



Appendix C – VRC Awards

New This Year

- Revision of Student-Centered Teams to align with REC Foundation’s Student-Centered Policy
- Descriptions of technical and other judged awards clarified

Student-Centered Teams

The REC Foundation seeks to increase student interest and involvement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by engaging students in hands-on sustainable and affordable curriculum-based robotics engineering programs across the U.S. and internationally. Judges play an important role in our efforts to ensure that our program remains student-centered. We believe that the student-centered model of learning is aligned with the REC Foundation’s mission and provides effective educational benefits to students.

Teams must be student-centered. There are a variety of definitions for the term “student-centered” in the educational community, and the REC Foundation would like to communicate a definition for student-centered that will apply for teams that participate in the VIQC, VRC, and VEX U competitions to increase the transparency of the expectations and increase the student learning opportunities. The term student-centered is encompassed in both the learning and application settings for REC Foundation events and activities:

Student-Centered Learning: Students are actively involved in learning opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in the engineering design process, mechanical design, programming, and teamwork under the guidance of adult mentorship.

Student-Centered Application: Students have ownership on how their robot is designed, built, programmed, and utilized in match play with other teams and Robot Skills matches.

Through observation and interviews with teams, Judges identify teams that are student-centered. These teams understand that the purpose of the program is to enhance the learning process, not to win at any cost. Judges shall give higher consideration to teams that favor the enhancement of student learning over teams that favor winning at any cost.

Judges, with input from event staff, should identify teams that are not student-centered. Teams that are not student-centered should not receive judged awards.

Additional information and guidance on student-centered teams is found in the REC Foundation’s Student-Centered Policy: <https://www.roboticseducation.org/documents/2019/08/student-centered-policy-rec-foundation.pdf/>



Team Ethics and Conduct

Ethics is an important part of every engineer’s professional training and practice. The REC Foundation considers the positive, respectful, and ethical conduct of teams to be an essential component of the VEX competition. A team includes the students, teachers, coaches, mentors, and parents associated with a team. Judges will consider all team conduct when determining judged awards.

Team Supervision

Teams are to be student-centered, but teams must be supervised by at least one adult. An adult must be present at the event at all times. Anyone age 18 or older and who is not a high school is considered an adult.

Awards Overview

This section details the full list of awards presented in the VEX Robotics Competition. Most local and regional events will offer a small subset of these awards, based on the number of teams at the event. The only event likely to present most or all of these awards will be VEX Worlds, as warranted by the hundreds of teams participating. The awards presented at each event are chosen by the event planning committee with the help of their Regional Support Manager. Details on the judging process are available in the Judge Guide located at roboticseducation.org/event-partners/event-partner-resourcesdocuments/.

Official events may not change award criteria from those listed below. Events not following the award criteria in this document will not qualify teams to higher level events. Judges at that qualify teams directly to VEX Worlds must follow the judging process outlined in the official Judge Guide. Event Partners are to recruit Judge Advisors and Judges. Event Partners are not to determine winners of judged awards.





The standard set of awards will be offered at most events:

Standard Set of Awards	
Excellence Award	Top All Around Team (Judged and Robot Performance)
Tournament Champion Award (2 teams)	1st Place Finals Match Alliance (Robot Performance)
Design Award	Team with most effective and efficient robot design process (Judged)
Robot Skills Champion Award	Team with highest combined top Programming and top Driving Skills Challenge score (Robot Performance)
Judges Award	Team deserving recognition from Judges for special accomplishments (Judged)
Volunteer of the Year Award	Recognized Adult Event Volunteer (Individual Award)

VEX Worlds and other large events may also offer some or all of the following awards. For a listing of the awards offered at the event and of the awards that qualify for advancement to championship events, please visit the event page at robotevents.com:

Additional Robot Performance Awards	
Tournament Finalist (2 teams)	2nd Place Finals Match Alliance
Robot Skills 2nd Place	2nd place Robot Skills score





Technical Judged Awards

(Listed in priority according to the Qualifying Criteria document)

Innovate Award	Team with a specific, unique engineering element that demonstrates “outside the box” thinking
Think Award	Most effective and consistent programming strategies and solutions
Amaze Award	Most consistently high scoring and competitive robot
Build Award	Most durable robot
Create Award	Most creative engineering solution

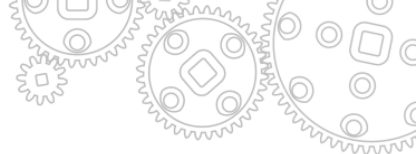
Other Judged Awards

Energy Award	Most enthusiastic and exited team
Inspire Award	Most passionate and positive team
Sportsmanship Award	Most respected and admired team by volunteers and other teams

Individual Awards

Mentor of the Year Award	Recognizes outstanding adult mentor
Teacher of the Year Award	Recognizes outstanding teacher
Partner of the Year Award	Recognizes Event Sponsor/Supporter
STEM Hall of Fame - Inspiration All-Star	Recognizes Adult STEM All-Star (presented only at VEX Worlds)
Online Challenges	Each season the REC Foundation with support from sponsors offers a number of online challenges. For further information, see the Online Challenges at https://challenges.robotevents.com/





Robot Performance Awards

These awards are based on team performance on the field and not determined by Judges.

The **Tournament Champions Award** is presented to each of the two teams on the 1st Place Finals Match alliance of the event.

The **Tournament Finalist Award** is presented to each of the two teams on the 2nd Place Finals Match alliance of the event.

The **Robot Skills Champion Award** is presented to the team with the highest combined Programming Skills Challenge and Driving Skills Challenge score. A team's combined score will be determined by adding their highest Programming Skills score and their highest Driving Skills score at a single event. Teams competing in only one of the two skills challenges will receive a zero score in the challenge in which they did not participate.

The **Robot Skills 2nd Place Award** is presented to the team with the second highest combined Programming and Driving Skills Challenge score.

The **Robot Skills 3rd Place Award** is presented to the team with the third highest combined Programming and Driving Skills Challenge score.

Excellence Award

The Excellence Award is the highest award presented in the VEX Robotics competition. This award is presented to a team that exemplifies overall excellence in building a high-quality robotics program. This team is a strong contender in numerous award categories.

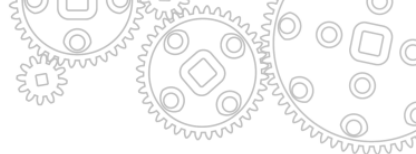
Key criteria:

- Engineering Notebook must be submitted (usually at team check-in)
- Ranking for Design Award
- Ranking for Qualification Matches
- Ranking for Robot Skills
- Ranking for other judged awards
- Quality of the team's interview with the Judges
- High-quality robotics program
- Team conduct

Blended Events

Events having at least ten (10) teams at each the High School and Middle School levels registered two weeks prior to the event must offer two (2) Excellence Awards, one for High School and one for Middle School.





Excellence Award at VEX Worlds

Key Criteria and Judging Process: The key criteria and judging process for the Excellence Award at VEX Worlds are the same as for local events and events that qualify teams directly to VEX Worlds. Online Challenges are not required for teams to be eligible for the Excellence Award at VEX Worlds. However, Judges may consider Online Challenges as part of the overall team evaluation if they are submitted.

Prequalification: To be eligible for the Excellence Award at VEX Worlds, a team must have been awarded the Excellence Award at an event that qualifies teams directly to VEX Worlds during the current competition season. Eligible teams must submit their Engineering Notebook at VEX Worlds during the first day of check-in. Teams that have won the Excellence Award at VEX Worlds in the previous three years are not eligible for the Excellence Award at VEX Worlds. Eligible teams will be notified by email after the second weekend in March.

Design Award

The Design Award is presented to a team that demonstrates an organized and professional approach to the design process, project and time management, and team organization. The team's Engineering Notebook and Judges interview will demonstrate the team's ability to produce a quality robot with minimal adult assistance.

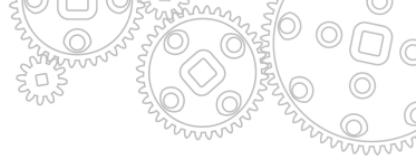
Key criteria:

- Engineering Notebook must be submitted (usually at team check-in).
- Engineering Notebook demonstrates a clear, complete, and organized record of the robot design process.
- Team demonstrates effective management of time, talent, and resources.
- Team interview demonstrates their ability to explain their robot design and game strategy.
- Team interview demonstrates effective communication skills, teamwork, and professionalism.

The Engineering Notebook

One of the primary missions of the REC Foundation is to help students acquire real world life skills that will benefit them in their academic and professional future. Following the engineering design process and creating an Engineering Notebook helps students practice and develop a variety of real-world life skills including project management, time management, brainstorming, communication, and teamwork. The engineering design process and the Engineering Notebook are used by engineering and design professionals in many different fields.





When teams register with the REC Foundation, they receive a bound Engineering Notebook in the Welcome Kit. It has instructions and examples in the front. Teams may use the notebook provided or purchase their own from VEX Robotics or most office supply stores. A bound quad-ruled notebook is the preferred format, and bound notebooks are given bonus points on the Design Award Rubric. The notebook must have been bound before any entries were made in it.

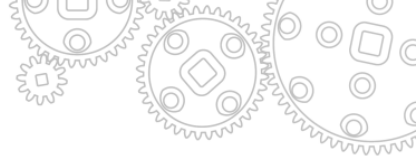
Judges will not accept or evaluate any electronic notebooks including those on laptops, thumb drives, or cloud-based servers.

The engineering design process is iterative. Students identify and define a problem, brainstorm design ideas to solve the problem, test their design ideas, and continue to improve their design ideas until a solution is reached. During the engineering design process, students will encounter obstacles, successes and failures, and learn many lessons. Everything a team does throughout the engineering design process should be documented by the students in their Engineering Notebook.

All Engineering Notebooks should contain these elements:

- Team number on the cover
- Written in ink with errors crossed out using a single line (so errors can be seen)
- Notebook has not been edited
- All pages intact; no pages or parts of pages removed even if they contained errors
- Each page numbered and dated in chronological order
- Each page signed by student author
- Team meeting notes as they relate to the design process
- Pictures, CAD drawings, documents, examples of code, or other material relevant to the design process are glued into the notebook (tape is acceptable, but glue is preferred)





Outstanding Engineering Notebooks should contain these additional elements:

- Table of contents
- Each page signed by a student witness as well as student author
- First entry is the first team meeting, and each team meeting has an entry
- Descriptions of brainstorming sessions
- Descriptions, sketches, and pictures of design concepts and the design process
- Observations and thoughts of team members about their design and the design process
- Records of tests, test results, and evaluations of specific designs or design concepts
- Team organization practices as they relate to the design process
- Project management practices including their use of personnel, financial, and time resources
- Notes and observations from competitions to consider in the next design iteration
- Descriptions of programming concepts, programming improvements, or significant programming modifications
- A person unfamiliar with the team's work would be able to recreate the robot design based only on information in the Engineering Notebook

Engineering Notebook and Team Interview Rubrics

Judges will use the the Engineering Notebook Rubric and the Team Interview Rubric to evaluate teams' performance on the award criteria. The Engineering Notebook Rubric is used to evaluate the quality of a teams' Engineering Notebook. The Team Interview Rubric is used to evaluate the students' understanding and application of an effective robot design process, as demonstrated in their team pit interview with Judges. The rubrics are available in the Judge Guide at: roboticseducation.org/event-partners/event-partner-resources-documents/.

Design Award at VEX Worlds

Key Criteria and Judging Process: The key criteria and judging process for the Design Award at VEX Worlds are the same as for local events and events that qualify teams directly to VEX Worlds.

Prequalification: To be eligible for the Design Award at VEX Worlds, a team must have been awarded the Excellence Award or Design Award at an event that qualifies teams directly to VEX Worlds. Eligible teams must submit their Engineering Notebook at VEX Worlds during the first day of check-in. Eligible teams will be notified by email after the second weekend in March.





Technical Judged Awards

The **Innovate Award** is presented to a team with the most effective and efficient design process; a top contender for the Design Award. Key criteria:

- Engineering Notebook is required
- Engineering Notebook is a clear, complete, and organized document of the design process
- Team demonstrates effective management of time, talent, and materials
- Students understand and explain how they developed an effective game strategy and robot design
- Students understand and explain the engineering design process
- Students understand and explain how they worked together to develop their robot

The **Think Award** is presented to a team with the most effective and consistent programming strategies and solutions to solve the game challenge. Key criteria:

- Participation in the Programming Skills Challenge is required
- Autonomous programming is consistent and reliable
- Programs are cleanly written, well documented, and easy to understand
- Team clearly explains the programming strategy used to solve the game challenge
- Team clearly explains their programming management process, including version history
- Students understand and explain how they worked together to develop their robot programming

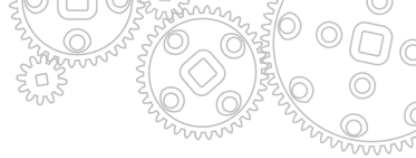
The **Amaze Award** is presented to a team that has built the most consistently high scoring and competitive robot. Key criteria:

- Robot design is consistently high scoring and competitive
- Robot construction is high quality
- Robot programming is effective, successful, and consistent
- Students understand and explain how they worked together to develop their robot

The **Build Award** is presented to a team that has built the most durable robot. Key criteria:

- Robot construction is durable and robust
- Robot is reliable on the field and holds up under competition conditions
- Robot is designed attention to safety and detail
- Students understand and explain how they worked together to develop their robot





The **Create Award** is presented to a team who has built a robot that incorporates the most creative engineering design solution to the challenges of this season’s game. Key criteria:

- Robot design incorporates a creative design solution
- Team has demonstrated a highly creative design process and methodology
- Team has committed to ambitious and creative approaches to solving the game challenge
- Students understand and explain how they worked together to develop their robot

Other Judged Awards

The **Judges Award** is presented to a team that is most deserving of special recognition. Key criteria:

- Team displays special attributes, exemplary effort and perseverance at the event
- Team overcomes an obstacle or challenge and achieves a goal or special accomplishment at the event or at some time throughout the season
- Team distinguishes itself in some way that does not fit under other award criteria but nonetheless deserves special recognition
- Students demonstrate teamwork and effective communication skills

The **Energy Award** is presented to a team that shows the most enthusiasm and excitement at the event. Key criteria:

- Team maintains a high level of enthusiasm and excitement throughout the event
- Team exhibits a passion for robotics competition that enriches the event experience for all
- Students demonstrate teamwork and effective communication skills

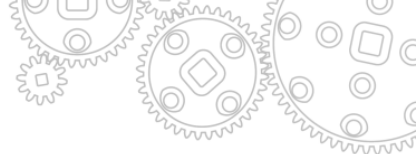
The **Inspire Award** is presented to the most passionate and positive team at the event. Key criteria:

- Team exhibits passion and positive attitude at the event
- Team exhibits integrity, and goodwill toward other teams, coaches, and spectators
- Students demonstrate teamwork and effective communication skills

The **Sportsmanship Award** is presented to a team that has earned the respect and admiration of the volunteers and other teams at the event. Key criteria:

- Team is courteous, helpful, and respectful to everyone at the event, on and off the field
- Team interacts with others in the spirit of friendly competition and cooperation
- Students demonstrate teamwork and effective communication skills





Individual Awards

Individual awards recognize the contribution of an adult volunteer or sponsor and are determined by the Event Partner or event planning committee before the event. Judges do not determine individual awards. Individual awards do not affect a team's eligibility for other judged awards.

The **Mentor of the Year** award is presented to a mentor that has helped students achieve goals that were seemingly out of reach. This individual is a role model, a leader and an extraordinary mentor who helps show students new ways to expand their knowledge and solve problems in the world of STEM.

The **Teacher of the Year Award** is presented to a teacher who shows true leadership and dedication to his or her group of students. The winner of this award continually exceeds expectations to ensure a safe, enjoyable and educational experience for all students.

The **Partner of the Year Award** is presented to an individual, company, or organization that demonstrates a commitment and devotion to a VEX Robotics club or program, delivering time and resources in support of student learning and achievements through REC Foundation programs.

The **Volunteer of the Year Award** is presented to an event volunteer who demonstrates a commitment and devotion to their community, putting in many hours of hard work with persistence and passion to help make events happen.

STEM Hall of Fame – Inspiration All Stars

Students participating in VEX Competitions encounter **Inspiration All-Stars** every day. Some are teachers and mentors who work with individual teams to make a robotics program work. Others are volunteers who help make events happen. They all are devoted individuals who put in many hours of hard work with persistence and passion. Whether these individuals help students achieve goals that may have seemed out of reach or provide opportunities for students to expand their knowledge and solve problems in the worlds of STEM, these all-stars show true leadership and dedication to the robotics competition experience.

Students, parents, and volunteers nominate Inspiration All-Stars through a written submission via the VEX Worlds awards page at robotevents.com/vexawards. Submissions have specific requirements and a hard deadline so be sure to check the website for details.

REC Foundation Online Challenges

The REC Foundation Online Challenges provide teams additional opportunities to earn awards and prizes by showcasing their knowledge and skills in a variety of technical and communication specialties. Rules, judging criteria, and information on the prizes and awards are found at: <http://challenges.robotevents.com/>. Submissions have specific requirements and hard deadlines so be sure to check the website for details.

