

5G Challenge - Preliminary Event Frequently Asked Questions

5G Challenge Preliminary Event vs. Final Event

Q: What is the difference between the Preliminary Event and the Final Event?

A: *Both events are 5G Challenges, but they are separate. The Preliminary Event is our 2022 5G Challenge. The Final Event will not be announced until 2023.*

Eligibility

Q: Are non-U.S. citizens or organizations allowed to participate in the 5G Challenge?

A: *Yes, non-U.S. citizens and organizations can participate. However, they can only participate as a member of a Contestant Team with a Contestant Team Leader who meets the eligibility criteria. For details, click the [Resources tab](#) to view the **Official Rules** document, and see Section 3.1.2, "Eligibility."*

Q: Can you determine my eligibility before I submit a white paper?

A: *Yes. Contestants are encouraged to submit eligibility criteria as early as possible by emailing 5gchallenge@ntia.gov to request the secure file transfer instructions. 5G Challenge organizers will review eligibility documents early, as time permits.*

Q: Referencing the eligibility criteria, what is considered a "primary place of business" and how does a business entity satisfy this eligibility criteria?

A: *To be considered a U.S. entity, a business must be incorporated in a U.S. state or territory or have their headquarters in that location.*

Q: Do I have to participate in the 5G Challenge Preliminary Event (this challenge) to participate in the 5G Challenge Final Event (the follow-on challenge in 2023)?

A: *No*

Q: Can multiple vendors submit a single RAN subsystem in the 5G Challenge?

A: *Yes*

Q: Is a team consisting of more than one entity type (e.g., academic, industry) allowed?

A: *Yes*

Application

Q: If a contestant submits a gNB, will they be required to open all interfaces for testing as three distinct units: RU, DU, and CU?

A: *Contestants can only submit individual CU, DU or RU subsystems.*

Q: For the white paper, how would a contestant show compliance to O-RAN Alliance and 3GPP specifications?

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A: *At a minimum, contestants must specify their level of compliance with O-RAN Alliance and 3GPP specifications. For details, click the [Resources tab](#) to view the **Official Rules** document, and see Section 3.1.3, “White Papers.”*

Q: For the white paper submission, will any subsystem test report be accepted, or only from certain groups/labs/plugfests?

A: *The 5G Challenge will accept a summary of any applicable test reports.*

Q: I wasn't selected as an early-bird contestant? Can I update my white paper and resubmit before the final deadline?

A: *Absolutely. Submit your revised white paper by the final deadline and it will be re-evaluated. If you don't submit a revised white paper, then your early-bird paper will be re-evaluated as-is alongside all other final white paper submissions.*

Q: Are supplemental information, such as brochures or technical papers, allowed to be submitted with a white paper? If so, does such supplemental information count against the page limit?

A: *The page count applies to all documents submitted with the exception of the eligibility verification documents, which will be submitted separately via secure file transfer.*

Q: Is there a list of required functions that define “compliance”? This issue is how to deal with optional functions/features within Release 15 and ORAN spec.

A: *Functions/features considered optional in the Release 15 and ORAN can be disclosed as part of the contestant's white paper and tested for compliance (and additional scoring).*

Challenge Design and Structure

Q: Isn't this just a plugfest? What's different about it?

A: *In contrast to a traditional plugfest, in the 5G Challenge Preliminary Event contestants will not know in advance who they are going to integrate with, and they will be evaluated against specific interface expectations. This advanced-level competition is an opportunity to showcase interoperability with different RAN component configurations in an open innovation prize competition. Contestants will have the opportunity to work with host lab engineers who have extensive knowledge and expertise achieving integration and interoperability, for the chance to win part of the \$3 million prize purse.*

Q: For Stage Two, is more than 1 subsystem allowed per contestant?

A: *Yes. However, preference will be given to selecting up to 12 unique contestants. Contestants are allowed to submit multiple subsystems, but must consolidate multiple subsystem submissions into one white paper.*

Q: What kind of assistance (and how much) is provided with the different entry tracks?

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A: *All contestants will be provided the same level of host lab assistance (e.g., support for initial set-up of the systems, guidance on integrating with the host lab system, feedback on testing results and/or any errors found during the testing to be addressed by the contestant) and will be given the same window of time with the host lab, regardless of the entry track chosen.*

Q: Is there a difference between qualifying for and winning a prize?

A: *Contestants who meet the evaluation criteria for Stage Two and Stage Three prizes will qualify for a prize. The judging panel determines winners. To receive their prize money, qualified contestants must submit an acceptable technical paper.*

Host Lab Testing

Q: What will the testing procedure documents include?

A: *The testing procedure documents will provide information on the set of possible tests for subsystem interfaces and end-to-end performance testing.*

Q: Will the contestants be able to receive the test plan or scripts prior to their testing?

A: *Contestants will receive a copy of the test plan one week prior to the beginning of their integration window in the host lab. This test plan cannot be shared with any parties outside the contestant's group.*

Q: Are there more details on the tests conducted at the various levels defined in section 3.1 of the Scoring Guide?

A: *Each level of testing builds on the previous level of testing:*

Level-0 integrates the Device Under Test (DUT) into the test environment. The DUT must adequately interoperate with the test environment before we can proceed to further testing.

Level-1 testing demonstrates the subsystem can perform conformance and basic functionality tests.

Level-2 will demonstrate interface interoperability between the contestant's sub-system and the associated northbound/southbound emulated subsystems.

Level-3 connects the contestant's DUT with an emulated DUT, to examine end-to-end interoperability across the common standard interfaces. We will use both functionality and performance test scenarios to test interoperability.

Q: Is the 40 hour per week limit for lab time in Stage Two for host lab support or for contestants?

A: *The 40-hour work week is the total allotted time for support in the lab. Contestants will retain 24hr/day virtual access to their systems throughout their testing window, however the in-lab testing and support will be limited to the 40-hour week.*