

itag AtlanTec AI Challenge 2026 – Rules of Engagement

Participant Diversity & Team Composition

Diverse teams are encouraged in terms of expertise, gender, and backgrounds. Each team should consist of approximately four participants, ensuring a balance of technical, strategic, and communication skills.

Recommended Team Roles:

- Team Lead (1): Oversees direction and ensures adherence to objectives. Liaises with organisers
- Developer (2): Focuses on AI model development / usage and implementation.
- Product Lead (1): Provides domain-specific insights based on the problem statement.

All teams must be formed before the event starts, with at least 90% team formation achieved beforehand. Late registrations will not be accepted, and participant names must be entered accurately for certification purposes.

Ethical and Systemic Requirements

All AI solutions must adhere to ethical AI principles, ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability. Teams should conduct self-assessments of their projects for ethical compliance.

Pre-Event Engagement, Training & Networking

To help participants prepare for the AI Challenge, the following pre-event support is available:

An ITAG Hackathon hybrid session will be held on March 26th at 5.30pm - 7.30pm. This is an in-person session, and it will also facilitate people who can't make it in person and want to attend virtually.

This session will take place at the office of Liberty IT, Galway, see the full address below.

level 1, Block C, The Alcantara Building, Bonham Quay, Dock Road, Galway H91 27VO

Enjoy pizza and snacks while meeting fellow participants. Get briefed on the challenges ahead, including AI fundamentals, ethics, and cybersecurity insights. It's the perfect opportunity to network and prepare for the main event.

Event-Specific Rules

Teams are required to present their solutions in a structured format with a 5-minute pitch/demo followed by a 2-minute Q&A session. Judges will evaluate solutions based on defined criteria, including innovation, ethical compliance, and societal impact. The quality and clarity of the presentation will be part of the evaluation criteria. Teams must adhere to the event's schedule and complete all deliverables within the allocated time frames

Please note that for submission of code, this should be provided through a GitHub repo.

Please note the dates below for code submissions

Make sure that you have created a public github repo.

You can make submissions to that repo from

Friday 26th March

To

Tuesday 14th April at 12.30pm.

Submitting your project

For submission, you have to email a link to your public GitHub repo to Sarah King at sking@itaq.ie **before the submission deadline.**

Please note – While you can work on your presentation deck up to the day of the event, you will be penalised in marking if you have not submitted your Github repo at the cut-off time. This is in the interest of fairness. We want to give everybody the same amount of time to work on building their ideas.

Available Resources & Tools

Participants are encouraged to use their own toolsets, there is not a restriction on what technology people can use. There are numerous Agentic coding tooling agents with free tiers available such as Claude Code, Codex, Open Code etc, github copilot.

There are also free tiers available if people require GPU usage. Google colab or Nvidia are helpful places to start.

If teams, require specific advice about cloud or computing access, please reach out to the organisers or mentors for advice.

AI Challenge Format & Timeline

The AI Challenge is structured across multiple phases:

Phase 1: Planning & Preparation (March– 2026): Securing datasets, cloud resources, and technical infrastructure.

Phase 2: Training & Engagement (26th March 2026): Event Kick-Off at 17:30 (Liberty IT office, see address above).

Pre-challenge workshops on Agentic workflows, ethical AI, and advice for teams planning to enter.

Phase 3: AI Challenge Execution (17th April 2026): Please note that this event is taking place at:

Location: Computer Science Building, University of Galway

- 9:30AM: Registration & Coffee - Participant check-in and networking.

- 09:45 AM – 1:00 PM: Build, Collaborate, and Document - Teams refine solutions with mentor support.
 - 1:00 PM – 1:45 PM: Lunch – will be provided
 - 1:45 PM – 3:45 PM: Prepare to Present - Finalizing solutions and rehearsals.
 - 3:45 PM – 5:00 PM: Pitch to the Panel - 5-minute pitch + 2-minute Q&A.
- Phase 4: Post-Challenge Opportunities : Event Organisers will explore avenues for selected teams to present at the itag AtlanTec Conference (14th May 2026).

Problem-Solving Criteria & Datasets

The problem-solving statement for this hackathon is:

Human Intelligence Driving Transformative Innovation

Solutions must be innovative, scalable, and demonstrate technical depth.

Suggested Focus Areas & Dataset Sources:

- Healthcare: HSE, CSO, World Bank - Disease prevention, telemedicine, patient management.
- Housing: Housing Agency, CSO - Affordable housing, smart housing, urban planning.
- Economy & Finance: World Bank, CSO - Economic forecasting, fraud detection, tax compliance.
- Environment: EPA, CSO - Climate change, waste management, biodiversity conservation.
- Transport: Transport Infrastructure Ireland, CSO - Traffic management, sustainable Transport.

Judging & Evaluation Criteria

Teams will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Problem Definition: Human Intelligence Driving Transformative Innovation.
- Innovation: Creativity and originality in solving National AI challenges.
- Technical Depth: Teams will submit the codebase to help verify the solution is technically sound.
- Ethical Compliance: Adherence to fairness, transparency, and accountability.
- Skill Development Impact: Evidence of learning and interdisciplinary teamwork.
- Presentation Quality: Clarity, coherence, and demonstration of insights.

A working prototype is required for all submissions.

Award Categories:

- Best Technical Solution.
- Most Innovative Solution.
- Upskilling Excellence Award.
- Additional awards may be introduced based on the nature of the solutions submitted.

Post-Event Engagement & Industry Opportunities

Winning teams may be invited to present their solutions at the itag AtlanTec Conference (14th May 2026) with networking opportunities with senior AI leaders across Industry.

Teams are encouraged to continue engagement with the ITAG community forums for future AI challenges and collaboration opportunities