

STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: What type of help can my mentor(s) provide to my team?

Answer: Mentors have experience in the industry and have taken on multiple engineering design projects from start to finish. They may or may not be a technical expert in the field you are working on for this project, but regardless of the technical content they do know how projects move from concept to design to construction, and they can share valuable advice for you in this vein. For example, try asking them about:

- Whether or not your proposed solutions are reasonable and constructible
- Whether the scope of work you have set for your project is too broad or too narrow
- What questions/concerns they anticipate that the judges might have (after sharing your presentation with them)

Question: How should I reach out to my mentor(s)?

Answer: Discuss this question with them at your first meeting to find out their preferences and try to accommodate their preferred method(s) of communication. Remember that mentors are volunteers and may not be able to meet or talk at your preferred time(s). The process works best when everyone is flexible and consistent. Also remember that in order to have them provide you with the best advice, you will need to keep your mentor up-to-date. Taking down and sharing progress reports or meeting minutes (with action items for each team member) are a great way to do this while keeping your team accountable to each other at the same time.

Question: Do you need to be an engineering student to participate?

Answer: No. The competition is judged according to the manner and level of effort that the team used in evaluating alternatives and developing the recommended solution.

Question: How much detail is expected for the final presentation?

Answer: Sufficient data must be presented to support the evaluation of alternatives and cost/benefit of the proposed solution. The panel of judges consists of professionals of various backgrounds in the Water Industry. Students need to be prepared to answer difficult questions regarding their project.

Question: Should one member of the team perform the presentation?

Answer: No. Each member of the team should participate in the project presentation. This is an interactive learning experience as well as a competition.

Question: Should calculations be included in the presentation?

Answer: Only if this data is pertinent to support a decision.

Question: Can we seek professional guidance outside of our professors and mentors?

Answer: Yes, only for guidance. Students are expected to perform all phases of the project from the planning and development through the final design of the proposed solution.