platform for devices ranging from Connected Cars to Smart meters, driving it to profitable growth and a leader in Digital Transformation. In the Cloud and Computing Systems area, Liz led the team to define and execute the strategy to enable our customers operating model needs in Hybrid Cloud. This included building the SaaS hybrid cloud platform, expanding into adjacent markets such as Hyperconverged and leading the industry in cloud managed solutions for the compute market.

She also led the Service Provider Access Group as Vice President and General Manager, responsible for strategy, marketing direction and engineering efforts to grow Cisco’s portfolio of Carrier Ethernet Access solutions.

Prior roles include: Vice President of Engineering Strategy and Portfolio Planning and multiple engineering roles leading global teams building software and central engineering services, executing engineering plans with feature velocity, quality and focus on getting it right for the customer.

Mentorship, talent development and leadership are an important priority for Liz, and she is an active mentor and sponsor of underrepresented groups. She is the Cisco Global Executive Sponsor for the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program. Liz serves on the Board of Directors for Ingersoll Rand Inc. She is also a member of the Board of Directors for The Tech Interactive.

Liz holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of Mumbai and a M.B.A. from the University of San Francisco.
Phillip Remaker is a Distinguished Services Engineer and has been a leader at Cisco with his work in technology adoption, software quality improvement, and defect tracking systems and processes. In addition to developing the Intellectual property strategy for Cisco, he helps to nurture innovative ideas and mentor inventors, as well as to analyze, evaluate, and rank new ideas for Cisco’s Intellectual Property and patent portfolio. Phil co-authored RFC 4335 and holds six patents with two more pending.

**Phillip Remaker**  
*Distinguished Services Engineer*  
*Cisco*

DeShawn Spellman is the current program director for the Thurgood Marshall College Fund’s Innovation & Entrepreneurship division. With nearly 20 years of work in higher education, specifically with students from underserved communities, he believes its lifeblood to help individuals reach their full potential in life. Spellman has successfully helped create positive outcomes and has launched unique programming with brands such as Ally Financial, The National Basketball Association (NBA), and GUCCI to name a few. He has also been a champion in helping to diversify Silicon Valley by his work with tech and social media giants Apple and Facebook. His work in diversity and inclusion fosters positive change and creates access to top companies for students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

**DeShawn S. Spellman**  
*Program Director, Innovation & Entrepreneurship*  
*Thurgood Marshall College Fund*

Simon Moss is a Co-Founder of Global Citizen, and is currently the Managing Director of Campaigns. He’s another Australian living in New York, has been campaigning on global issues for more than a decade, and writes and speaks regularly on the role of global citizens in ending extreme poverty.

**Simon Moss**  
*Co-Founder and Managing Director of Campaigns*  
*Global Citizen*
Zeus Kerravala is the founder and principal analyst with ZK Research, and provides a mix of tactical advice to help his clients in the current business climate and long-term strategic advice. Kerravala provides research and advice to end-user IT and network managers, vendors of IT hardware, software and services and the financial community looking to invest in the companies that he covers.

Zeus Kerravala  
Founder and Principal Analyst  
ZK Research

Carolina has over 15 years’ experience in the consumer technology industry most recently at Creative Strategies where since 2016 she has been focusing on a broad range of consumer technologies and services including those that have a deep impact on user behavior in an enterprise context.

In 2019, Carolina founded The Heart of Tech, her newest endeavor aims to help technology providers with their corporate social responsibility efforts. Two areas are particularly dear to her, because of the impact on society as a whole: education and diversity and inclusion.

Between 2013 and 2016, Carolina was Chief of Research at Kantar Worldpanel ComTech where she drove thought leadership research by marrying her deep understanding of global market dynamics with the wealth of data coming from ComTech’s longitudinal studies.

Prior to her ComTech role, Carolina spent 14 years at Gartner, most recently as their Consumer Devices Research VP and Agenda Manager.

Carolina is a regular contributor to Tech.pinions, Forbes and Fast Company.

Carolina Milanesi  
Founder and Principal Analyst  
The Heart of Tech
David Law
Global Head, Financial & Strategic Investors Group
Standard Chartered Bank

David is the Global Head of Standard Chartered Banks' Financial & Strategic Investors Group and a member of the Global Banking Management Team. He has over 20 years of commercial and investment banking experience and has held a variety of leadership positions throughout his career. Prior to joining Standard Chartered, David worked as a Managing Director and Chairman of Investment Banking for the Middle East and North Africa at Morgan Stanley. David graduated from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand with a Bachelor of Law and a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Accountancy and Finance in 1991. He is admitted to the bar as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.

Peter Tavernise is the Executive Director of the Cisco Foundation and Director of Cisco Public Benefit Investment. Peter brings over 25 years of non-profit fundraising, private family foundation, and corporate funding experience to meeting the core mission and strategy of Cisco Public Benefit Investment. He helps empower global problem solvers to innovate as technologists, think like entrepreneurs, and act as social change agents in ways that can be replicated, scaled, and sustained. Peter is currently a Trustee of the Cisco South Africa Education Trust, a board member of the Giraffe Heroes Project, and an advisory board member of GreatNonprofits.org.

Murugan Vasudevan
Regional Manager, Corporate Affairs
Cisco

Murugan leads the Social Innovation Group for Cisco in South Asia. His team is responsible for directing Cisco’s social investments around human capacity building, workforce development, and community enablement. This includes programs such as the Networking Academy and CSR investments. Cisco Networking Academy, a public–private partnership approach to tech skills development, currently reaching ~150,000 students annually in South Asia has set a goal of training 1M students by 2025. On the social investments, Murugan leads overall CSR strategy helping to establish the investment framework and strategic partnerships in India with a key focus on digital, sustainable, and scalable solutions. Cisco has set an audacious goal of positively impacting 50 million people in India by 2025.
As Vice President, Product Operations, Emerging Technologies & Incubation (ET&I), Sanjeev leads the team in sourcing, generating, screening, and managing new innovation and incubation ideas that ultimately fuel growth for the company. The ET&I team establishes and advances new technologies and business models, or “the Bold Bets” that can solve problems our customers face in the most agile, ambitious, and entrepreneurial way possible.

Sanjeev has a long history of accomplishments, specifically around product management, competitive differentiation and building successful global teams. Sanjeev is recognized as a proven business leader with a strategic, innovative, and collaborative lens in approaching business needs and requirements.

In his previous role as Senior Director, Cloud Infrastructure & Business Solutions Marketing, Sanjeev was responsible for driving demand and positioning for Cisco products and solutions around Cloud, Data Centre & Routing Infrastructure, SDN/NFV based Solutions. He managed a global team of product and technical marketing managers representing customer care-abouts, business cases, innovation, competitive differentiation, and market share management around Cisco’s Products & Solutions.

Sanjeev’s prior roles include: Director, Product Management, Service Provider and Technical Marketing Lead. Sanjeev is certified in CCIE 4006.

Sanjeev holds a Bachelor of Engineering in Electronics from Vishwakarma Institute of Technology, University of Pune.
Rules

Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2021

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

To download a copy of these rules, please click here.

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. A PURCHASE WILL NOT INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED OR RESTRICTED.

BY REGISTERING FOR THIS CONTEST, YOU FULLY AND UNCONDITIONALLY AGREE TO COMPLY WITH ALL OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS BELOW. IF YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH ANY OF THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS, DO NOT REGISTER FOR THIS CONTEST AND DO NOT SUBMIT AN ENTRY. NOTE: WE ARE NOT CLAIMING OWNERSHIP RIGHTS TO YOUR ENTRY.

TERM. This Contest (the "Contest") opens on October 27, 2020 at 12:00am Pacific Time and ends on January 17, 2020 at 5:00pm Pacific Time, (the "Contest Period"). Entry into this Contest is acceptance of these Official Rules. This Contest is sponsored by Cisco Systems, Inc., 170 West Tasman Drive, San Jose, CA 95134 USA ("Sponsor" or "Cisco").

ELIGIBILITY. This Contest is open and offered only to (1) individuals age eighteen (18) years or older at the time of registration ("Individual Participant"), 2) teams of up to five individuals age eighteen (18) years or older at the time of registration ("Team Participant"), and (3) legal business entities ("Business Entity Participant")

PLEASE NOTE: Individual Participants, Team Participants, and/or Business Entity Participants that have previously received monetary awards in the Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge or a Cisco prize at the Rice Business Plan Competition are not eligible for this Contest.

Confirmation of eligibility will be required prior to awarding any prizes.

This Contest is not open to: (1) employees or internally contracted vendors of Sponsor or its parent/subsidiaries, agents and affiliates; (2) the immediate family members or members of the same household of any such employee or vendor; (3) anyone professionally involved in the development or administration of this Contest; (4) employees or internally contracted vendors of governments and government-affiliated companies or organizations; or (5) any employee whose employer’s guidelines or regulations do not allow entry in the Contest or acceptance of the prize(s). This Contest is not open to Individual Participants who are permanent residents of the province of Quebec, Canada during the Contest period, Team Participants with one or more team members who are permanent residents of the province of Quebec, Canada during the Contest period, or Business Participants located or registered in the province of Quebec, Canada, of which one or more of the owners are permanent residents of the province of Quebec, Canada during the Contest period. Canadian participants may be required, in Sponsor’s sole discretion, to provide proof of a permanent address, business location(s) and/or registration (as applicable) outside of Quebec for verification purposes. In addition,
residents of Cuba, Iran, Syria, North Korea, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and Sudan are not eligible to participate. This Contest is void in these countries and where otherwise prohibited or restricted by law.

**HOW TO ENTER.** To enter the Contest, visit [https://cisco.innovationchallenge.com](https://cisco.innovationchallenge.com) (the “Site”) from October 27, 2020 to January 29, 2021, accurately and truthfully complete the online registration form, accept these Terms and Conditions and follow the instructions for submitting an “Entry” as described on the Site and below. An “Entry” must be an original idea for an early-stage technology-enabled solution that drives economic development and/or solves social or environmental problems as described further on the Site. The party submitting an Entry is referred to as a “Participant” or “you.” Participants may submit an Entry individually, or as part of a team, or as a Business Entity (as described below). As used herein, “Entry” means all submissions, original ideas, videos, documents or other materials submitted to Sponsor in connection with the Contest. Each Entry must be the original creation of the Participant. Once submitted, Entries may not be cancelled, removed or revoked by the Participant. Sponsor, its affiliates, licensees, successors and assigns are in no way obligated to use or continue to use any Entry.

**CONTEST PARTICIPATION**

**Individuals:**
Individual Participants may enter the Contest in their individual capacities to develop and submit a single Entry

**Teams:** As an alternative to participating as a single individual, a group of individuals may elect to form a team (“Team”) of up to five members to develop and submit a single Entry. Each member of the Team (“Team Member”) must accept these Terms and Conditions. Sponsor reserves the right to disqualify any Team (and all Team Members) if any one Team Member has not accepted these Terms and Conditions.

Teams must designate one individual member as the “Team Leader” for contact and Contest administrative purposes. The Team Leader will be responsible for submitting the Entry on behalf of the Team. An individual may only be a member of one Team. In the event an individual on a Team is disqualified, the Team the individual belongs to and the Entry submitted by the Team will be disqualified.

**Business Entities:** Business Entity Participants must enter the Contest on behalf of their legal business organizations to develop and submit a single Entry. An Entry submitted by a Business Entity Participant must designate one individual member as the “Business Team Leader” for contact and Contest administrative purposes. The Business Team Leader will be responsible for submitting the Entry on behalf of the Business Entity. Any individual who is employed by a Business Entity Participant may not submit an Entry in his or her individual capacity (i.e., as an Individual Participant, or as part of a Team).

**IMPORTANT NOTE TO BUSINESS ENTITY PARTICIPANTS:**
By submitting an Entry, you represent and warrant to Sponsor that your Business Team Leader (a) is an authorized representative of the Business Entity Participant, and is submitting the Entry on behalf of such business entity, and (b) has obtained all necessary
approvals from the Business Entity Participant to enter the Contest pursuant to these Terms and Conditions, including all employee and corporate permissions to submit any intellectual property to Sponsor. If you have any questions about such authority and permissions, you should work directly with counsel from the Business Entity Participant before submitting any Entry.

Participants may only submit one Entry. Participants are responsible for any costs or expenses associated with preparing and submitting an Entry. All Entries suspected of violating intellectual property rights, or any local or country law(s) will be ineligible. Participants assume all risk of damaged, lost, late, incomplete, invalid, incorrect or misdirected Entries. All Entries (and related information) shall be deemed collected and judged in the United States of America.

All Entries must be submitted in English.

Each Participant agrees that Sponsor will have the right, but not the obligation, in its sole discretion to contact any Participant regarding a possible transaction or other business relationship with Sponsor to commercially pursue a submitted idea.

Below is a general description of the Contest process:

**Qualification**

To enter the Contest, each Participant is required to 1) complete an online questionnaire (to be provided by Sponsor) (the “Initial Submission”) as described on the Contest Site and 2) submit a 90 second overview video to further explain their Entry. The video must not depict recognizable third party marks, copyrights, brands or other property, unless Participant has obtained all proper licenses. All trademarks, service marks, copyrighted materials, and venues must be generic in nature.

Each Initial Submission along with the other information requested of Participant during the registration process, may be reviewed by Sponsor and/or one or more judges selected by Sponsor (collectively, the "Judging Panel"), to determine if the Initial Submission meets the eligibility criteria for the Contest as described in these Terms and Conditions. In Sponsor's discretion, Sponsor may engage third-party subject matter experts and judges to serve on the Judging Panel and/or assist with the review of Entries and selection of Contest winners.

All Initial Submissions determined by the Sponsor and/or the Judging Panel as meeting the eligibility criteria (based on a preliminary review) will advance to Round One. [NOTE: During this qualification process, the Sponsor will perform a preliminary review of Entries only. In the event an Entry proceeds to the later rounds, Sponsor reserves the right to conduct a more detailed review of the Entry/Participants to definitively determine eligibility for the Contest -- which eligibility decision will be made in Sponsor's sole discretion.]

In the event that Sponsor (with input from the Judging Panel, as appropriate) determines that any Initial Submission does not or may not meet the eligibility criteria for the Contest,
Sponsor may (a) disqualify the Entry, or (b) request that the Participant submit a revised, clarified description of the Entry, for further consideration by Sponsor.

All Initial Submissions that are determined to be initially eligible for the Contest per the process described above will advance to Round One (described below).

**All Initial Submissions must be received by Sponsor on or before January 29, 2021 at 5:00pm Pacific Time.**

**Round One**

After an Entry has been qualified per the process described above, it is deemed to be in Round One, and the Initial Submission is deemed “final” and can no longer be modified by a Participant.

Participants may be invited to either a) attend a Webex conference call to answer questions and/or to further explain or clarify their Entry or b) respond to written questions via email. A request for a Webex conference call or email questions does not indicate that the Participant will be a Semi-Finalist, and not all Participants will be requested to join a conference call or answer questions via email. If a Participant is invited to respond to questions via email, they will be given a minimum of 5 days to respond. Participant agrees that the information, ideas and materials provided to Sponsor in connection with Round One, and any other information, ideas or other materials otherwise provided to Sponsor in connection with the Contest, may be publicly disclosed by Sponsor or its agents, and used for Sponsor’s marketing and public relations activities, in Sponsor’s sole discretion.

From all the Entries in Round One, the Judging Panel will select up to eighty (80) Entries to proceed to Round Two as Semi-Finalists. The Judging Panel will make its selections based on the content of the Entries using the judging criteria as outlined in these Terms and Conditions.

Round One judging will take place between January 29 – March 29, 2021. Semi-Finalists are expected to be announced on or about March 30, 2021.

**Round Two**

To enter Round Two, each Semi-Finalist is required to 1) submit a 90 second overview video, and 2) complete an online questionnaire (to be provided by Sponsor) (the “Round two Submission”) as described on the Contest Site. The video submitted in Round One may be re-submitted in this round. Alternatively, a new video may be submitted. The video must not depict recognizable third party marks, copyrights, brands or other property, unless Participant has obtained all proper licenses. All trademarks, service marks, copyrighted materials, and venues must be generic in nature. Submissions for Round 2 will be open between March 30, 2021 and April 23, 2021 at 5pm Pacific Time.

Participants may be invited to either a) attend a Webex conference call to answer questions and/or to further explain or clarify their Entry or b) respond to written questions via email. A request for a Webex conference call or email questions does not indicate
that the Participant will be a Finalist, and not all Participants will be requested to join a conference call or answer questions via email. If a Participant is invited to respond to questions via email, they will be given a minimum of 5 days to respond.

Participant agrees that the information, ideas and materials provided to Sponsor in connection with Round Two, and any other information, ideas or other materials otherwise provided to Sponsor in connection with the Contest, may be publicly disclosed by Sponsor or its agents, and used for Sponsor’s marketing and public relations activities, in Sponsor’s sole discretion.

From all the Entries in Round Two, the Judging Panel will select up to forty (40) to proceed to Round Three as Finalists. The Judging Panel will make its selections based on the content of the Entries using the judging criteria as outlined in these Terms and Conditions.

All Round Two Submissions must be received by Sponsor on or before April 23, 2020 at 5:00pm Pacific Time.

Round Two judging will take place between April 23 – June 1, 2021. Finalists are expected to be announced on or about June 2, 2021.

People’s Choice Award

The video overviews and short summaries from the questionnaires belonging to the Finalists selected in Round Two will entered in the People’s Choice Award for public voting. Public votes will be based on review of the video overview submitted by the Participant. The Participant owning the video overview with the highest number of votes at the end of the round will win the People’s Choice Award, as described in the Prizes section below.

Note: The People’s Choice Award is in addition to the other Contest awards and winning the People’s Choice Award does not preclude winning any of the other prizes.

Potential winners must comply with all Terms and Conditions; winning is contingent upon verification of eligibility and compliance with all requirements herein. Sponsor will announce the winner on the Site and attempt to notify the winner individually by mail, email or telephone (at Sponsor’s discretion and using the information provided in the registration).

People’s Choice voting will take place between June 02 and June 18, 2021. The winners are expected to be announced on or about June 29, 2021, subject in part to timely return by the potential winner of all appropriate documents required by Sponsor. (See the "Affidavits and Releases" section below.)

Cisco Employees’ Choice Award

The video overviews and short summaries from the questionnaires belonging to the Finalists selected in Round Two will entered in the Cisco Employees’ Choice Award for
Cisco employee voting. Employee votes will be based on review of the video overview submitted by the Participant. The Participant owning the video overview with the highest number of votes at the end of the round will win the Cisco Employees’ Choice Award, as described in the Prizes section below. Note: The Cisco Employees’ Choice Award is in addition to the other Contest awards and winning the Cisco Employees’ Choice Award does not preclude winning any of the other prizes.

Potential winners must comply with all Terms and Conditions; winning is contingent upon verification of eligibility and compliance with all requirements herein. Sponsor will announce the winner on the Site and attempt to notify the winner individually by mail, email or telephone (at Sponsor’s discretion and using the information provided in the registration).

Cisco Employees’ Choice voting will take place between June 02 and June 18, 2021. The winners are expected to be announced on or about June 29, 2021, subject in part to timely return by the potential winner of all appropriate documents required by Sponsor. (See the "Affidavits and Releases" section below.)

**Round Three**

From the Finalists selected in Round Two, the Judging Panel will select up to twenty (20) Contest “Winners”, using the judging criteria described in the "Judging Criteria" section below. In addition, Finalists may be invited to either a) attend a Webex conference call to answer questions and/or to further explain or clarify their Entry or b) respond to written questions via email. A request for a Webex conference call or email questions does not indicate that the Participant will be a Winner, and not all Participants will be requested to join a conference call or answer questions via email. If a Participant is invited to respond to questions via email, they will be given a minimum of 3 days to respond.

Participant agrees that the information, ideas and materials provided to Sponsor in connection with Round Three, and any other information, ideas or other materials otherwise provided to Sponsor in connection with the Contest, may be publicly disclosed by Sponsor or its agents, and used for Sponsor’s marketing and public relations activities, in Sponsor’s sole discretion.

Final Round judging will take place between June 2 – June 25, 2021. Winners are expected to be announced on or about June 29, 2021, subject in part to timely return by the potential winners of all appropriate documents required by Sponsor. (See the "Affidavits and Releases" section below.) All decisions of the Judging Panels are final, non-appealable and binding. Potential winners must comply with all Terms and Conditions; winning is contingent upon verification of eligibility and compliance with all requirements herein. Sponsor will announce the winners on the Site and attempt to notify them individually by mail, email or telephone (at Sponsor’s discretion and using the information provided in the registration).

**JUDGING CRITERIA:**

All Entries that meet the eligibility criteria for the Contest and do not otherwise violate any terms and conditions of the Contest, as solely determined by Sponsor, will advance to
Judging Round One. For Judging Round One, Judging Round Two, and Judging Round Three, the Judging Panel will make their selection based on the content of the Entries and using the following criteria:

1. Innovative Internet of Things (IoT) or digital technology aspect of solution: How innovative is the solution in its use of new or existing technology to solve a local or global problem? Are there other solutions available and if so, how does this differentiate from them? (33%)

2. Feasibility: How feasible is the solution to put into practice? Does the solution make sense financially? Will the solution be sustainable over the long term? (24%)

3. Impact: What is the scale of potential social impact? How broad is the impact? How many people will your solution reach? How significant is the impact? (33%)

4. Clarity: How well do you articulate your solution and the potential impact it will have on society? (10%)

CONTENT TERMS OF SUBMISSION: Proof of an uploaded Entry does not constitute proof or evidence that Sponsor received the Entry within the Contest Period or that it is otherwise eligible for the Contest. Sponsor reserves the right to disqualify and/or remove any Entry or Participant for any reason or no reason within its sole and absolute discretion. Nothing in these Terms and Conditions shall require Cisco to monitor or edit the Site or any Entries for offensive or otherwise objectionable content. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Cisco may reject or remove from the Site or Contest any Entry which might be considered, offensive, defamatory, obscene, illegal, harmful, in violation of the Site Acceptable Use Policy or that otherwise falls short of Sponsor’s (or its customers’) standards. All Participants shall use the Site according to these Terms and Conditions and any Site Acceptable Use Policy available at the Site.

REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES By submitting an Entry, Participant represents and warrants as follows:

i. all registration information is complete, accurate and truthful;

ii. For Individual Participants and Team Participants: no person or entity (including your employer or academic institution) other than you has any right, title or interest in any part of your Entry;

iii. For Business Entity Participants: The Business Team Leader (a) is an authorized representative of the Business Entity Participant, (b) is submitting the Entry on behalf of the Business Entity Participant, as an organization, and (b) has obtained all necessary corporate and other approvals from the Business Entity Participant, as an organization, to enter the Contest and submit the company’s intellectual property, as contemplated under these Terms and Conditions.

iv. no other party is entitled to claim royalties from the use of the Entry;

v. your Entry does not and will not infringe or violate any rights of any third party or entity, including, without limitation Intellectual Property Rights (as defined below), defamation,
privacy, publicity, false light, misappropriation, confidentiality, or any contractual or other rights;

vi. your entire Entry is an original work by you, and you have all the rights, licenses, permissions and consents necessary to submit the Entry and to grant all of the rights that you have granted hereunder;

vii. you (and any Entries made by you) shall at all times comply with any Site Acceptable Use Policy available at the Site;

viii. your Entry does not contain content that is inconsistent with the permissible uses outlined by these Terms and Conditions, including, but not limited to, content that is unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, defamatory, libelous, invasive of another’s privacy, vulgar, profane, sexually explicit, obscene, racially or ethnically offensive or otherwise objectionable;

ix. you will not upload, post or otherwise transmit any Entry or content that contains software viruses, Trojan horses, worms, time bombs, cancelbots or any other computer code or files that are designed to disrupt, damage, or limit the functioning of any software or hardware; and

x. you are not submitting any confidential, proprietary, or trade secret information.

NO CONFIDENTIAL RELATIONSHIP

No Entry will be received or held “in confidence” and under no circumstance will your Entry create a confidential relationship or obligation of secrecy between you and Sponsor or between you and any other party. Without limitation of the foregoing, you understand and agree that your Entry may be publicly disclosed by Sponsor on the Site, or in other public communications, forums and media. Before submission, Participants should be guided by their own attorneys as to the desirability of seeking patents or other protection for Entries. Participant acknowledges that Sponsor may currently or in the future be developing information internally, or receiving information from other parties, that is similar to the Entry. Accordingly, nothing herein shall prohibit Sponsor from independently acquiring, developing, or having developed for it, products, concepts, systems, services, or techniques that are similar to or compete with the products, concepts, systems or techniques contemplated by or embodied in any Entry. You recognize that other persons or entities may have provided Sponsor or others, or made public, or may in the future submit, or make public, materials that are the same or similar to your Entry. You acknowledge and agree that Sponsor shall have the right to use such same or similar materials, and that you will not be entitled to any compensation arising from Sponsor’s use of such materials. In the event that your Entry is identical or similar to the Entry of another Participant, Sponsor reserves the right to score one Entry higher than the other subject to the judging criteria set forth below and at the sole discretion of the Judging Panel.

PRIZE(S):

Subject to these Terms and Conditions, once confirmed by Sponsor, the winner(s) will receive the following:

- One (1) Grand Prize of $250,000 USD
- Three (3) Regional 1st Runners-up Prizes of $75,000 USD each
- Three (3) 2nd Runners-Up Prizes of $50,000 USD each
- Three (3) 3rd Runners-Up Prizes of $25,000 USD each
- Three (3) 4th Runners-Up Prizes of $10,000 USD each
- One (1) People’s Choice Award of $10,000 USD
- One (1) Cisco Employee’ Choice Award of $10,000 USD
- One (1) HBCU Startup Prize of $50,000 USD
- One (1) Greenhouse Gas Solutions Prize of $50,000 USD
- One (1) Ethical AI Prize of $50,000 USD
- One (1) Digital Inclusivity Prize of $50,000 USD
- One (1) Pandemic Response Prize of $50,000 USD

For Team Participants, the prize amounts will be distributed to the Team Leader, the official representative specified in the winning entry. The Team Leader will have sole responsibility for further distribution of any cash prizes among the individual Team Members. For Business Entity Participants, the prize amounts will be distributed directly to the legal business organization.

The total value of all prizes is $1,000,000. All amounts are in United States dollars. No assignment or transfer is allowed by Winner. If a potential winner is unable to participate in or accept the prize or any portion of the prize for any reason, Sponsor shall have no further obligation to such potential winner. Neither Sponsor nor any of its prize suppliers will replace any lost or stolen prizes after being awarded to winners. In no event will Sponsor be responsible for awarding more than the stated number of prizes.

ADDITIONAL WINNER(S) REQUIREMENTS.

For a period of three (3) years, Winner(s) will comply with reasonable requests from Cisco to provide updates to Cisco on their progress and use of the prize.

For a period of three (3) years, Winner(s) will comply with reasonable requests by Cisco for interviews and appearances, including granting Cisco the right to use his/her name, likeness and related content in Cisco marketing campaigns and Cisco–owned platforms. Winner(s) agree to execute any necessary releases for this purpose.

NOTIFICATION OF WINNER(S). Winners will be notified by phone, mail and/or email, at Sponsor’s discretion. Sponsor’s decision will be final in all matters. Sponsor may also send potential winner(s) a declaration of eligibility / liability / publicity release ("Release"). Unless restricted by law, potential winners receiving such a Release may be required to complete and return it within the time period specified therein. The prize may be forfeited and, in such case, an alternate potential winner may in Sponsor’s discretion be selected from among the remaining eligible entries (using the criteria described above), if a potential winner: (i) cannot be reached; (ii) fails to obtain all signatures on the Release and to return the documents in a
timely manner as required pursuant to these Official Rules; or (iii) cannot accept or receive the prize for any reason. Prizes will be sent to winner as quickly as practicable following notification (and receipt of any Release and related document, if applicable).

**TAX CONSIDERATIONS.** Each winner will be solely responsible for any local, provincial, country or any other applicable taxes, and any other costs, expenses and fees in connection with the prize. If applicable, the winner(s) may be issued an IRS Form 1099 or other tax documentation.

**AFFIDAVITS AND RELEASES.** All Winners will be required to sign and return an Affidavit/Declaration/Certificate of Eligibility/Release of Liability, for receipt by Sponsor within five (5) calendar days of the date such documents are dated. Such documents may include a requirement that the Winners obtain written consent from his/her employer or university (in a form provided by Sponsor) that such employer or university has no rights or other interest in the idea submitted by the Participant. In the event of noncompliance with these Terms and Conditions, if a Winner or potential winner cannot be reached using the contact information provided on the Entry on or within two attempts, or if the prize-winner notification is returned as unclaimed or undeliverable, the prize will be forfeited and an alternate potential winner may be selected. Prizes are not assignable or transferable in whole or in part. No prize substitutions allowed, in whole or in part, except the Sponsor reserves the right to substitute a prize of comparable value.

**VERIFICATION/AUDIT.** Participant understands and agrees that Cisco may (but is not required to) verify, audit or otherwise confirm Participant’s identity, registration information, eligibility or other information relating to any Participant or Entry that may aid Sponsor in selecting Contest winner(s). Participant hereby consents to such verification efforts and shall reasonably cooperate fully and in good faith with Cisco throughout the duration of the Contest. Cisco, in its sole and absolute discretion, may suspend, remove or otherwise eject any Participant suspected of providing false, misleading or other information that may fail to comply with these Terms and Conditions, any applicable Site Acceptable Use Policy or any other Contest rules or regulations.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS.**

The Contest is subject to applicable federal, state and local laws, and these Terms and Conditions.

Each winner will be solely responsible for any local, provincial, country or any other applicable taxes, and any other costs, expenses and fees in connection with the prize. If applicable, the winner(s) may be issued an IRS Form 1099 or other tax documentation for the approximate retail value of any awarded prize.

Participant grants permission to Sponsor and its authorized representatives to use his/her name, address (city and state/province/territory/country), photograph, voice, and/or other likeness for advertising, trade and promotional purposes without further compensation, in all media now known or hereafter discovered, worldwide, and on the Internet and world wide web, in perpetuity, without notice, consideration, review or approval.
Following the Contest Period, Sponsor shall not be required to retain records of any Entries. By participating, Participant hereby: (a) agrees bound by these Terms and Conditions, and the decisions of Sponsor, which shall be final and binding; and (b) waives any right to claim ambiguity in the Contest or these Official Rules, except where prohibited by law. Once submitted, an Entry cannot be deleted or cancelled.

Participant acknowledges and agrees that Sponsor has neither made, nor is in any manner responsible or liable for, any warranty, representation or guarantee, expressed or implied, in fact or in law, relative to any prize or the Contest. All warranties are hereby disclaimed; and each potential winner will accept the Prize "AS IS." All costs and expenses, including support services, not specifically listed above as part of the prize, are solely the winner’s responsibility.

In the event of a dispute as to the source of any Entry, the authorized account holder of the email address used to enter will be deemed to be the person making the Entry. The authorized “account holder” is the natural person assigned an email address by an Internet access provider, online service provider or other organization responsible for assigning email addresses for the domain associated with the submitted address.

Subject to applicable law, Sponsor reserves the right in its discretion, to (a) cancel, terminate, modify or suspend this Contest and these Terms and Conditions, for any reason, at any time and without any liability, and (b) limit or restrict participation in the Contest, upon notice. All Participants are solely responsible for compliance with any applicable laws, rules and regulations, contractual limitations and/or office or company policies, if any, regarding Participant’s participation in trade promotions or acceptance of promotional prizes; and by entering this Contest, Participant confirms that he or she is not in violation of any of the foregoing and has obtained the consent of his or her employer to participate, if applicable. If a Participant is not permitted to accept any received prize, then the Participant may return such prize to Sponsor; and Sponsor will refund the cost of shipment, as appropriate.

Use of any automated entry device or software is prohibited. Creation or use of multiple accounts for registration, voting or participation in the Contest is prohibited. To the extent the Contest uses or requires functionality of any third party website (e.g., social media sites or platforms that enable broad communications, collaboration and/or posting of videos), you understand that the Contest is not sponsored by such third parties, and further agree to follow the policies on such website(s), as applicable. Sponsor reserves the right to disqualify any Participant it finds to be tampering with the entry process or the operation of the Contest or violating these Terms and Conditions, or otherwise acts in an uncooperative, unsportsmanlike, disruptive, abusive, or threatening manner; and Sponsor reserves the right to cancel the Contest should it suspect fraud or for reasons out of the control of Sponsor. Disputes regarding these Official Rules and/or this Contest will be governed by the internal laws of California. CAUTION: ANY ATTEMPT TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE CONTEST MAY BE IN VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEST. SHOULD SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, SPONSOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEEK REMEDIES AND DAMAGES (INCLUDING ATTORNEY FEES) TO THE FULLEST EXTENT OF THE LAW, INCLUDING CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.
Sponsor is not responsible for: (a) lost, late, misdirected, undeliverable, incomplete or indecipherable entries due to system errors or failures, or faulty transmissions or other telecommunications malfunctions and/or entries; (b) technical failures of any kind; (c) failures of any of the equipment or programming associated with or utilized in the Contest; (d) unauthorized human and/or mechanical intervention in any part of the submission process or the Contest administration; (e) technical or human error which may occur in the administration of the Contest or the processing of entries; or (f) other factors beyond Sponsor’s reasonable control. Sponsor is not responsible for injury or damage to any Participant’s or any other person’s computer related to or resulting from participating in the Contest or downloading materials from or use of the Site.

If for any reason the Contest is not capable of running as planned by Sponsor, including infection by computer virus, bugs, tampering, unauthorized intervention, fraud, technical failures, or any other causes which, in Sponsor’s sole determination, corrupts or affects the administration, security, fairness, integrity, or proper conduct of this Contest, Sponsor reserves the right at its sole discretion to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the Contest. If Contest is cancelled prior to the end of the Contest Period, for the reasons stated above, notice will be posted on the Contest website; and some or all of the prizes may, in Sponsor’s sole discretion, be awarded to potential winners to be selected (using the judging criteria described above) from among all the remaining uncorrupted entries received up until the time of modification or cancellation.

Sponsor shall not be liable to any Participant or other person for failure to supply any prize or any part thereof, by reason of the prize becoming, for reasons beyond the reasonable control of Sponsor, unavailable or impracticable to award, or for any force majeure event, technical or equipment failure, terrorist acts, labor dispute, or act/omission of any kind (whether legal or illegal), transportation interruption, civil disturbance, or any other cause similar or dissimilar beyond Sponsor’s control.

**LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY AND RELEASE.** PARTICIPANT AGREES THAT SPONSOR, ITS AFFILIATES, DIVISIONS, SUBSIDIARIES, RESELLERS, DEALERS, DISTRIBUTORS, ADVERTISING/PROMOTION AGENCIES, AND ALL OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, REPRESENTATIVES AND AGENTS (“RELEASED PARTIES”) WILL HAVE NO LIABILITY WHATSOEVER FOR, AND WILL BE RELEASED AND HELD HARMLESS BY PARTICIPANT FOR ANY CLAIMS, LIABILITIES, OR CAUSES OF ACTION OF ANY KIND OR NATURE FOR ANY INJURY, LOSS OR DAMAGES OF ANY KIND INCLUDING DIRECT, INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, CONSEQUENTIAL OR PUNITIVE DAMAGES TO PERSONS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT. SOME JURISDICTIONS MAY NOT ALLOW THE LIMITATIONS OR EXCLUSION OF LIABILITY FOR INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES OR EXCLUSION OF IMPLIED WARRANTIES, IN WHICH CASE SUCH LIMITATION OR EXCLUSION SHALL APPLY ONLY TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY THE LAW IN THE RELEVANT JURISDICTION.
PUBLICITY. Participant acknowledges and agrees that Sponsor may use the Contest (including any submission) for publicity, advertising or other marketing purposes, in any media, and may use the name, likeness, and hometown name and/or prize information of potential winners as part of that publicity, without additional compensation to the potential winners.

PRIVACY. All personal information collected by Sponsor will be used for the administration of the Contest and in accordance with Sponsor’s privacy statement. Any questions regarding privacy matters should be directed to the address set out below. Please refer to Sponsor’s privacy statement located at https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/about/legal/privacy-full.html for important information regarding the collection, use and disclosure of personal information by Sponsor.

CHOICE OF LAW: This Contest and any action related thereto shall be governed, controlled, interpreted and defined by and under the laws of the State of California and the United States of America, without regard to the conflicts of laws provisions thereof. The exclusive jurisdiction and venue of any action with respect to the subject matter of these Terms and Conditions shall be the state courts of the State of California for the County of Santa Clara or the United States District Court for the Northern District of California and each of the parties hereto submits itself to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of such courts for the purpose of any such action. The parties specifically disclaim the UN Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods. Any and all claims, judgments, and awards shall be limited to actual out-of-pocket costs incurred, including costs associated with participating in this Contest, but in no event attorneys’ fees. Participants hereby waive all rights to (i) claim or be awarded any punitive, direct, indirect, incidental, and consequential damages and any other damages, other than for actual out-of-pocket expenses, and (ii) to have damages multiplied or otherwise increased, including for willful patent infringement.

OFFICIAL RULES AND WINNERS’ LIST. For a copy of these Official Rules or the names of winners, please contact Sponsor by mail at the address below addressed to attention: cisco-challenge-support@skild.com. Or please check the Site for a list of winner’s names. Winners list to be available approximately ten days after the Contest Period.

SPONSOR: Cisco Systems, Inc., 170 West Tasman Drive, San Jose, California, USA, 95134
Resources

Promotional Toolkit
Help us spread the word by downloading social media posts, share links, flyers, and graphics needed to promote the Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2021 to your network.

Click here

How to win $250K USD in 90 seconds?
Watch these videos to learn tips on how to create your best Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge pitch video.

YouTube video

Savanna Circuit Tech: Grand Prize Winner, Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2020
Learn how our 2020 Grand Prize winner developed a solar chilling in-transit system to help dairy businesses in Africa cut post-harvest losses.

Click here

Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2020 Winners
Take a deeper dive to learn more about our 2020 Grand Prize winner in our #GlobalProblemSolverChallenge blog series.

Click here

Oorja: Grand Prize Winner, Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2019
Learn about our 2019 Grand Prize winner’s community solar pumping model, Oonnati.

YouTube video

CareNX: Grand Prize Winner, Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2018
Learn how our 2018 Grand Prize winner is providing care to 35,000 expectant mothers in India.

YouTube video
New York Times: Is a Pandemic the Right Time to Start a Business? It Just Might Be

Previous financial crises gave rise to high-profile American companies. The spread of the coronavirus challenges entrepreneurs to meet new needs.

Click here

TED Talk: The Single Biggest Reason Why Startups Succeed

Serial inventor Bill Gross gathered data from hundreds of companies and ranked each company on five key factors. He found one factor that stood out from the others.

YouTube video

Inspirational Global Problem Solvers

Meet these social entrepreneurs who are working to make the world a better place through innovation and technology.

YouTube video

Mike Coto (left), CEO of Majicom: Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2020 $10K USD Third Runner-Up
FAQs

Who can enter?
Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge aims to recognize new business ideas that leverage technology for social impact from early-stage entrepreneurs around the world. Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue. Applicants may be nonprofit or for-profit business entities, or they may not yet have formed a legal business entity. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules.

Can I enter as part of a team?
Yes. A team may have up to 5 team members. If you are registering as part of a team, your team leader will need to register first and can then invite others to register as members of the team. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules.

When do I need to submit my application?
You or your team leader need to complete and submit all the application materials before the deadline on January 29, 2021, at 5 pm PT. For the complete rules, please click here.

What do I need to do in order to apply?
You need to register on our online platform, complete an online questionnaire, and upload required documentation including a 90 second pitch video. For more details on the submission process, please click here.

Can I revise my submission?
Yes, you may revise your submission content (online questions and uploaded files) and resubmit at any time until the deadline of January 29, 2021, 5:00pm PT.

What are the prizes?
The Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge 2021 is offering $1,000,000 USD split among 20 prizes. For more details, please see the Prizes page.

Who will determine the winners?
A team of industry and subject-matter experts from within and outside of Cisco will evaluate each entry based on its integration of digital technologies, level of innovation, and technical and business feasibility including likelihood of sustainability, impact, and clarity to determine the winning solutions.

When can I vote for my favorites?
There will be a public voting period from June 2 – 18, 2021. When voting begins, the video pitches and short overviews provided by the Finalists will be shared publicly during the People’s Choice Award voting period. The Finalist with the highest number of votes on June 18, 2021 at 5 pm will receive the People’s Choice Award and $10,000 USD.

Who can vote for the People’s Choice Award?
Anyone can vote and you can vote for as many teams as you wish during the public voting period from June 2 – 18, 2021.
Every voter will have to register with a valid name and social media account in order to log in to cast their vote.

What will happen to my solution?
At the end of the Challenge your solution will still belong to you and your team. For more information, please review the rules.

Was my entry disqualified?
If your entry does not meet the submission requirements, violates the terms and conditions, contains inappropriate content, or if you or your team did not provide appropriate proof of eligibility, your submission will be disqualified. You will not receive notice of disqualification until the end of the submission process. If you have any question or doubts about what is acceptable please review the rules. If you still have a question, please contact us at cisco-challenge-support@skild.com.

When will the winners be announced?
Finalists will be announced June 2, 2021, and the winners of the Challenge will be announced on June 29, 2021.

What are the judging criteria?
The judging panel will make their selection based on the content of the submissions and using the following criteria:

1. Innovative Internet of Things (IoT) or digital technology Solution: How innovative is the solution in its use of new or existing technology to solve a local or global problem? Are there other solutions available and if so, how does this differentiate from them? (33%)

2. Feasibility: How feasible is the solution to put into practice? Does the solution make sense financially? Will the solution be sustainable over the long-term? (24%)

3. Impact: What is the scale of potential social impact? How broad is the impact? How many people will your solution reach? How significant is the impact? (33%)

4. Clarity: How well do you articulate your solution and the potential impact it will have on society? (10%)

Can I submit an application in a language other than English?
No. All entries, in their entity, must be submitted in English, as outlined in the rules. Videos with English subtitles are acceptable. Entries not submitted in English are subject to disqualification.

If my solution is already a legal business entity, can I participate?
Yes. Business entity participants must enter the contest on behalf of their legal business organization. An entry submitted by a business entity participant must designate one individual member as the Team Leader for contact and contest administrative purposes. The Team Leader will be responsible for submitting the entry on behalf of the business entity. Any individual who is employed by a business entity participant may not submit an entry in his or her individual capacity (i.e., as an Individual Participant).

Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules.
Can I participate in the Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge as a high school student?

In order to be eligible for the challenge, you must be at least 18 years of age at the time of registration. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules.

Can I participate in the Cisco Global Problem Solver Challenge if I am under 18 years of age?

No, in order to be eligible for the challenge, you must be at least 18 years of age at the time of registration.

If I am an intern or contractor/vendor working for Cisco, can I participate?

No. Cisco employees, interns, contracted vendors, and their immediate household or family members are excluded from this challenge. For detailed eligibility requirements, please review the rules.

What stage of development is eligible?

Our goal is to advance early-stage projects that are beyond the concept or idea formation stage, but which have not yet generated over $1M USD in funding and/or revenue. We look for projects with a dedicated team that are beyond the idea formation stage, and that have completed a proof of concept for the core functionality of the product/service at a minimum. Projects that are further along are more likely to score higher on the “Feasibility” criteria. Below are the stages of development we reference:

Idea Formation Stage: The stage at which you have come up with an idea and are thinking about different sub-ideas related to the main idea. You may also begin sharing your idea(s) and plans with others for feedback to advance to the next stage of development, a proof of concept.

Proof of Concept (POC): Proof of concept is a technical exercise to demonstrate that your idea can be developed and is operationally feasible. Ideally, your POC verifies with evidence the core part of the whole system and not just one secondary part within the working system.

Working Prototype: While the POC demonstrates with evidence that it can be done, the working prototype shows how it can be done, how it might look, and how it will be used. It is a model of the system that allows stakeholders and testers an experience of the product/service.

In Beta/Trials: Your prototype or Minimum Viable Product (MVP) is being tested/trialed or is in beta with a potential user group/customer segment.

Product Market Fit: Your product/service is being offered in the marketplace and is proving out the business model with new and repeat customers.

Growth: In this stage, you are increasing the scope and scale of the business model by using suitable mechanisms of marketing, sales and sales channels, and by choosing a suitable engine of growth.

I have a question that isn't answered here. How can I get help?

Please reach out to cisco-challenge-support@skild.com with any additional questions.
Contact:
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