2026 AI Innovation Award Guidelines v1.0

(International Edition)

1. Purpose

To support Taiwan's national strategy for advancing artificial intelligence and accelerating the transition of AI technologies from research to real-world applications, the 2026 AI Innovation Award focuses on AI systems capable of operating in practical environments.

The competition emphasizes the integration of perception, adaptation, decision-making, and action, encouraging startups, academic institutions, research organizations, and interdisciplinary teams to develop intelligent systems with real-world deployment potential.

Through industry-defined challenges and real-world application scenarios, participants are invited to propose innovative AI solutions that demonstrate practicality, scalability, and verifiability. The competition particularly welcomes emerging AI applications involving Physical AI and Embodied AI, which integrate software, hardware, intelligent sensing, robotics, and real-world operational capabilities.

By adopting a challenge-driven and validation-oriented approach, the competition aims to identify teams with strong technical capabilities, system integration expertise, and commercialization potential. Through technical evaluation, prototype validation, and real-world testing opportunities, the program seeks to strengthen Taiwan's AI innovation ecosystem and enhance global competitiveness.

Definition of Physical AI

For the purpose of this competition, Physical AI refers to AI systems that can perceive, understand, decide, and act within real-world environments through the integration of sensors, devices, robots, or other connected systems. These systems extend beyond data analysis by enabling intelligent actions and interactions in the physical world.

---

2. Organizers

Organizer

National Science and Technology Council (NSTC)

Co-Organizers

- Compal Electronics, Inc.
- Taipei Computer Association (TCA)
- Taiwan Tech Arena (TTA)

---

3. Eligibility

The competition is open to startups, academic institutions, research organizations, and independent teams worldwide.

3.1 Startup Teams

Applicants registering as startups must:

- Be legally registered and operational.
- Have been established within the past eight (8) years.
- Submit applications under the company entity name.

3.2 Academic Institutions and Research Organizations

Applicants registering as academic institutions or research organizations must:

- Apply under a single institution, department, laboratory, research center, or organization.
- Submit applications under the official name of the institution or organization.

3.3 Independent Teams

Independent teams must:

- Consist of three (3) to eight (8) members, including the team representative.
- Be composed of students, researchers, professionals, or interdisciplinary collaborators.

- Be permitted to include members from different institutions, organizations, or companies.

3.4 Application Rules

1. Multiple teams from the same organization may participate.
2. A team may submit multiple proposals; however, each proposal must be submitted separately.
3. Duplicate or substantially similar proposals are not permitted.
4. Each application account may only be used for one challenge track.
5. A designated team representative must complete registration and serve as the primary contact person.
6. Teams may revise submitted information before the application deadline.
7. No changes to team composition, proposal content, or application category will be accepted after the submission deadline.

3.5 Restrictions

The following entities are not eligible to participate:

- Entities incorporated in Mainland China, Hong Kong, or Macau.
- Individuals employed by Mainland Chinese-funded enterprises.
- Organizations directly or indirectly controlled by entities from Mainland China, Hong Kong, or Macau.
- Companies in which such entities directly or indirectly own more than thirty percent (30%) of shares or possess effective control.

The Organizer reserves the right to make final eligibility determinations.

---

4. Challenge Tracks

Theme: AI × Healthcare Innovation

Empowering Clinical Practice and Care Delivery Through Intelligent Technologies

The 2026 AI Innovation Award focuses on real-world healthcare and care applications. Participants are invited to develop innovative Physical AI and Embodied

AI solutions capable of addressing practical challenges in healthcare delivery, patient care, and hospital operations.

Track 1: Clinical Diagnosis & Medical Decision-Making Innovation

Overview

This track focuses on AI applications that support clinical diagnosis and medical decision-making, helping healthcare professionals improve diagnostic accuracy, decision efficiency, and patient safety.

Example Areas of Interest

Including but not limited to:

- Medical imaging analysis and diagnostic assistance
- Radiology, cardiovascular imaging, oncology, and pathology applications
- Clinical risk prediction and early warning systems
- Disease deterioration prediction and complication forecasting
- Readmission risk assessment
- Clinical decision support systems
- Integration of electronic medical records, laboratory data, imaging, and physiological signals
- Specialty-specific decision support tools for oncology, cardiology, psychiatry, women's health, and related fields

Desired Outcomes

Proposals should:

- Address clearly defined clinical challenges.
- Integrate naturally into existing healthcare workflows.
- Minimize additional workload for healthcare professionals.
- Demonstrate potential for clinical validation and future deployment.

Track 2: Smart Care & Home Health Innovation

Overview

This track focuses on continuous care and home health management for older adults, patients with chronic diseases, and long-term care populations.

Participants are encouraged to develop AI-enabled solutions that support patients, caregivers, families, and healthcare providers.

Example Areas of Interest

Including but not limited to:

- Home safety and health monitoring
- Fall detection and activity monitoring
- Abnormal behavior and lifestyle pattern analysis
- Remote health management
- Chronic disease monitoring and care management
- Home-based rehabilitation systems
- AI-assisted rehabilitation guidance
- Adaptive rehabilitation planning
- Caregiver support tools
- Care scheduling and workload management
- Risk alerts and care coordination
- Healthcare-community-homecare integration

Desired Outcomes

Proposals should:

- Address specific aging, chronic care, or long-term care challenges.
- Prioritize user experience, patient dignity, and privacy protection.
- Demonstrate potential for long-term service deployment and sustainable operation.

Track 3: Smart Hospital Operations & Robotic Services Innovation

Overview

This track focuses on improving hospital and healthcare facility operations through AI, automation, and robotics technologies.

Solutions should help reduce workforce burden, improve operational efficiency, and enhance patient experience.

Example Areas of Interest

Including but not limited to:

- Hospital logistics and material transportation
- Medication, specimen, document, and supply delivery systems
- Environmental management and infection control
- Automated cleaning and disinfection systems
- Healthcare workforce support solutions
- Workflow optimization and administrative burden reduction
- AI-enabled robotic service systems
- Intelligent operation management platforms
- Multi-device coordination and task scheduling
- Hospital resource utilization analysis

Desired Outcomes

Proposals should:

- Demonstrate measurable operational benefits.
- Improve healthcare workforce efficiency.
- Be suitable for deployment in real-world healthcare environments.
- Maintain safety and operational feasibility.
- Offer scalability and replication potential for future smart hospitals.

5. Competition Timeline

International teams should apply by email. Please submit the completed Application Form and Participant Agreement to service@ai-innovation-award.org. The Organizer reserves the right to modify the competition schedule at its discretion.

Stage	Timeline
Call for Applications Opens	June 1, 2026
Application Deadline	July 31, 2026, 17:00 (GMT+8)
Preliminary Review	August 2026
Final Review (On-site Demo)	Late September 2026
Winner Announcement	Late September to Early October 2026
Incubation Program	October–November 2026
Exhibition & Award Ceremony	December 3–6, 2026

5.1 Application

All submissions must be completed no later than: **July 31, 2026, 17:00 (GMT+8)**

Incomplete or late submissions will not be considered.

5.2 Preliminary Review

August 2026

All eligible applications will undergo a document-based evaluation conducted by an expert review panel.

Teams advancing to the Final Review will be notified by email.

5.3 Final Review (On-site Demo)

Late September 2026

Shortlisted teams will participate in an on-site technical demonstration and presentation session.

Each team will receive:

- 15 minutes for demonstration and presentation
- 15 minutes for Q&A with judges

Detailed schedules and venue information will be announced separately.

5.4 Winner Announcement

Winning teams will be announced on the official website and notified via email.

To maintain fairness and confidentiality, evaluation details and reviewer comments will not be disclosed.

5.5 Exhibition & Award Ceremony

Winning teams are required to participate in the:

Taiwan Healthcare+ Expo 2026 December 3–6, 2026

At least one representative from each winning team must attend and participate in:

- Technology Showcase
- Project Presentation
- Award Ceremony
- Media and Networking Activities

5.6 Incubation Program

Winning teams will participate in an industry incubation program led by Compal Electronics, Inc. and ecosystem partners.

The program aims to accelerate commercialization, technical validation, and real-world deployment opportunities.

---

6. Competition Process

The competition consists of two evaluation stages.

Stage 1: Preliminary Review

Technical Qualification & Advancement Evaluation

Applicants must submit all required proposal materials and supporting documents before the application deadline.

Both domestic and international teams are evaluated using the same criteria.

Proposals may be submitted in either:

- English
- Chinese

Required Proposal Contents

1. Project Overview

Provide a concise description of:

- The problem being addressed

- The proposed Physical AI or Embodied AI solution
- Expected impact and outcomes

2. Team Introduction

Describe:

- Team background
- Relevant expertise
- Team structure
- Individual responsibilities

3. Industry Pain Point

Clearly identify:

- Target application scenario
- Existing operational challenges
- Market or user needs
- Real-world problem definition

4. Physical AI / Embodied AI Solution

Explain how the proposed solution:

- Integrates AI with sensors, devices, robotics, or physical systems
- Enables intelligent decision-making
- Produces actions within a real-world environment

5. Demonstrable Tasks

Describe specific tasks the system can perform, such as:

- Recognition
- Navigation
- Manipulation
- Monitoring
- Autonomous operation

These tasks should be demonstrable during the Final Review.

6. System Architecture

Describe:

- Perception modules
- AI decision-making components
- Control systems
- Integration workflow

7. Hardware Platform & Validation Plan

Provide information regarding:

- Hardware platform
- Sensors
- Devices
- Robot systems
- Physical testing and validation strategy

8. Business & Market Development Plan

Describe:

- Target customers
- Market opportunities
- Commercialization strategy
- Potential deployment scenarios

Stage 2: Final Review

Technical Demonstration & Comprehensive Evaluation

Teams selected for the Final Review must present a working system demonstration.

Both domestic and international teams are evaluated using the same criteria.

Presentations may be conducted in:

- English
- Chinese

Recommended Presentation Structure

1. Project Overview

Problem statement, objectives, and solution summary.

2. Tasks & Success Criteria

Definition of tasks and performance indicators.

3. Perception → Decision → Action Workflow

Demonstration of how the system:

- Perceives its environment
- Processes information
- Makes decisions
- Executes actions

4. System Architecture & Engineering Design

Technical implementation details including:

- Hardware integration
- Software architecture
- Control systems
- Reliability design

5. Commercialization & Deployment Strategy

Potential applications, deployment plans, scalability, and business opportunities.

6. Q&A Session

Judges will evaluate technical feasibility, innovation, implementation readiness, and commercialization potential.

---

7. Evaluation Criteria

7.1 Preliminary Review

The Preliminary Review evaluates whether a team possesses the technical capability and system integration readiness required to develop and deploy a Physical AI or Embodied AI solution.

Criteria	Weight
Industry Pain Point & Solution Relevance	30%
Technical Innovation & System Architecture	25%
Hardware Integration & Implementation Plan	25%
Business Model & Market Potential	20%

Industry Pain Point & Solution Relevance (30%)

- Does the proposal address a clearly defined industry challenge?
- Does the AI directly influence physical actions, operational decisions, or equipment behavior rather than solely providing data analysis?

Technical Innovation & System Architecture (25%)

- Does the solution integrate sensing, control, and decision-making capabilities?
- Is the technical architecture feasible and well-designed?

Hardware Integration & Implementation Plan (25%)

- Has the team established or planned an appropriate hardware platform?
- Is the validation strategy realistic and executable in a real-world environment?

Business Model & Market Potential (20%)

- Does the proposal demonstrate commercial viability?
- Is there a clear market opportunity and growth potential?

7.2 Final Review

The Final Review evaluates system maturity, operational stability, engineering quality, and real-world deployment potential through live demonstrations and technical verification.

Environmental variability and real-world operating conditions may be incorporated into the evaluation process.

Criteria	Weight
Functional Performance & Task Completion	30%
Perception–Decision–Action Integration	25%
System Design & Engineering Excellence	25%
Commercial Deployment Readiness	20%

Functional Performance & Task Completion (30%)

- Can the system successfully complete required tasks?
- Does it demonstrate stability and repeatability?

Perception–Decision–Action Integration (25%)

- Can the system respond dynamically to environmental changes?
- Does the AI effectively drive real-world actions through physical devices or robotic systems?

System Design & Engineering Excellence (25%)

- Is the system architecture complete and coherent?
- Are module interactions clearly defined and technically sound?

Commercial Deployment Readiness (20%)

- Is the solution practical for deployment?
- Does it demonstrate efficient hardware-software integration?
- Is it scalable and suitable for real-world adoption?

8. Awards & Resources

8.1 Award Selection

Award recipients will be selected based on overall evaluation performance. The number of winning teams and final award decisions are subject to the judges' evaluation results.

The Organizer reserves the right to adjust the number of awardees or withhold awards if submissions do not meet the required standards.

8.2 Industry Resources

Participating industry partners may provide selected teams with various forms of support to accelerate technology validation and commercialization.

Technical Resources

Including but not limited to:

- Software platforms
- Development tools
- APIs and SDKs
- Edge AI technologies
- Technical consulting and engineering support

Hardware & Equipment Resources

Depending on the challenge track and project requirements:

- Sensors
- Computing devices
- Robotics systems
- Testing equipment
- Prototype development resources

Real-World Validation Opportunities

Selected teams may gain access to:

- Healthcare environments

- Testing facilities
- Pilot deployment opportunities
- Industry validation scenarios

Professional Mentorship

Including:

- Industry experts
- Technical advisors
- Business mentors
- Product development guidance

Collaboration Opportunities

Including:

- Proof-of-Concept (PoC) projects
- Pilot programs
- Commercial partnership discussions
- Potential investment or procurement opportunities

Participation in the competition does not guarantee any future commercial partnership, investment, procurement, or technology adoption.

8.3 Awards

Compal Electronics, Inc. Healthcare Innovation Challenge

Up to three (3) winning teams may be selected.

Each winning team may receive:

- NT$1,000,000 Cash Prize
- Up to NT$1,000,000 Incubation Grant, subject to participation in the Incubation Program and fulfillment of program requirements.

Total support per winning team may reach: **NT$2,000,000**

Final awards are subject to evaluation results and compliance with all competition requirements.

8.4 Exhibition Participation

Winning teams must participate in the Taiwan Healthcare+ Expo 2026 and complete the following activities:

- Technology Showcase
- Project Presentation
- Award Ceremony
- Media Interviews (if requested)

8.5 Incubation Rights and Obligations

Right of First Negotiation: Award-winning teams agree to participate in the incubation program with the sponsoring enterprise. During the incubation period, the enterprise shall be granted a right of first negotiation with respect to the team's proposed solution. Any future collaboration, including but not limited to project scope, service fees, licensing arrangements, investment opportunities, or other commercial matters, shall be subject to separate negotiations and a mutually executed written agreement.

Failure to Comply: Failure by an award-winning team to comply with the obligations set forth herein may result in the revocation of its award status. The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) reserves the right to require the return of any prize money, trophies, grants, or other benefits previously awarded.

9. Terms and Conditions

9.1 General Provisions

Participation in the 2026 AI Innovation Award constitutes full acceptance of these Competition Guidelines and all related rules and requirements. The Organizer and Co-Organizers reserve the right to interpret, amend, and enforce these rules. Any violation may result in disqualification, revocation of awards, recovery of prize funds, and public announcement of such actions. Participants shall be solely responsible for any legal liabilities, damages, or expenses (including attorney fees) arising from their actions.

9.2 Participant Agreement

All team members must sign and comply with the Participant Agreement provided by the Organizer. The Participant Agreement forms an integral part of these Competition Guidelines.

9.3 Authorization of Team Representative

All team members authorize the designated team representative to complete the application process on behalf of the team and agree to provide project materials and contact information for competition administration, evaluation, and event-related communications.

9.4 Eligibility Verification

The Organizer reserves the right to verify participant eligibility and may request supporting documentation at any stage of the competition.

9.5 Restricted Participants

The competition is not open to:

- Entities incorporated in Mainland China, Hong Kong, or Macau;
- Individuals employed by Mainland Chinese-funded enterprises;
- Academic institutions, research organizations, or startups located in Mainland China, Hong Kong, or Macau; or
- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by such parties.

For the purpose of this competition, "controlled entities" include organizations in which such parties:

- Directly or indirectly own more than 30% of shares or capital; or
- Exercise effective control over management or operations.

9.6 Technology Compliance

Core technologies, systems, and critical components included in submitted projects must not be manufactured by or sourced from Mainland Chinese brands. Hardware, software, information and communication technology products, and related services from Mainland Chinese brands are not permitted. The Organizer reserves the right to determine whether any technology or component is considered critical.

9.7 Intellectual Property and Legal Compliance

Participants warrant that their submissions do not infringe upon any intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other lawful interests of third parties. Any required licenses, permissions, or authorizations must be obtained prior to submission. Plagiarism, misappropriation, unauthorized use, or other infringements may result in disqualification and revocation of awards.

9.8 Intellectual Property Ownership

All intellectual property rights related to submitted materials, including but not limited to reports, presentations, prototypes, demonstrations, and technical deliverables, shall remain the property of the participating team.

Participants grant the Organizer and Co-Organizers a non-exclusive, royalty-free, worldwide license to use submitted materials for competition-related purposes, including promotion, reporting, publicity, and event documentation, without limitation as to time or territory.

Participants further agree not to assert moral rights against the Organizer, Co-Organizers, or their authorized parties with respect to such use.

Any future collaboration, Proof of Concept (PoC), technology licensing, investment, or technology transfer arrangements shall be governed by separate agreements between the relevant parties.

9.9 Participation Obligations

Teams advancing to the Final Review must cooperate with competition-related activities, including evaluations, award ceremonies, media interviews, promotional activities, exhibitions, and project presentations.

Winning teams shall also cooperate with impact assessment and follow-up activities for a period of up to six (6) months after the competition. Failure to fulfill these obligations without reasonable cause may result in suspension of benefits or other actions deemed necessary by the Organizer.

9.10 Incubation Program

The competition is supported by Compal Electronics, Inc., which may provide technical resources, mentorship, and commercialization support to winning teams through an incubation program of up to six (6) months.

Winning teams agree to participate in the first phase of the incubation program and related consultation activities.

Phase 1 – Consultation & Mentorship
October 5–23, 2026

Industry experts will provide guidance on business development, presentation refinement, and resource connections.

Phase 2 – Validation & Collaboration
October 27–November 13, 2026

Participation in the second phase will be determined based on Phase 1 outcomes and Compal Electronics, Inc.'s evaluation. If further collaboration is pursued, both parties shall enter into a separate written agreement specifying responsibilities, deliverables, and commercial arrangements.

9.11 Awards and Prize Disbursement

Winning teams must complete required incubation activities and participate in designated exhibition and award events, including the Taiwan Healthcare+ Expo 2026.

Prize funds will be disbursed in two installments:

- 50% upon successful completion of Phase 1 of the Incubation Program;
- The remaining 50% upon completion of the required exhibition, technical presentation, and award ceremony activities, including participation in Taiwan Healthcare+ Expo 2026.

Applicable taxes will be withheld in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

The team name and team membership receiving the award must be identical to those submitted during registration.

Winning teams shall provide a prize allocation form for administrative purposes. The Organizer shall not intervene in the internal distribution of prize funds among team members.

9.12 Personal Data Protection

Personal data collected by the Organizer and Co-Organizers will be used solely for purposes related to competition administration, evaluation, communication, promotional activities, statistical analysis, and related program operations.

Participants may exercise their rights to access, correct, update, restrict processing of, or request deletion of their personal data in accordance with applicable laws.

9.13 Image and Likeness Authorization

Participants grant the Organizer and Co-Organizers the right to photograph, record, publish, and publicly display their image, voice, and likeness for competition-related promotional and documentation purposes.

Such authorization is granted on a worldwide, perpetual, and royalty-free basis.

9.14 Disqualification

A team may be disqualified if any team member or affiliated organization:

- Is subject to government sanctions or funding restrictions;
- Has outstanding tax liabilities;
- Is identified as a Mainland Chinese-funded enterprise by the relevant authorities;
- Provides false or misleading information; or
- Engages in conduct that may adversely affect the integrity, fairness, reputation, or objectives of the competition.

The Organizer reserves the right to revoke awards and recover prize funds if any violation is discovered.

9.15 Governing Law

These Competition Guidelines shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Any dispute arising out of or relating to the competition shall be submitted to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Taipei District Court, Taiwan, as the court of first instance.

The Organizer reserves the right to amend these Guidelines and related competition arrangements at any time. Any updates shall be announced on the official competition website.

---

10. Contact Information

Official Website: https://ai4all.taiwanarena.tech/

Email: Service@ai-innovation-award.org

Contact Persons:

Ms. Annett Wu
Tel: +886-2-2577-4249 ext. 312

Ms. Wang
Tel: +886-2-2577-4249 ext. 351