SPACE APPS 2019 RESOURCES FOR LOCAL LEADS

05 July 2019
This document will be updated as additional questions are received from the Space Apps community.
You are encouraged to check back to this document when questions arise.

Getting Started

Event Planning Kit

We would like to welcome both new and returning Leads as the Local Lead of Space Apps in your city! Please be sure to read the Space Apps Event Planning kit before planning your event. The kit contains important information - including Space Apps background and general information; important points regarding venue selection, outreach, participation and judging, and a recommended event agenda and planning timeline - that will help guide you in your planning process.

Global Planning Calls

In the lead-up to Space Apps, we will host global planning calls open to all Leads. On these calls, we will provide updates on Space Apps from the Global Planning Team. You will also have a chance to ask questions and gain advice from other Leads. Closer to these dates, Leads will receive an email with additional details and instructions for joining the calls.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The remainder of this document contains a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The FAQs, combined with the Event Planning Kit and the global planning calls, cover many common questions about planning and implementing a Space Apps event. This is a living document that will be updated periodically based on the inquiries that we receive from Local Leads. The FAQ is organized around the following topics:

+ Organizing a Space Apps Event

+ Before and After Space Apps

+ Participant Registration

+ Project Teams, Challenges, and Project Submission

+ Website and Communications

+ Branding and Logos

+ Judging and Prizes

If you have questions that are not answered here, please contact the Global Organizing Team at info@spaceappschallenge.org.

Organizing a Space Apps Event

Can I lead multiple events?

Yes. You can submit multiple host applications. Please submit a separate application for each site you plan to host, and provide justification for your ability to host multiple events in your region.

Can I charge for entrance?

No. Due to NASA's rules for the International Space Apps Challenge, Local Leads are not permitted to charge participants for attendance.

Is there a minimum number of participants?

No. Successful Space Apps events come in all sizes, whether a group of five people or a large auditorium filled with participants. The important thing is that your event is well thought out and organized.

What is the minimum age for participants?

Space Apps welcomes participants of all ages. We do not set a minimum age for participation in Space Apps, and many youth and children have participated in past events. We only note that participants under 13 must have a parent or guardian register for them and must attend the entire event with them. Some local events choose to include special events tailored for younger participants, but younger participants are certainly invited to participate in the regular challenges in line with the Space Apps legal policy and other requirements set by the Local Lead.

May I receive a letter that acknowledges me as the Local Lead?

Yes! Having an official letter from the Space Apps Global Organizing Team can be helpful when approaching potential sponsors and collaborators to validate (when necessary) that you are the Lead organizer of your Space Apps location. Please contact info@spaceappschallenge.org if you would like to request a letter.

How long do teams typically want to work each day?

Some teams will prefer to work 4-8 hours per day, while others will want to stay up and work through most of the night. It is up to you, as Local Lead, to determine how long participants can work each day – and of course, it will depend upon the hours of availability for your venue. – but you should do whatever you can to accommodate both types of teams. At minimum, for Space Apps weekend the venue should be open for each full day, and if the hours must be limited, try to find a good alternative space for teams who want to continue working after your primary venue closes. See the Space Apps Event Planning Kit for additional details.

What resources should be provided at my venue?

For a successful Space Apps event, the following resources should be available at your venue:

+ Facilities: Microphone(s); a podium; a quiet meeting space for judges to confer; access to public transportation and/or parking; nearby access to food and beverages; tables and chairs; and whiteboards or pads of paper for teams to use while working.
+ Connectivity: Strong Wifi with sufficient bandwidth and IP addresses; capacity for video/web streaming; power strips, and power outlets, and more*.

+ Supplies: USB drives; name tags; laptop and printer for registration and event management; and office supplies.

*Additional details on recommended supplies and what to look for in a venue can be found in the Space Apps Event Planning Kit.

How can I reach the Space Apps global organizers directly?

You may contact the Global Organizing Team at info@spaceappschallenge.org.

What typically happens during Space Apps weekend?

The Space Apps Event Planning Kit includes a recommended agenda and many other details and suggestions for a successful event, but in general, the event weekend will include:

+ Optional Data Bootcamp: Some local events include a Data Bootcamp on the day prior to Space Apps weekend, with special guests, presentations, or hands-on experience using NASA data. Data Bootcamps are not required, but they are fun and valuable to your participants! (See more information below on Data Bootcamps and other types of pre-event meetups.)
+ Day 1: Venue opens. Participants arrive, register and form teams. Typically, some teams will have formed before arriving, and some will already have chosen which challenge to work on. There might be a short opening ceremony, perhaps with a special presentation. Teams begin to work on their chosen challenges.
+ Day 2: Teams continue to work, and then prepare to present their solutions. Each team presents its solution to the assembled judges and other participants. Judges confer. Winning solutions are presented in a closing ceremony. A reception or social hour may follow. Venue closes.

See the Sample Event Agenda in the Space Apps Event Planning Kit for more ideas and details.

Before and After Space Apps

I am thinking about hosting a meetup before the weekend to encourage Participants to form teams. Has this been done before?

Yes, absolutely! Many sites have a Pre-Event Meetup prior to the Space Apps weekend. These events provide participants with an opportunity to become familiar with the challenges, to brainstorm ideas on how to address them, and to begin forming teams. Usually this happens in the week prior to the event and can be very informal. There are three options for a Pre-Event Meetup, ranging from short meetups that require minimal effort, to longer ones that require significant effort to plan and facilitate:

+ A 1-2 hour event to bring participants together before the hackathon to allow first time and returning participants to connect prior to the weekend.
+ A 2-4 hour event to discuss challenges and/or hear from guest speakers to inform participants as to what to expect at Space Apps.
+ A day-long Data Bootcamp to inspire participants and help ease participation for newcomers, and to provide an introduction to data use and hackathon skills.

For more information on hosting a Pre-Event Meetup, please see the 2019 Pre-event Meetup Guide.

What is a Data Bootcamp?

A Space Apps Data Bootcamp is a day-long event that you may choose to conduct for your event participants. The Data Bootcamp provides an opportunity for your attendees to learn new concepts, strategies, and skills, from guest speakers, panelists and mentors, and to apply what they have learned in breakout sessions throughout the day. Data Bootcamps are held on the day before Space Apps, to inspire participants and set hackathon newcomers at ease, and to provide an introduction to coding, dataset retrieval and manipulation, problem solving, pitching and storytelling, or other useful hackathon skills. Review the Pre-Event Meetup Guide for more information.

Can people start working on the challenges as soon as they are published?

We appreciate the enthusiasm of participants who want to start as early as possible, but we ask that participants start the actual work at the hackathon itself. The 48-hour hackathon is designed to inspire innovative ideas and develop solutions in a collaborative, team environment, and participants are not expected to have a fully developed project at the end. Having said that, we do encourage hosts to provide participants with an opportunity to meet and get to know each other before the hackathon, by holding a Pre-Event Meetup or Data Bootcamp.

How can I support exciting projects post-hackathon?

If you wish to support projects beyond the Space Apps weekend, the Space Apps Project Accelerator Toolkit can help you determine how to do so. The Toolkit provides some guidance on securing resources, selecting projects, and tracking progress. The Project Accelerator is NOT a required part of organizing a Space Apps event, but is intended to be a resource for those who are interested.

How does the Space Apps virtual event work?

Those who are unable to participate a Space Apps event in-person can hack virtually from just about anywhere on planet Earth! Virtual Participants can sign onto spaceappshchallenge.org when the Virtual Event begins. Once there, they can find others to work with and register a team, select a challenge, develop their solution, and submit a project page. Judges will review virtual project submissions after the Space Apps weekend. Additional details on virtual participation will be available on the Space Apps website.

Participant Registration

How does participant registration work?

As a Local Lead, you will be given a unique location page on spaceappschallenge.org, where you can provide information for your event. Your location page will include the official registration link for participants in your location. Your location page should include information about your venue, the event agenda, the number of participants your event can accommodate, and any other details that you wish to include about your local event. To register, each participant will create a profile on the spaceappschallenge.org website, and will then register for a specific location. If the number of

participants who wish to register for your event exceeds the maximum number that you have identified for your location, the remainder will be placed on a waitlist. All participants must register as individuals on spaceappschallenge.org, either online prior to the event or on-site at the event. Participants may NOT register on any other website.

When will participant registration open?

Participant registration for Space Apps 2019 will late July 2019. Each location will be provided with a unique Space Apps webpage on the Space Apps website, so that individual participants in your area can register to attend your event. Once you fill out your event information on your location page, you will be able to share your location's page with your network of contacts to encourage participants to register for your local event.

Is the registration individual or by team?

Participants register on spaceappschallenge.org as individuals, not as teams.

How can we view the list of registered participants on the Space Apps website?

As an approved Local Lead, you will be given a password that will give you access to view the list of registered participants for your location. From the website's administrative console, you will be able to see and to modify the participant list for your location, and, if applicable, to manage your location's waitlist.

What do I need to do to check participants in at the event?

We recommend that you set up a registration desk at the entrance to your venue, and that you have at least one person available at all times to: direct participants that have RSVP'd to check-in via an attendees list; register participants who have not pre-registered; check in judges and guest speakers; provide name tags; direct attendees to where they can set up; and answer questions.

Project Teams, Challenges, and Project Submissions

When are teams formed?

Participants may start to form their project teams at (or before) a Pre-Event Meet-up, or teams may form or add additional members on the first day of the Space Apps event. Leads may not assign participants to teams. Regardless of when teams form, participants are not permitted to start working on their solutions until the Space Apps event begins on October 19th.

How do participants form teams?

There are many ways that participants can form teams. Some participants may self-organize into teams before the event, or during a pre-event meetup or Data Bootcamp. Other participants will arrive at your venue looking for a team to join. For these participants, one teambuilding method that has worked in the past is to set up tables around the room that represent each challenge theme, and to instruct participants who have a project idea or a specific challenge or challenge theme that they want to work on to go to that table. Encourage everyone to introduce themselves to the others at the table and share why they're interested in the challenge and what skills or experience they have. Participants who already have a project idea for one of the challenges can do a short pitch to the group to recruit a team. Participants can visit more than one table, or ask for volunteers from other tables if they need additional skills on their team. When facilitating the team formation process, remember that it is important to many participants to have agency in choosing a challenge and forming a team.

Should we encourage only teams to compete, or allow individuals as well? How many members should a team have?

An individual is allowed to work and submit a project independently. However, we encourage all attendees to be part of a team. We have found that the most successful solutions come from teams of individuals with diverse skill sets and backgrounds. As host and Local Lead, you should set the tone and create an open and collaborative environment at your local Space Apps event. If participants come from a technical background, encourage them to connect with other participants like artists, entrepreneurs, or storytellers. If participants come from a non-technical background, encourage them to connect with developers, designers, and subject matter experts.

The sweet spot for teams is typically 4 to 5 people. If a team gets too big, it can be difficult for the team to focus; if it is too small, the team may not have all the skills/knowledge needed to solve a challenge. You may choose to set a maximum number of participants per team for your local event, but there is no set requirement, and we encourage you to be flexible and, wherever possible, to accommodate particular circumstances that may exist for your participants.

Can teams work on more than one challenge?

A team can create more than one project, but it can be very difficult for a team to do this successfully. Please encourage participants and teams to focus on just one project and one solution, as the hackathon only lasts one weekend! That said, individuals can participate on multiple project teams and can be recognized on multiple project pages, if they so choose. If a team feels that their solution is relevant to multiple challenge statements, please ask them to choose the challenge that is most aligned to their project.

How are projects/solutions submitted?

Every team needs to create a project page on spaceappschallenge.org to describe their work. We encourage teams to create their project page as soon as they form their team on Space Apps weekend, and to add project information as the weekend progresses. Participants must be registered and be identified on their team's webpage on spaceappschallenge.org in order to be eligible for global judging and awards.

Can I have mentors at my event to help project teams?

Yes – having mentors at your event is a very good idea! Mentors can help participants learn new concepts, strategies and skills, and they can help coach teams on subjects they are not familiar with. Mentors can circulate around the room or remain at a fixed location, but they help as many teams as possible. A mentor may not participate as a member of a project team. When choosing mentors, look for people with experience in coding, problem solving, data set manipulation, storytelling, design, and scientific subject matter expertise that correlates to the challenge areas. To find mentors, reach out to technical or academic networks or universities that would be interested in working with your Space Apps event participants. For instance, Scotland has the STEM

Ambassador network (https://www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassadors/), which links people who are involved in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Finding an equivalent organization in your area can be of great help for getting mentors/others involved.

When will challenges be posted?

Challenges will be posted on spaceappschallenge.org approximately one month before the event. We will notify Leads via email and social media when the challenges are posted online.

Where will participants access the data for the challenges?

Many of the challenge statements will include links to resources and datasets that are relevant to those challenges. Other data to use and explore will also be available from data.nasa.gov.

Can a Local Lead create a project or participate on a team?

No - it is a conflict of interest for a Lead or anyone on the organizing team of a Space Apps event to work on a project team since the Lead and the organizing team recruits (and may serve as) judges. As a Local Lead and organizer, you can be most effective by running a successful event.

Is it OK for me to offer only some of the challenges to our participants?

We recommend you make all the challenges available and let the participants choose. Feel free to select a few to highlight, but please let participants know they can work on any challenge they choose.

Is it possible for a team to come up with their own project or is it mandatory to pick one of the challenges?

We encourage participants to develop projects in response to one of the challenges. In order to be eligible for global judging, teams must submit a solution to one of the official Space Apps challenges. However, participants who want to build a project that does not respond to a particular challenge are permitted to do so.

Website and Communications

When is the Space Apps website launching?

The 2019 website is now live at spaceappschallenge.org. Check the website frequently for updates and to see new material.

Can I create my own local webpage for my event?

It is not required, and for most locations it is not necessary, but you may create your own local website to supplement the information that you place on spaceappschallenge.org. An independent website can give you greater ability to showcase your local sponsors and to develop your own branding. You can also link your local page on www.spaceappschallenge.org to your own local site. However, please be mindful that for all Space Apps local events, participant registration must take place through the spaceappschallenge.org website, and your official location page, and team project pages must be completed there. If you do create your own additional site, please be sure to follow all Space Apps branding guidelines.

Can I translate the challenges?

Yes! If you or your team do translate the challenges into other languages, we encourage you to share the translation with us. We in turn will share the translated Challenges with the worldwide Space Apps community.

Can we put information in our native languages on our location pages?

Yes. You can put information and other materials in your native language; if you do so, we ask that you provide our Global Organizing Team with the English translation in case there are questions.

What resources can I share with potential local event sponsors to help them learn more about Space Apps?

You can provide potential local event sponsors with the Space Apps Collaborator Info Sheet, as well as links to the Space Apps website, Facebook page, YouTube videos, infographics, and the Space

Apps Mission Report, which outlines the purpose of Space Apps, profiles winning projects from around the world, and shares stories from the events.

Are we allowed to post sponsor logos on our location's webpage?

Sponsor logos cannot be posted on the Space Apps website. However, you can include links to collaborator/sponsor websites on your event page.

What social media is used for Space Apps?

Twitter and Facebook are two of the primary channels we use to connect with the global Space Apps community. We want to highlight your event and your teams, and talk about who you are as a stellar Space Apps Lead! If you are currently not on social media, we encourage you to create a Space Apps Twitter handle for your event (for example, Space Apps NYC's Twitter is @SpaceAppsNYC). We also encourage Space Apps Leads to communicate with each other on social media by using the hashtag #SpaceApps!

Which hashtag should we use on Twitter and social media?

The global account will be using #SpaceApps. Please use this hashtag to let us know what you are up to! On the local level, you may choose to create a secondary hashtag: #SpaceAppsYOURCITY, or #SpaceAppsYOURCITY19 (the "19" lets you track posts from this year, 2019)

Branding and Logos

Are there any restriction on logo use?

Yes – NASA has strict restrictions that everyone must follow regarding the use of their logo. You cannot under any circumstance use the NASA logo in any event promotion materials. You can, however, showcase that NASA is involved. Print or online content promoting your local event can include NASA's name in text (e.g. "NASA's International Space Apps Challenge," or "Space Apps Buenos Aires, brought to you by NASA") - but you may not use the logo image.

If these requirements are not clear or you have questions, please contact info@spaceappschallenge.org.

If I print T-shirts or posters, can I put my local sponsors' logos on them?

Yes, you can include sponsor names or logos on t-shirts and posts, but you cannot display a NASA logo with other sponsor logos.

Can a collaborator/sponsor sell things at my Space Apps event?

Sponsors can promote their activities at Space Apps events, and they can give away souvenirs or mementos in exchange for sponsorship, but they cannot sell anything directly to participants at a Space Apps event. Pushy sponsors can be a big distraction. If you want to allow local sponsors a brief amount of time to present information about themselves, it is allowed, but presentations of this type should not take more than 30 minutes total, or more than 5 minutes per sponsor. Participants will be eager to get to work and you should give them time and space to work—they only have two days, after all!

Judging and Prizes

How does local judging work?

Judging occurs at each location under the direction of the Local Leads. If desired, each location may add its own judging criteria to the overall Space Apps criteria, and Local Leads may establish local awards if they wish. In addition to any that you determine locally, here are the core Space Apps criteria that your judges should consider:

+ Impact: How much impact (quality and quantity) can this project have? Does it solve a big problem or a little problem? Will it inspire or help many, or a few?
+ Creativity: How creative/innovative is the approach? Is the project novel and something that hasn't been attempted before, or is it an incremental improvement on something that already exists?
+ Validity: Is the solution scientifically valid? Will it do what it sets out to do? Can it work in the real world?

+ Relevance: Is this project responsive to the challenge for which it was submitted? Is it a complete solution or does it have a long way to go? Is it technically feasible? How usable or user friendly is the solution?

+ Presentation: How well did the team communicate their project? Were they effective in telling the story of the project: the challenge, the solution, and why it is important?

Note that when local judging is completed, each local event can nominate up to two projects to advance to global judging, which will be conducted using the criteria listed above. Therefore, it is highly recommended that each Local Lead share the judging criteria above with participants at the start of the hackathon, so that all teams know what to expect of the judging process.

How do I select judges?

Local Leads may select judges however you choose, with the aim of providing a fair and objective review of projects. Local Leads typically select from 3 to 6 judges with sufficient diversity to judge across all of the challenge categories. You may wish to invite representatives from your local technology, science, data, or other relevant communities to serve as judges; you may also choose to offer participation on the judging panel as an incentive to sponsors who have relevant expertise.

Are there any restrictions on who may serve as a judge?

Beyond ensuring that judges have relevant expertise and that the judging panel is diverse enough to judge all challenge categories, the only restriction on who may serve is that judges must be able to serve fairly and impartially. Thus, participants themselves, their family members, and anyone else for whom judging would create a conflict of interest, should not serve as judges for the event.

How many solutions can be nominated for global judging?

A maximum of two solutions from each local event can be sent forward for global judging by NASA.

What is the format for teams to present their projects to judges?

At the end of the second day of the Space Apps hackathon, teams will take turns presenting their projects to the judges. Each team presentation should be short (3-5 minutes each, depending on the number of teams). The presentation is the opportunity for each team to highlight its work for the

judges to see. We recommend that Local Leads remind teams of the judging criteria ahead of time, so that they can genuinely demonstrate how their project solves the challenge.

A word about the importance of the presentations: common pitfall for hackathon teams is that they fail to spend adequate time preparing for their presentation, instead using every available minute to develop their project. You, as the Lead, should point out to teams that the judges have a very limited amount of time to understand the project and review technical specifications, and that communicating their good ideas and hard work clearly and concisely is a crucial part of their solution. The time that a team takes to prepare a clear and well-organized presentation is time well spent, and such preparation is a skill that will serve them well throughout their careers

Who announces the winners?

As Local Lead, you can announce the local winners at the end of the event. Alternatively, you may ask a special guest, one of your event sponsors, or your judges to announce the winners.

Are there any awards for the best local solutions?

It is up to you to decide if you wish to give local awards for the best projects, but local awards are not required. In many cities, local awards or prizes are supplied by local event sponsors. We've found that if prizes are given, it works best if they are modest; large prizes can result in a competitive, rather than a collaborative, environment. Prizes offered at some local events in the past have ranged from movie tickets to educational opportunities, and everything in between.

All locations are different and whether you choose to offer local prizes (and what those prizes are) is up to you. Regardless of whether you choose to offer prizes, every participant can receive a certificate of participation, if you choose to print them at or during the event.

Are participant and volunteer certificates available?

Yes. Closer to Space Apps weekend, the Global Organizing Team will distribute certificate templates that can be used. If you prefer, you may design your own certificates for your local event.

Can I do a local People's Choice Award?

The Global People's Choice Award has been discontinued, and we do not encourage you to do one at the local level. If you do choose to do a local People's Choice Award, please be aware that any projects selected as People's Choice award winners will not go on to a global judging round.