



Global **AI Hackathon** 2026

Core Challenge Guide: AI for Systems & Society

For Graduate and Doctoral Students

Build AI systems to strengthen infrastructure and protect communities.

A Global Initiative by the United States Artificial Intelligence Institute (USAI[®])

Hackathon Date: June 14–21, 2026 |||

Overview

USAI[®] Global AI Hackathon 2026 is a fully virtual competition open to students at the **graduate and doctoral levels worldwide**. Teams will design, build, and present real-world AI solutions to meaningful challenges, collaborating across borders and showcasing their work to experienced judges.

Students will receive mentor support, curated resources, and structured guidance throughout, making this an accessible and high-impact learning experience for builders of all skill levels and disciplines.

For students at the **graduate and doctoral levels, the** hackathon takes place on **June 14–21, 2026**. **The core challenge track: AI for Systems & Society**, challenges teams to design AI systems that protect people, strengthen public infrastructure, and help institutions make better, more responsible decisions. Solutions are judged on creativity, responsible AI use, and real-world impact, not technical perfection.

Graduate Core Challenge: AI for Systems & Society

AI systems increasingly shape how societies function — from public safety and employment to housing, healthcare, and digital trust.

In this track, graduate teams will design AI systems that protect people, strengthen public infrastructure, and help institutions make better decisions.

Participants will build decision-support systems, simulation tools, or responsible AI infrastructure that address complex societal challenges using open or responsibly generated synthetic data.

Projects in this track emphasize:

- AI reasoning and system design
- Policy and infrastructure thinking
- Responsible use of data
- Real organizational needs

Teams will draw inspiration from real-world nonprofit organizations, public policy institutions, and global research groups.

The goal is not to build a finished product, but to prototype a system that could realistically be piloted by a nonprofit, government agency, or public-interest organization.

Full challenge directions will be revealed during the Hackathon Kickoff.





Challenge Brief 5: Human Safety & Protection: Design the Systems that Detect and Prevent

Digital technologies now shape many parts of the global safety infrastructure. However, new risks are emerging quickly — including AI-enabled exploitation, trafficking networks, digital coercion, and systemic vulnerability signals.

In this challenge, teams will design AI systems that help organizations detect risks earlier, strengthen protection networks, and support safer intervention strategies.

Students are encouraged to think carefully about privacy, human rights, and responsible deployment while building systems that could realistically help protect vulnerable populations.

Inspiration From Organizations Like



Safe Passages



Institute for Survivor Care



International Justice Mission



Thorn

Challenge Brief 6: Public Systems & Policy: Build the Decision Engines for Public Systems

Communities around the world are beginning to prepare for a future shaped by artificial intelligence. Local governments, schools, businesses, and nonprofits are all exploring how AI can improve services, strengthen economies, and support residents — but many communities lack tools to understand their readiness or coordinate their efforts.

In this challenge, teams will design AI systems that help communities assess their AI readiness and build strategic blueprints for responsible adoption across key sectors such as education, workforce development, government, healthcare, and nonprofit services.

Students are encouraged to think about how AI can support better long-term planning, reveal opportunity gaps, and guide communities toward smarter, more inclusive decisions.

Inspiration From Organizations Like



OECD



World Bank



Urban Institute



Brookings Institution



Cincy AI Catalyst

DISCLAIMER: USAI's Global AI Hackathon 2026 is exclusive to students only. Full-time students from any degree or doctoral program are also eligible. Working professionals enrolled in any Degree or Doctoral Programs are not eligible to participate in the competition. Should anyone win the competition (in any category) and be discovered as a working professional, the prize and other benefits will be awarded to the next-best team/s.

About USAII[®]

The United States Artificial Intelligence Institute (USAII[®]) is the world's leading Artificial Intelligence certifications provider for aspiring professionals and leaders at any stage of their career, organizations, institutions, academia, or governments, looking to upskill and reskill their expertise in the ever-evolving Artificial Intelligence domain.

Own the Graduate Challenge

Register on Devpost

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