Event Portal - Judge Advisor and Judge Guide

Revision History	
Revision	**Description**
26-27.1	Initial Season Release

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Introduction to the Event Portal – Event Management System

The Event Portal system is the cloud-based, official event management system for *FIRST* Tech Challenge which is used alongside the local event software, FTC Live and the official event results website, FTC Events. The Event Portal is used by several different users with assigned permissions and responsibilities. The Judge Advisor can use the system to `Manage Awards for Judge Advisors` by using the "Awards Manager" for traditional and hybrid events. Judge Advisors (JA) and Judges use the system for video conferencing to meet with teams and deliberate for hybrid events. This guide will explore and explain how to use the Event Portal system as a Judge and Judge Advisor on event day.

Volunteer Roles Assigned in VMS

Once the event has been approved in the Event Portal, Judge Advisor and Judge volunteer assignments made through the Volunteer Management System (VMS) using *FIRST* Dashboard email accounts will automatically grant user permissions within the Event Portal for the assigned event. These volunteer roles require Data Privacy training and role certification before the role will sync with the Event Portal for access to the system. A JA or Judge cannot use the Event Portal until they complete training. Reach out to the event Volunteer Coordinator for more information about assignment in VMS.

- All events within the US and Canada are **required** to use VMS on a per-event basis.
- Events outside of the US and Canada are **encouraged** to use VMS on a per-event basis, but all volunteers must be screened per local standards.

If the event is not using VMS to manage volunteer permissions, a Region Administrator (typically the Program Delivery Partner), or Event Administrator can manually assign role permissions in the Event Portal. Volunteers assigned manually must complete *FIRST* Data Protection and Privacy Training before being assigned.

Event Portal Role Permissions

Once Judge Advisor and Judge have been assigned the role and completed required training, they can log into the Event Portal.

Judge Advisor Permissions

A Judge Advisor has access to an assigned event's homepage "Judging" link. This link gives access to the "Manage Awards" page in the Event Portal, create judging schedules, "Join" all linked interviews, add Judges and teams to Panels, review "Judging Notes," join the "Deliberation Room," and access all Portfolios (if enabled and submitted). A JA also has access to these homepage links:

- Rankings
- Pit Display
- Competing Teams Report
- Cycle Time Report

Judge Permissions

After being assigned to an event, a Judge will log into the Event Portal to participate in interviews for a hybrid event or as a *FIRST* Leadership Award Interview. Once logged in, the event homepage for Judges appears. If you have multiple events, select the correct event to navigate to the event's "Judging" link. A Judge has access to an event's assigned online interview rooms for assigned panels, "Judging Notes," "Deliberation Room," and access to Portfolios under "Judging." An event Judge has no access to the "Awards Manager" for entering awards, so any team award comments, which may be used for scripts, need to be given to the JA. This role also has access to these homepage links:

- Rankings
- Pit Display
- Competing Teams Report
- Cycle Time Report

Event Portal Configuration - Portfolio Submissions

As the event is being configured by the Event Administrator or Region Manager/Administrator, one of the most important configuration settings for judges is knowing whether or not Portfolio Submissions are enabled or not. Beginning in the 2026-2027 BIOBUZZ season, portfolio submissions are now allowed for any event type. For any event type that is a Hybrid event, such as a Hybrid Qualifier, this setting is ON by default (to allow Portfolio Submission) – for all other event types, this setting is OFF by default. Portfolios cannot be submitted unless the Portfolio Submission is enabled in the event configuration settings. The Event Portal roles that have the ability to enable/disable this setting is:

- Event Administrators,
- Technical Directors,
- *FIRST* Technical Advisors,
- Scorekeepers, and
- Regional Administrators / Region Managers.

Judges can determine if the setting is enabled by whether or not the "Team Submissions" section is visible in the Event Judging Home page in the Event Portal. Figure 15 shows an example where the Portfolio Submission is enabled because the "Team Submissions" section is active and available. If your event should allow Portfolio Submissions and your "Team Submissions" section is not active, please immediately reach out to your Event Administrator to enable this in your event's configuration.

Event Day – Log into the Event Portal

Log into https://event-portal.firstinspires.org with the same username (email address) and password used to sign into your *FIRST* Dashboard at firstinspires.org. If you are not already signed into your *FIRST* account, you will be redirected to the firstinspires.org login page as a Single Sign-On (SSO) to use your *FIRST* credentials.

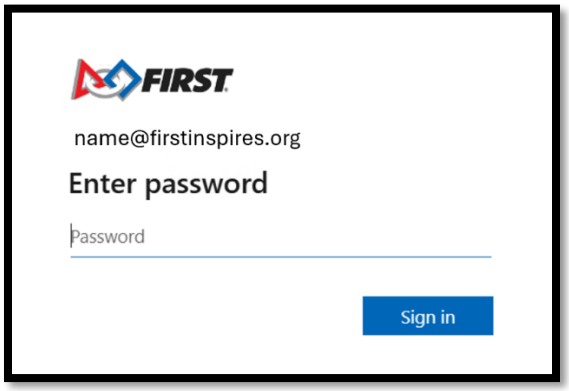


Figure 1: FIRST Dashboard SSO to get to the Event Portal system.

Note: If this is your first time logging into the Event Portal you will have to accept the Terms and Conditions.

Manage Awards for Judge Advisors

The “Awards Manager” is an integral tool to use as part of the official event results. The Awards Manager tool is accessible from the Event Portal on the event page (Figure 2) for the event Judge Advisor. This tool has several functions including allowing a Judge Advisor to enter the awards required for the event size (number of teams) plus optional awards, and to edit the awards scripts (Table 1). The “Awards Manager” process for Judge Advisor to export awards from the Event Portal to import into FTC Live or to “sync” in FTC Live will be described in this section.

In the Event Portal, only a Judge Advisor can see the “Manage Awards” option on the “Event Home” page.

Note: Judges cannot use/edit the “Awards Manager” in the Event Portal. Only the JA assigned to the event with completed training can see this functionality.

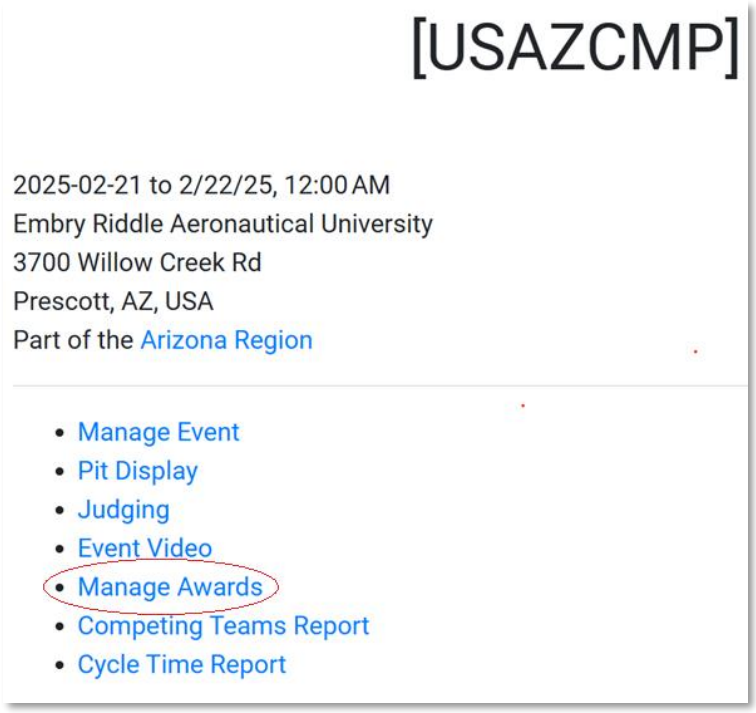


Figure 2: Link to the Awards Manager on the Event Portal

Table 1: Awards Manager Functions

The Event Portal Awards Manager Functionality:	
Enter Awards	Required page for choosing award winners from the drop-down list of teams added to the event. Awards are limited by the size of the event (number of teams). For example, a small event with eight teams would only be allowed to enter one of the MCI awards (Design, Innovate, or Control) and one of the TA awards (Connect, Reach, or Sustain) in the Award Manager.
Import/Export Awards	This is a required step when an event is using the local FTC Live software that will not be connected to the internet. This exports the awards from the Event Portal which can then be imported into the local FTC Live software.
Present Awards/Advancement (Optional)	This is often done in the local FTC Live software and allows for an award/advancement presentation on another screen. This will show award winners and defaults to a “Stealth Mode” – uncheck the box to list award winners. Use the “Next” button to highlight the next award.
Scripts	There are two script tabs – One has an opening ceremony with awards, and the other has the playoff awards script.

Important:
Awards must be included in the event file prior to the Scorekeeper pressing "Send Results to *FIRST*."

DO NOT ignore the WARNING banner. If you need help, please call/email about event tech support before submitting event results. Once the awards have been published, they are read-only and require HQ approval/editing.

Award Scripts

Notes from the interviews can be used to write award scripts that can easily be copied and pasted into the "Judges' Comments" section at the bottom of each award in the "Awards Manager." When saved, these comments are included in the playoff script and read aloud when presenting an award. Only plain text (no bolding, italics, etc.) is allowed in any field in the "Manage Awards" section.

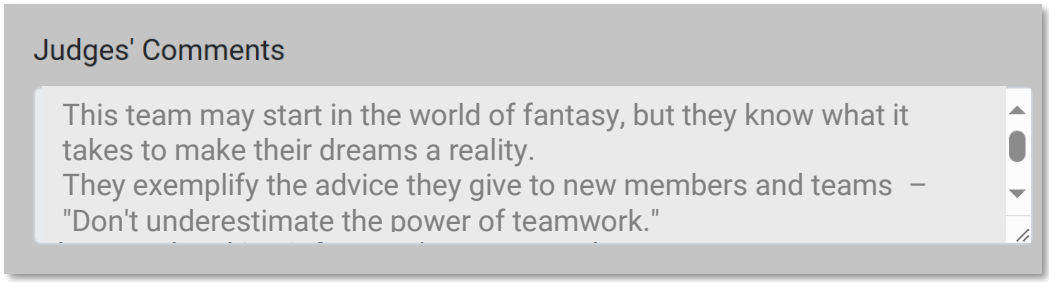


Figure 3: Example of "Judges' Comments."

How to Export Awards from the Awards Manager

Awards will be presented at the end of the event. A Judge Advisor should be in charge of the interviews and can use the Event Portal "Awards Manager" in the cloud to enter awards.

Volunteers should be mindful of their surroundings and who can view the Award Manager when entering or importing/exporting data. Be sure to limit who can view the awards before they are announced!

There are three options depending on what internet connectivity there is at the event:

		FTC Live (Scorekeeper Computer)	
		Yes Internet	**No Internet**
JA Computer/Tablet	**Yes Internet**	Option 1, 2 or 3	Option 2 or 3
	No Internet	Option 3	Option 3

Use Only ONE of these options. If Awards are entered via multiple methods, some awards may be overwritten/deleted/destroyed when importing from a different method – including local manual entry!

1. **The Event Portal Cloud Data Sync**

   The JA uses a computer or tablet with internet access to log into the Event Portal and enter awards. This can be done from the Judging room or other secluded location. After the awards have been entered in the Event Portal, import the awards to the FTC Live laptop using the Awards Manager > Import option. Select the "Sync from Online Scoring System" button in the local scoring software FTC Live (internet access required).

2. **The Event Portal Cloud Award Submission and FTC Live Local Export File Transfer**

   At the in-person event, the awards data transfer to FTC Live may require an extra step if there is no internet connection for the device running the software. If the Judge Advisor has access to an internet connection, the Event Portal can generate a file that can be transferred to FTC Live. The process is outlined below:

   - The JA should enter the Awards and Scripts in the Event Portal using the Awards Manager.
   - Select "Export Awards" – a .json file will be downloaded that can be provided to the Scorekeeper or another trusted volunteer via USB stick or other file transfer method.

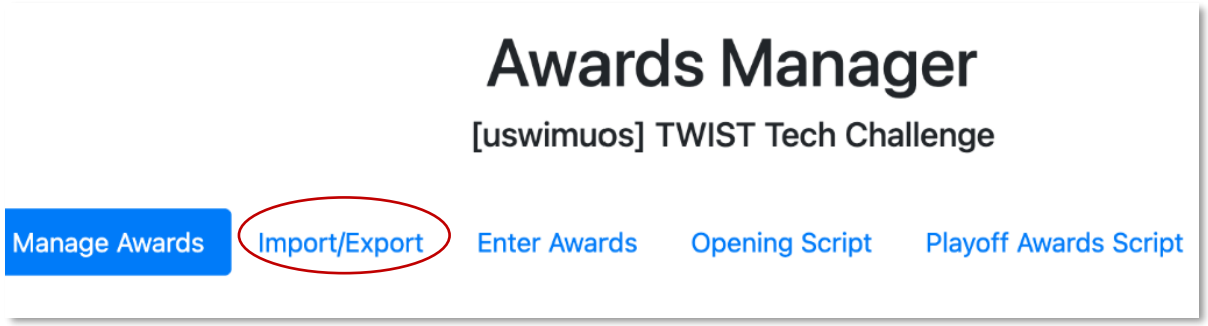


Figure 4: The Event Portal- Use "Export Awards" to download a .json file.

   - The downloaded file can be imported into FTC Live's Awards Manager with the "Import/Export" button.

3. **FTC Live Local Manual Entry**

   If the JA does not have access to an internet connection, they may opt to manually enter the data into FTC Live. This process is the least preferred option as it requires the Judge Advisor to log into a device that can connect to the local FTC Live local network, which may require them to be located near the arena or pits.

   This option is typically only used when the JA is not using the Event Portal to capture the awards. This option also assumes the JA is completing these steps, but can work with other volunteers to complete this process:

   - Log into a device connected to the same network running FTC Live (you do not need to use the same device running the FTC Live server, usually maintained by the Scorekeeper.)

     The Scorekeeper can provide you with the sign-in details for the Judge Advisor. Remember, USE ONLY ONE ENTRY OPTION!

   - Enter the Awards and Scripts in FTC Live using the "Awards Manager".

Judging Sessions in the Event Portal (Online Judging)

The following is a step-by step for Judges and Judge Advisors on how to select an internal or external the video conferencing tool, use the integrated video conferencing tool (Big Blue Button) and the "Notes" integrated into the Event Portal. Some regions use alternative video conferencing tools; those "Join" links can be embedded into the Event Portal by the Region Admin or JA. If you need system assistance prior to events beyond regional support, email any questions and screenshots to ftctech@firstinspires.org.

The Event Portal – Judging Key Terms

Table 2: Key Judging Terms for Online Judging

Key Term	Description
Initial Interview	The initial presentation to judges. A scheduled video conference session is used for a team to present and answer questions.
Pit Interview/Pit Judging	The pit interview video conference scheduled for a team to present and answer questions.
Deliberation Room	The main meeting room is for Judges to discuss notes and meet with the Judge Advisor.
Panels	The equivalent to a judging room at traditional events. Each Panel consists of the two or three Judges assigned to meet with teams in various time slots. In the Event Portal, Judges and teams are added to Panels.
Team Submissions	It consists of a Portfolio for Judges to review if one was submitted, and a place to provide feedback to the team about their Initial Interview.
Awards Manager	The functional feature in the Event Portal and FTC Live to enter award winners, download files, and present awards.
Notes	Multiple notepads, some shared with other Judges, for notes about teams and interviews. These notes are removed when the event results are published.

Find the Judging Event

Once logged in, you should see the Event Portal home page with events that you have an Event Portal role (Judge, Judge Advisor, Team Coach, Head Referee, etc.).

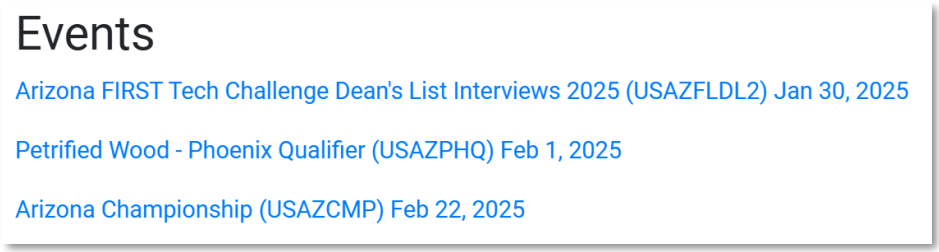


Figure 5: And example list of a user's of event links.

Click on the event in which you are scheduled to judge.

If you have only volunteered for a single event, the system may take you directly to your event page.

Event Home Page

Click on “Judging” to get to the “Event Judging Home” page. On the “Event Judging Home” page you will see the following:

1. A link to the Judging “Deliberation Room.”
2. Links to the Judging Schedule(s) – the full step-by-step for building the Judging Schedule lives in the Event Portal PDP Event Management Guide
3. Link to Judging “Notes.”
4. Team Submissions.

Note: It is worth keeping a tab open to this page throughout the judging process.

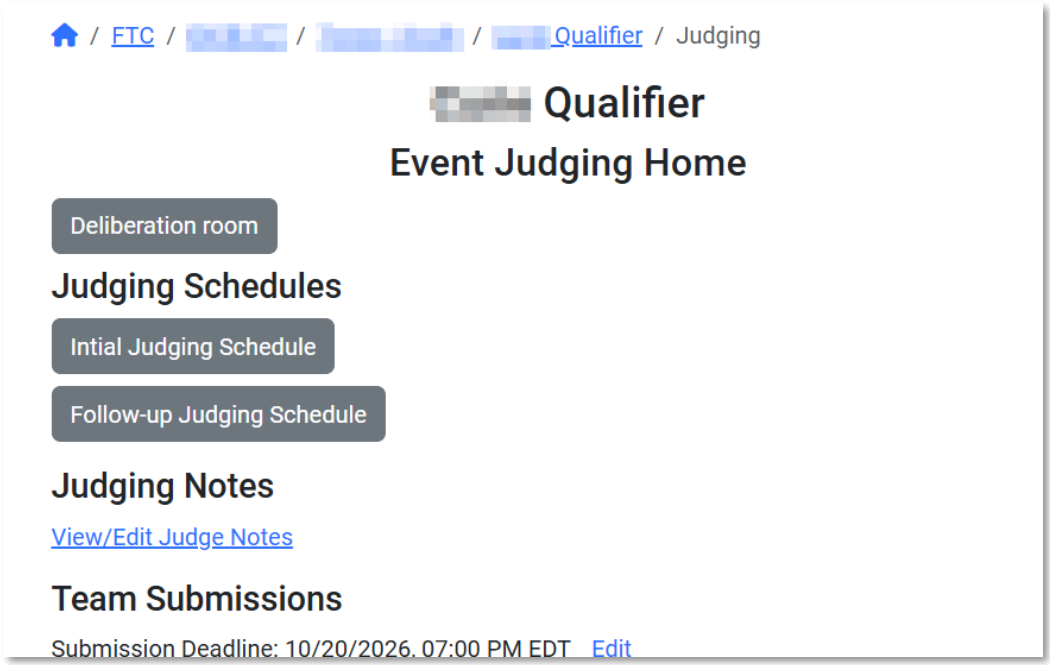


Figure 6: JA's View - Event Judging Home page.

Deliberation Room

Click on the “Deliberation Room” button. This opens the video conferencing application (Big Blue Button). Go here first to check in with the Judge Advisor, Judge Advisor Assistant or the Event Portal Event Administrator that runs the judging sessions. This is also the best place to go if you get “lost” during the event.

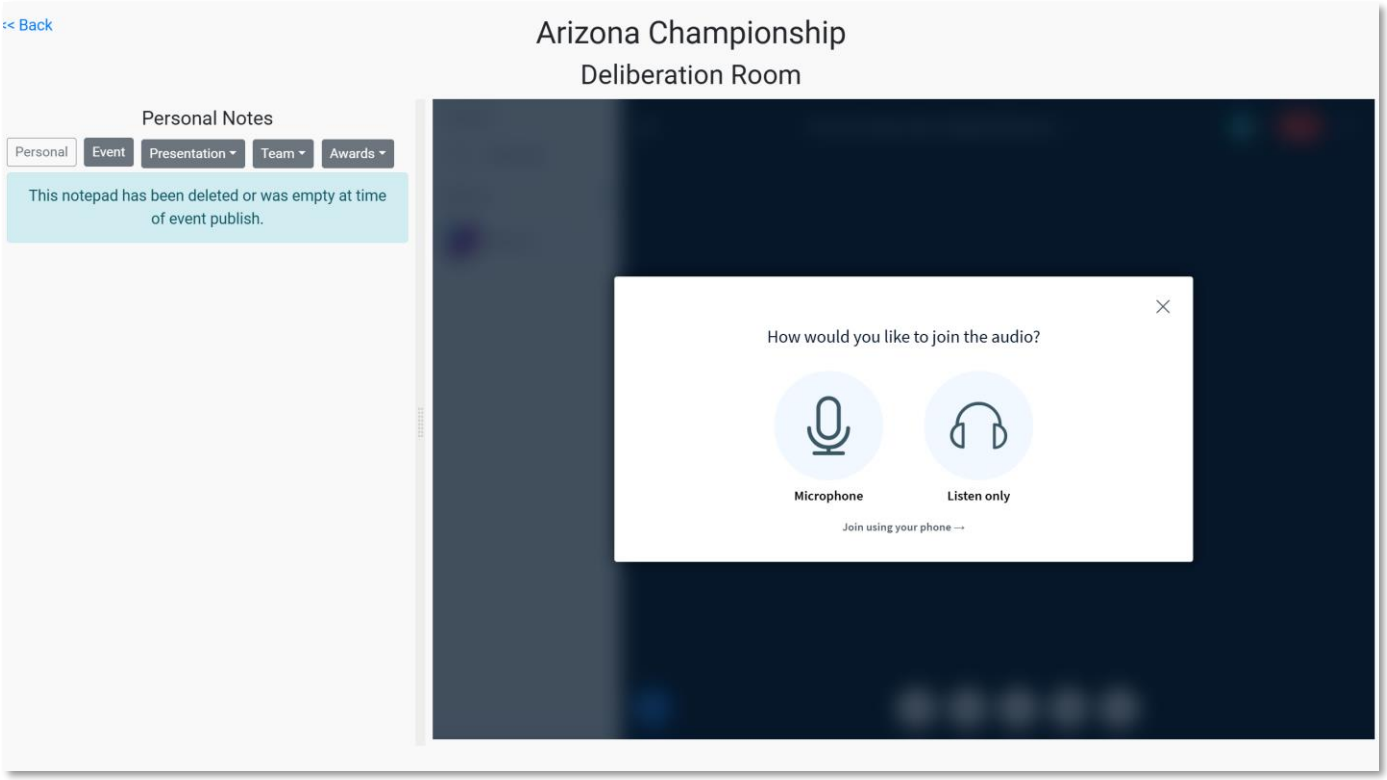


Figure 7: Deliberation Room start screen.

To join the video conference, click on the “Microphone” icon. You may be asked by your web browser to allow the webpage to access your microphone and your camera, click “Allow” or the browser’s equivalent. An “echo test” to confirm your audio is working properly may appear. Follow the instructions shown on the screen.

If you select the “Headphone” (Listen only) option and would like to use your microphone, use the up arrow next to the microphone icon labeled “Change audio device” to switch your audio settings.

Note: Click the on the “Judge Deliberation” text at the top of the video conference to view the session’s details, such as the details to “Join by Phone.” It is a good idea to save the meeting details if you need to move to a phone using cellular data if your network is not working properly. If you are using a phone, you may be muted upon entry to the conference. Follow the prompts on your browser to unmute and mute your phone.

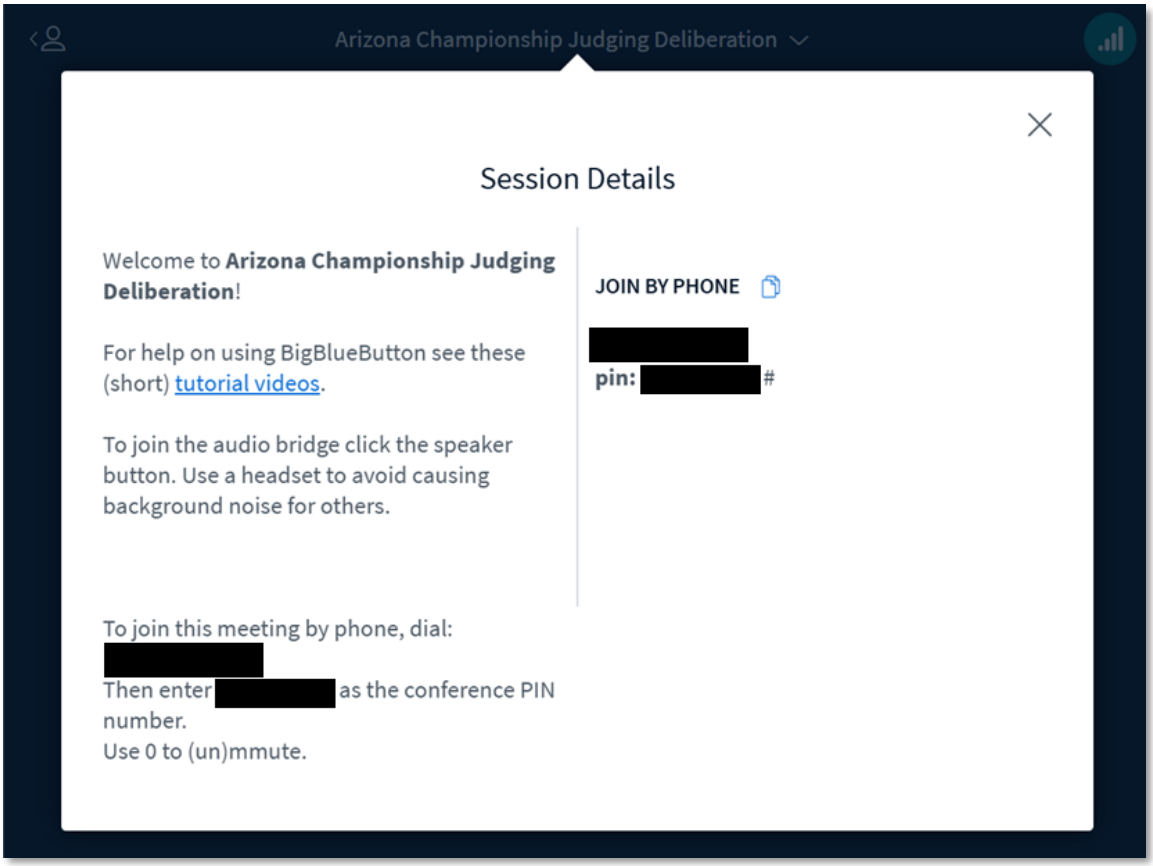


Figure 8: Meeting details screen.

Once completed the screen should look like:

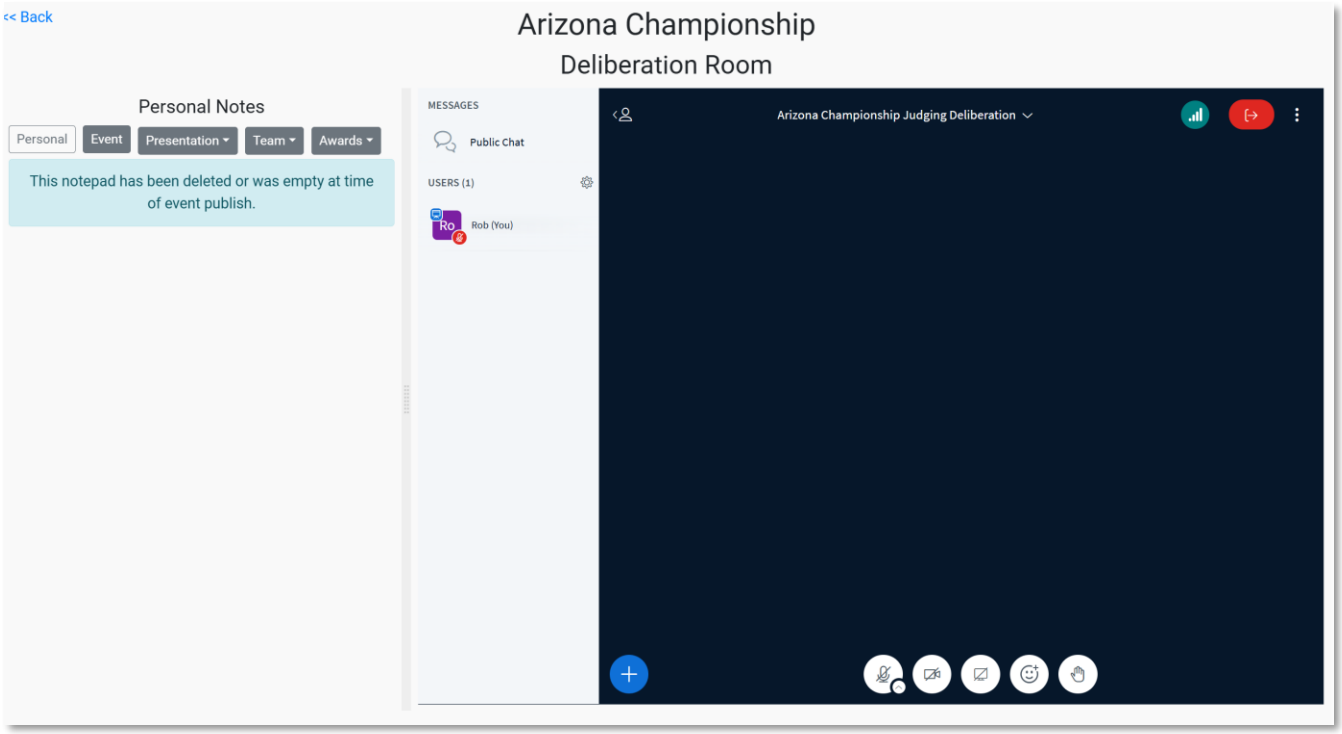


Figure 9: Active "Deliberation Room" screen.

From here, the Judge Advisor can hold discussions with the Judges and assign Judges to breakout rooms for award deliberations after you meet with teams. Judges have access to "Personal Notes," a chat system, and can also see the other individuals in the "Deliberation Room."

Click on the blue "<< Back" button in the upper-left corner of the screen to go back to the "Event Judging Home" page. This will disconnect you from the video conference, and you will have to reconnect your audio if you navigate back to the Deliberation Room or enter a Judging Panel Room. You will also need to reconnect your audio if you refresh a page with a BBB session active.

Initial Interview

The initial Interview section contains the schedule for teams to attend their Initial Interview where they can present to the Judges. The Volunteer Coordinator, the Event Portal Region or Event Administrator or Judge Advisor will inform Judges about the time window for Initial Interviews in advance.

Click on "Initial Interview Schedule:"

- If you are a Judge Advisor, this will bring you to the screen where you will see all the schedules.
- If you are a Judge, you will only see "Join" for the panel(s) you are assigned to judge.
    - If you are a "Floating Judge" you will see a "Join" option for each session.

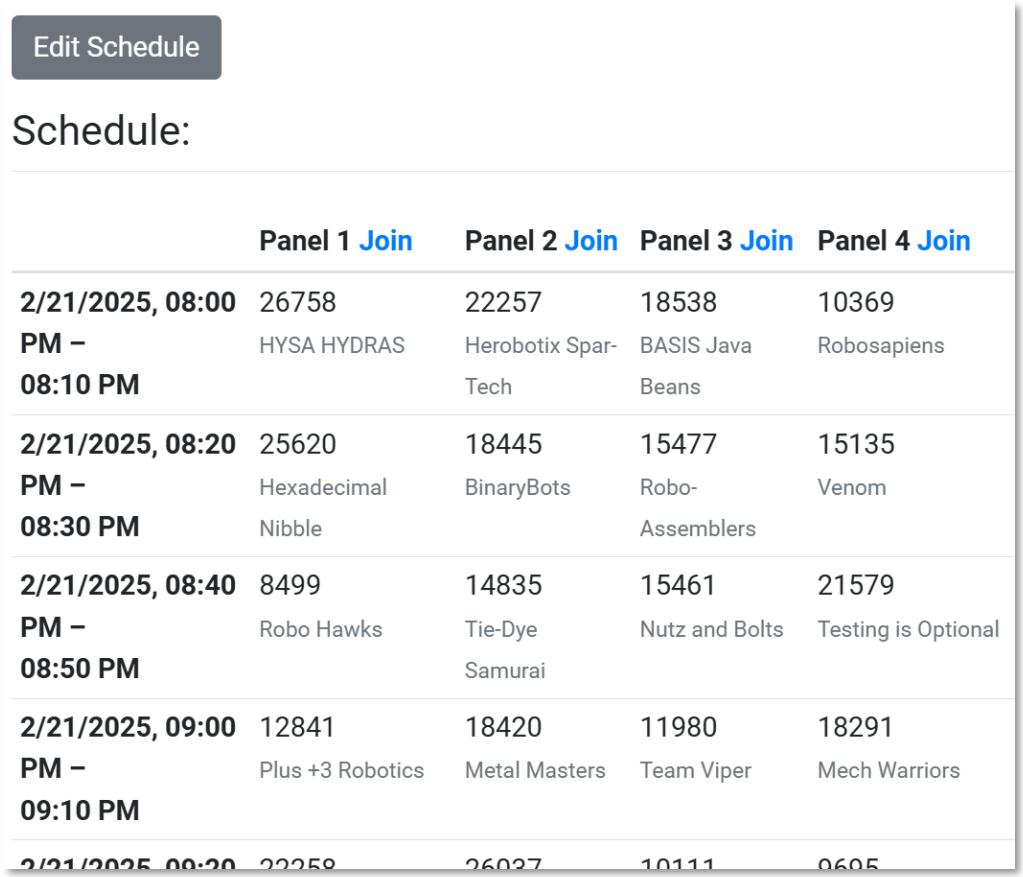


Figure 10: JA's view - Initial Interview schedule page with "Join" links.

Initial Interview – Judging Room

Clicking on the “Initial Interview” button takes you to the Judge Panel’s “waiting room” page. Here you can see all the appointments scheduled for the panel, ”Notes” for the Panel, and the “Join Meeting” button. The “Status” section reports the number of Judges online. Click on “Join Meeting” to enter the Judging Room.

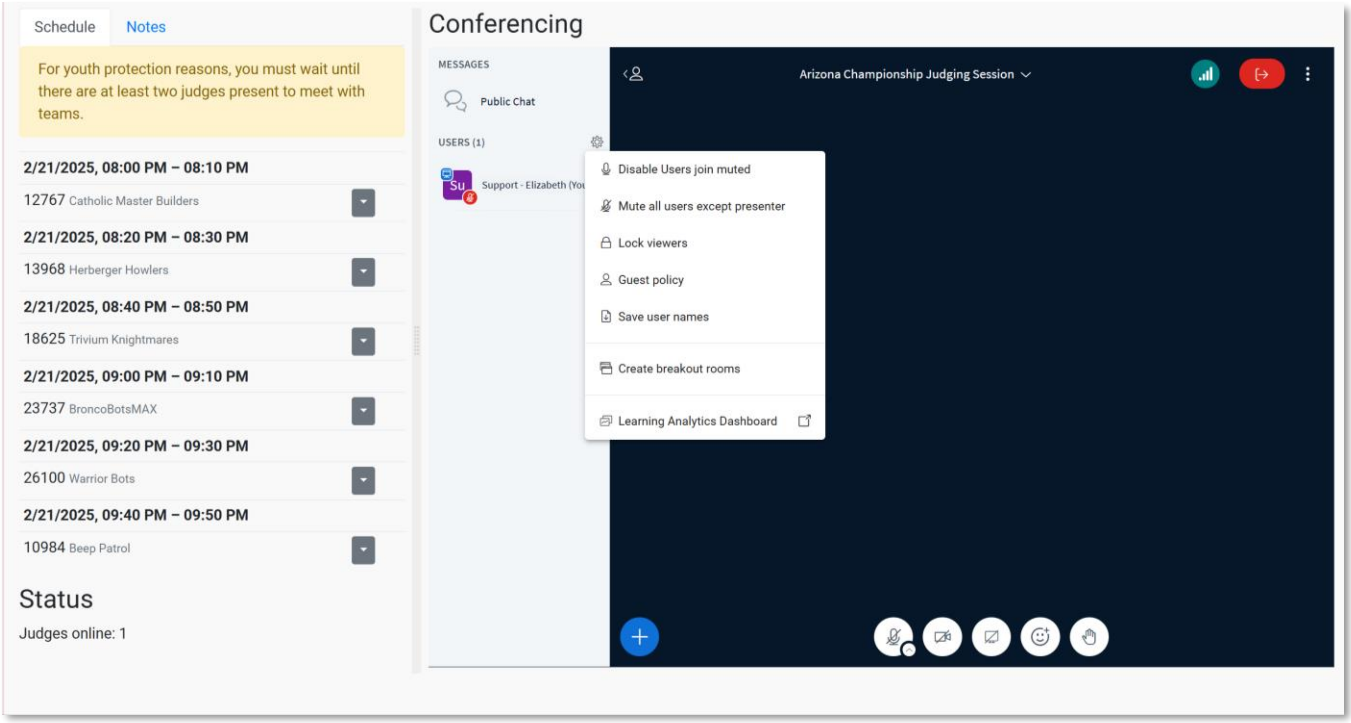


Figure 11: Initial Interview video conference screen.

Note: The grey button next to a team's time slot shows a "Portfolio" (if submitted) and team "Notes."

You and your judging partner(s) will be in your Judging Panel room waiting for teams to enter their own waiting room. If teams are present in their waiting room, you will see that information displayed along with an "Admit" button to allow them into the room.

> There must be at least two Judges in the room before team members can be admitted.

Once the team is admitted, introduce yourselves and explain the process and timing for the team as described in the Judge Manual. One of the Judges needs to keep the time for (a.) the interview and (b.) the Q&A session.

Team-Specific Notes

Click on the small pull-down icon next to the team in the schedule and select “Open Notes” for that specific team. As indicated, these notes are available to all Judges and the Judge Advisor for this specific team.

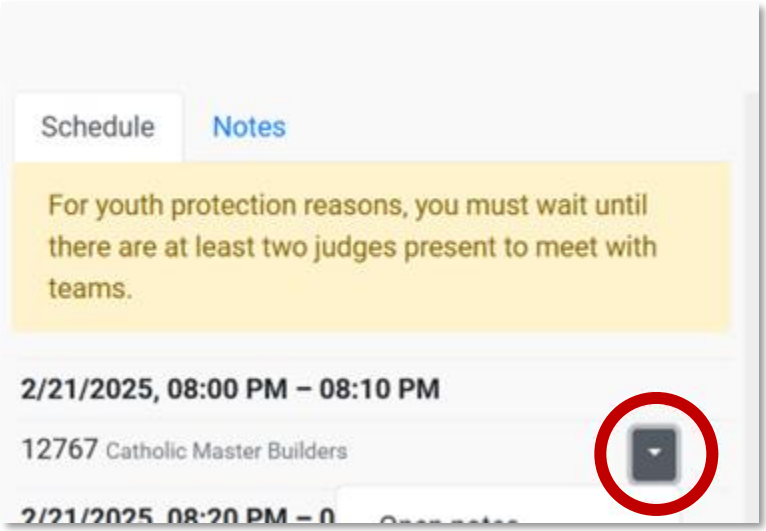


Figure 12: Drop-down arrow to "Open Notes" or view Portfolio.

Share Screen and Make Presenter

Teams may want to share their screen and show you a slide show or short video. By default, team members will not be allowed to share their screen. Judges can allow team members to share their screen. In the list of attendees on the left-hand side, click on the team member's name and click on "Make Presenter." Suggest that they choose "Entire Screen" so they can easily share multiple resources (documents, photos, videos, etc.).

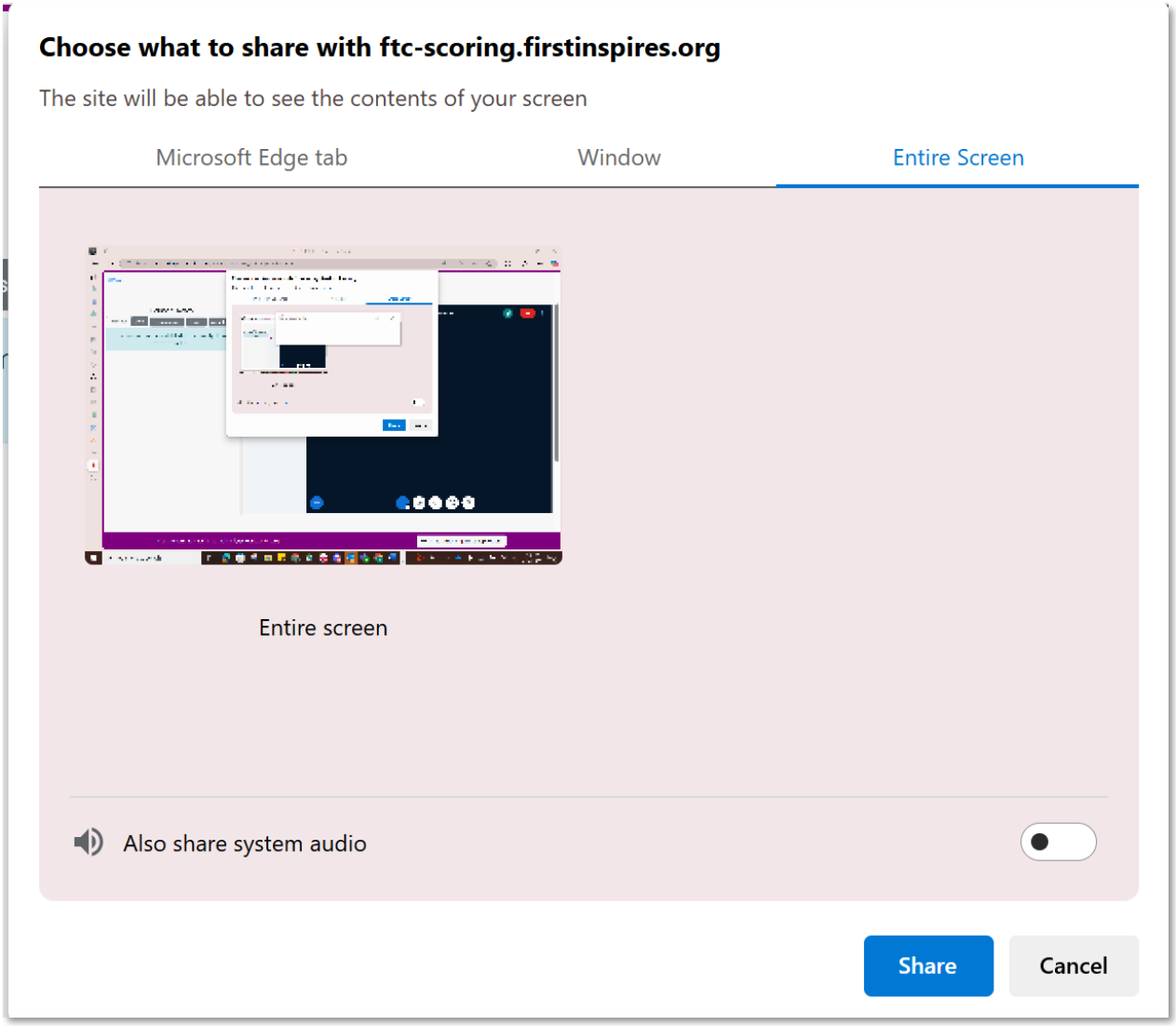


Figure 13: Share screen windows.

Time Management

The Judge Advisor and Event director will create a judging schedule that will be used for the event. This section will outline key details to consider when creating a schedule for the Initial Interviews.

There will be five minutes for team members and Judges to get into the conference (if everyone participating is present you may start early), five minutes of uninterrupted interview time for the team; 10 minutes of Q&A by Judges with team members. In total, a team needs to have a total of at least 15 minutes total for judging.

In the remaining 10-15 minutes between interviews, the Judges must prioritize using this time to fill out the Judging Feedback form which is mandatory and to be filled out immediately after the interview before starting with the next interview. Note: Region Admin or Judge Advisor may modify this schedule.

Conclusion of Initial Interview

At the conclusion of a team's allotted time, the Judges need to thank the team and send them back to their waiting room. Next to the team info on the left of the screen is a red "Remove" button. This will send the team back into their waiting room and leave the Judges in the room by themselves.

Review and Discuss Notes About the Team

Judges may now discuss the interview, take/share notes, review the Portfolio (if applicable) and complete the Judging Feedback Form.

To view the team's documents (Portfolio and Judging Feedback Form), you need to navigate to the list of teams and select the gray arrow for that team. A list of team documents appears:

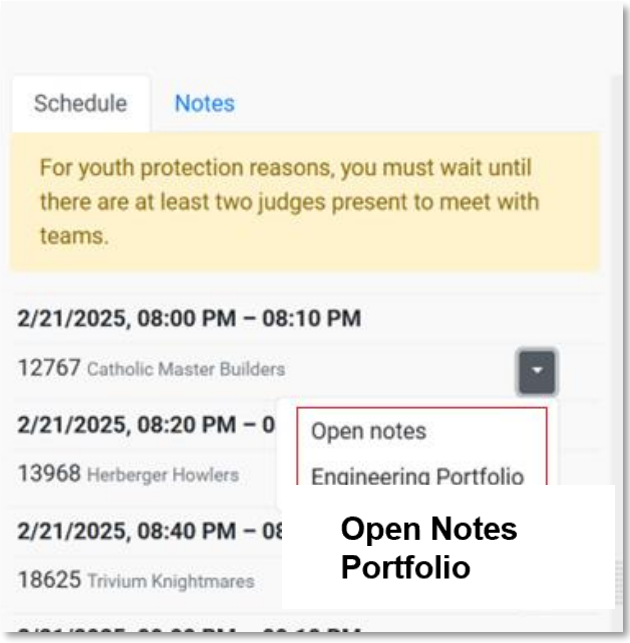


Figure 14: List of Team Documents

These can also be found on the “Event Judging Home” page.

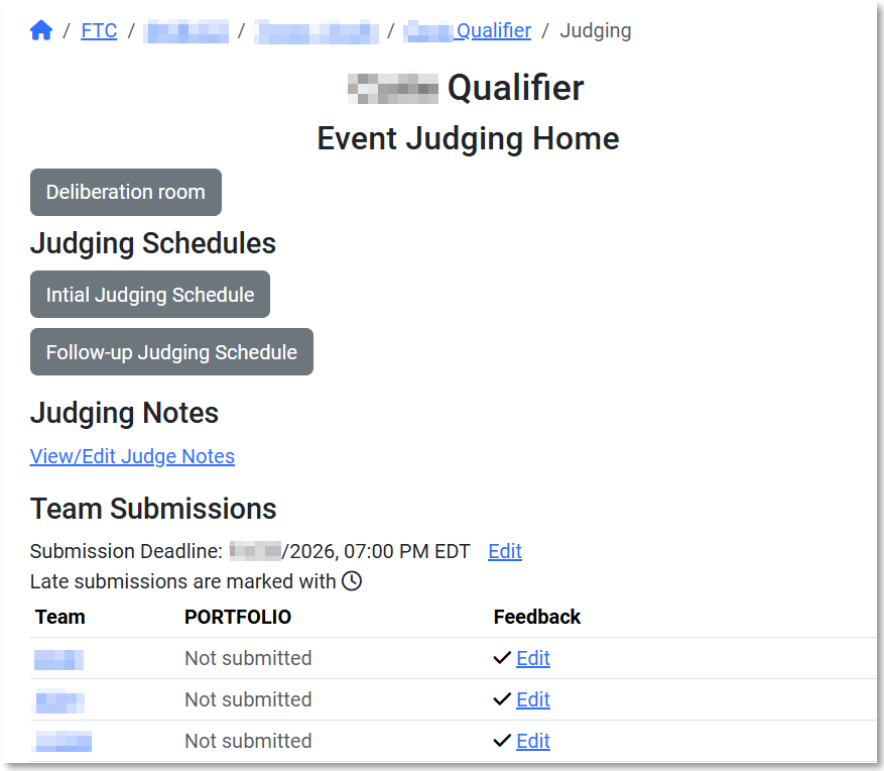


Figure 15: Portfolio and Judge Feedback Form on "Event Judging Home" page.

Check In with the Judge Advisor

At the end of the Initial Interview appointments, Judges return to the “Deliberation Room” to check in with the Judge Advisor. The “Deliberation Room” is your “home room” for the day.

To get back to the “Deliberation Room”, while in your judging room, click on the “<< Back” button at the top left of the screen to return to the “Initial Interview Schedule” screen, then click “<< Back” again to return to “Event Judging Home” to enter the “Deliberation Room.”

> You cannot have two video conferences open at the same time.

Pit Interviews

If the “Pit Interviews” are online, the interviews may follow a similar pattern as Initial Interview with Judges having set appointments with a series of teams or may be conducted in “pit style” where teams sit in their virtual pit (video conference room) for a designated window of time and specific award panels visit them for short 5-minute discussions. Teams may be visited by multiple award panels, but all teams will get at least one visit from the Judges during their designated “pit” window. The pit interview judging style will be pre-determined before the event by the Judge Advisor. Some hybrid events have pit interview judging in-person at the match play event.

Pit interview Judging Schedule

If Pit Interviews are conducted using the Event Portal system, the pit interview judging is usually focused on specific awards.

Important Note: The option to enable “pit style” interviews must be enabled in the pit-interview Judging Schedule. Judge groups are organized around awards designated by the JA or the Event Portal Event Administrator. The number of groups and names of the groups will be shown to the JA, Judges, and the Event Portal Event Administrator. Groups may be given a custom title, but teams do NOT see how many groups were created or any of the group titles. Teams only know that they will be visited by one or more groups of Judges during their designated pit interview window. Judges assigned to a specific panel will only see the “Join” link for their panel. The other panels are shown but will be gray with no link. This shows a Judge Advisor’s view of all the Pit interview groups.

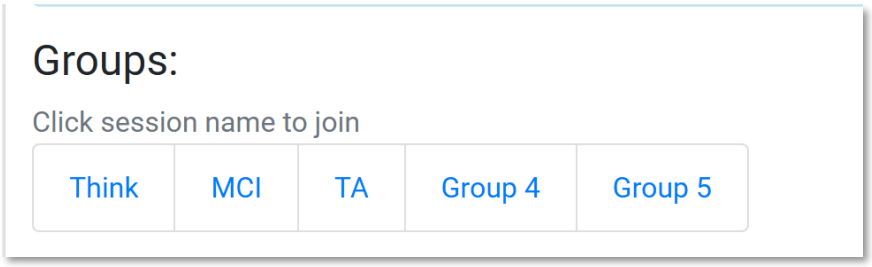


Figure 16: Links to Award-based Meeting Links (if “Pit-style interviews” are enabled.)

Note: Judges assigned to the “Floating” group may see all available groups and can join any Panel for the pit interview interviews.

Judges must be mindful of time for all pit interviews.

In this example below, the Judge selects the “Think” to go to a video conferencing screen for “Pit interview Judging – Think” and sees all teams they can drop into meet with from 4-4:30 pm, if students are online. This does not necessarily mean that only these teams listed are eligible or on the short list for a specific award.

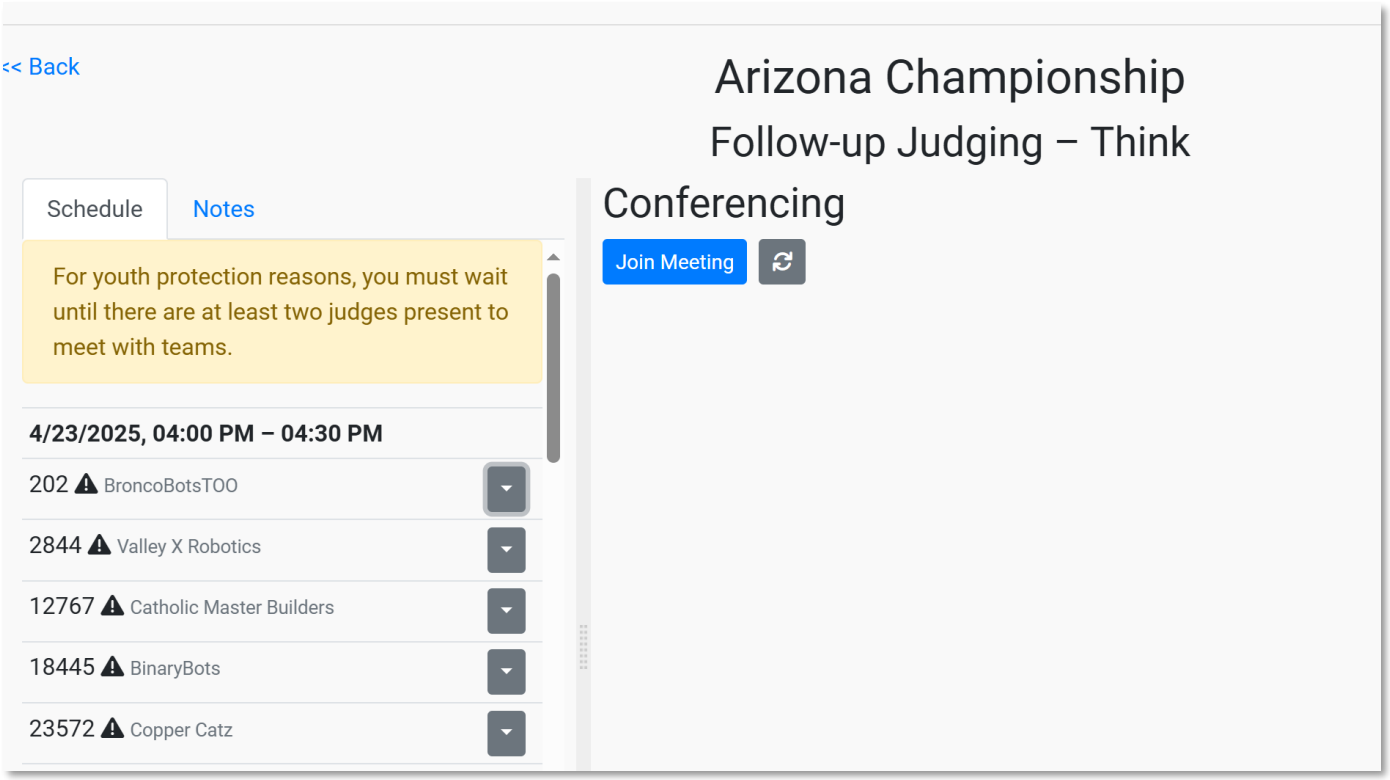


Figure 17: Pit interview Judging Meeting with List of Teams.

Pit Interview - Team Perspective

When teams are in their team's room, waiting for the panel to visit, the Judges will see the number of devices logged in to the room and can visit that team by clicking "Visit."

> Reminder: There must be at least 2 Judges present to visit a team. Team members can test their video and sound as well as interact with one another while waiting for a Judge Panel to visit.

Note that teams may already be with another Panel as indicated by the red – "Currently with another judging group."

Teams that have NOT been visited are indicated by the black triangle (!) icon next to the team number.

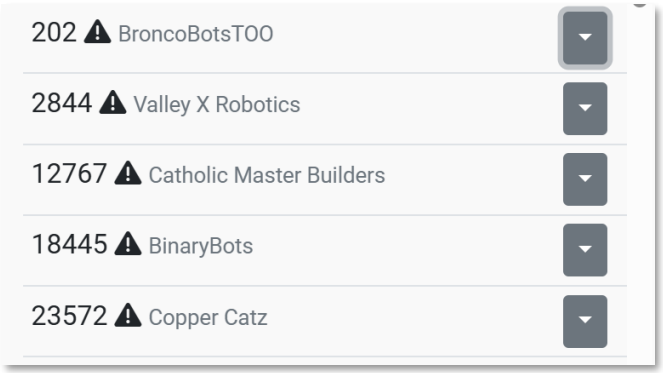


Figure 18: List of Unvisited Teams.

When the Judges have finished visiting, they click on the red “REMOVE” button. This will remove the Judges from the team’s room, take them back to the Panel room, where they can then visit another team. The Judge Panel can repeat this process with several teams based on the award and the Judge Advisor’s guidance on which teams to visit throughout the pit interview interviews. If you accidentally end the interview for your panel, you can re-join the Pit interview Judging Schedule page.

Note: Team appointments can be organized with overlapping times. For example, the teams are asked to be in their rooms for 25 minutes, but a second set of teams may be in their rooms after the first 20 minutes. This allows Judge Panels for each award category with some flexibility to move on to the next group a few minutes early assuming they have completed all the interviews with the previous group of teams.

Judge Notes for Pit Interviews

Judge Notes, access to team submissions, and other features in the “Pit Interview Judging Schedule” are the same as in the “Initial Interview.” Judges can use the “Awards” tab in the “Notes” to enter award-specific notes during pit-style interviews.

Return to the Deliberation Room

When pit interviews end, all Judges should return to the “Deliberation Room” (use the back button in the upper-left twice). The Judge Advisor will continue the deliberation process and can view any notes submitted by the Judges.

“Judging” After the Event is Published

The “Judging” link is still available within the event after the event is published but with read-only access. Judging Feedback Forms are still accessible, but Portfolios and other PII (including Judge notes) are deleted within seven days of the event publication.

Useful Links and Information

On-Call Support Numbers

These numbers are for *volunteer support only*. Teams should not use these numbers to call about rulings or technical assistance.

Administrative, Judge, Referee and Non-Technical Issues:	(603) 206-2412
Scoring System (FTC Live) or other Technical Issues:	(603) 206-2450

Call or use the **built-in chat feature on FTC Live** available for events with internet access.

Pre-Event Support

Mon – Fri 8:30am – 5:00pm Eastern Time (UTC-4 or UTC-5)
Contact Support including live chat or email customerservice@firstinspires.org

Program Resources

Event Search ftc-events.firstinspires.org	Game and Season Resources ftc-resources.firstinspires.org/ftc/game
FIRST Tech Challenge Blog	Event Resources ftc-resources.firstinspires.org/ftc/event
FIRST Tech Challenge Website firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc	Volunteer Resources ftc-resources.firstinspires.org/ftc/volunteer

Feedback

We strive to create support materials that are the best they can be. If you have feedback about this manual, please email customerservice@firstinspires.org or by contacting support. Thank you!