Hackathon BioCodex 2026: Official Rules & Guidelines

This document outlines the official rules, eligibility, and judging criteria for Hackathon BioCodex 2026. This year, the competition is divided into two distinct rounds to foster better project development and rigorous evaluation.

1. Competition Structure & Timeline

The hackathon is split into a **Qualifying Round** and a **Final Excellence Round**.

Round 1: The Qualifying Round (Feb 11th – 17th)

- **Focus:** Ideation, Architectural Planning, and Initial Prototyping.
- **Hacking Period:** Starts Feb 11th, 09:00 AM; Ends Feb 17th, 11:59 PM.
- **Submission Deadline:** Feb 17th, 11:59 PM.
- **Judging Period:** Feb 18th
- **Shortlist Announcement:** Feb 19th, 09:00 AM. (Top teams advance to Round 2).

Must Submit for Round 1:

To be eligible for judging, teams must update their GitHub repository with the following and submit the **GitHub Link** via the official portal:

1. **Problem Statement:** A clear definition of the specific challenge being addressed.
2. **Proposed Solution:** A detailed description of how your hack intends to solve the problem.
3. **Project Proposal:** The full document (based on the provided template) including tech stack and roadmap.
4. **Presentation Video:** A brief video explaining the concept and planned architecture (Upload to YouTube/Drive and link in README).

Round 2: The Final Excellence Round (Feb 18th – 25th)

- **Focus:** Feature Completion, Refining UI/UX, and Final Demo.
- **Hacking Period:** Feb 19th – Feb 25th, 11:59 PM.
- **Submission Deadline:** Feb 25th, 11:59 PM.

- **Final Results Announcement:** Feb 27th.

Must Submit for Round 2:

Advancing teams must update their existing GitHub repository with the following:

1. **Final Codebase:** The complete, functional source code developed during the hackathon.
2. **Final README:** Updated documentation including setup instructions and a list of features completed.
3. **Demo Video:** A maximum 2-minute video showing the working prototype in action.

2. General Competition Rules

- **Team Composition:** Maximum of 4 team members. "Ghost members" (zero contribution) will be removed from certificates.
- **Exclusivity:** Organizers, judges, sponsors, and volunteers are ineligible to participate.
- **The "Fresh Code" Rule:** While you can utilize pre-existing ideas or open-source libraries, all core logic for the hackathon features must be written during the event dates.
- **Open Source:** Use of frameworks (React, TensorFlow, etc.) is encouraged. However, "pre-building" the specific project logic before Feb 11th is prohibited.
- **Existing Projects:** If adding to an existing repo, you MUST clearly document in the README which commits and features were created during the BioCodex 2026 window.

3. Submission & GitHub Requirements

Teams must maintain a single GitHub repository for both rounds.

- **Submission Link:** Every round requires the submission of the GitHub URL to the BioCodex portal.
- **Timestamp Integrity:** Commits made after the deadlines (Feb 17th for Round 1; Feb 25th for Round 2) will not be considered by the judges.

4. Eligibility

- **Open Entry:** BioCodex is open to students, independent researchers, labs, and startups.
- **Inclusion:** We maintain a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination. All participants must adhere to our Code of Conduct.
- **Certificate Eligibility:** Participation certificates are awarded only to teams that successfully complete Round 1 and submit all required "Must Submit" items.

5. Judging Criteria

The panel will evaluate projects based on four equally weighted pillars:

1. **Technology:** Technical complexity and the difficulty of the problem tackled.
2. **Design:** Intuitive interface and accessibility for the intended end-user.
3. **Completion:** Execution of the "Proposed Solution" submitted in Round 1.
4. **Learning:** The "growth curve" of the team in implementing new technologies.

6. What the Judges ARE NOT Looking For

- **Messy Code:** Logic and functionality outweigh "perfect" formatting.
- **Pitching Skills:** We value builders over "Shark Tank" style marketing.
- **Unfinished Hacks:** If your code is broken, **submit it anyway.** Explain your hurdles; judges value the "honest fail."

7. Disqualification

- Plagiarism or submitting work created entirely before Feb 11th.
- Harassment or unsporting behavior.
- Breaking the Code of Conduct.
- Editing of the codebase after the final submission deadline.

Contact: For clarifications, contact the Cybrella organizing team via the official helpdesk: helpdesk@cybrella.in