



2026 Co-Making the Future  
China-U.S. Young Maker Competition  
Rules and Regulations

Working Group of the China-U.S. Young Maker Competition

March 2026

# **Chapter I - General Provisions**

## **1.1 Competition Background**

The "China-U.S. Young Makers Competition" (hereinafter referred to as the "Competition") is hosted by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China since 2014 and stands as the highest-level maker event for youth exchanges between China and the United States. Since its inception, the Competitions have been continuously recognized as fruits many rounds of China-U.S. High-Level Consultation on People-to-People Exchange and the results in the field of education in the China-U.S. SCD respectively. In 2020, it was selected into the "National College Discipline Competition Rankings" (Category A) released by the China Association of Higher Education.

## **1.2 Competition Theme**

The theme of the competition is "Co-Making the Future," utilizing digital technology to explore innovative opportunities in various fields, including resilient communities, environmental education, low-carbon environmental protection, food systems, crisis response, public health, health and well-being, clean energy, climate change, green transportation, and circular economy. The competition encourages the use of cutting-edge technology and open-source tools, as well as the integration of future thinking and design innovation, to create new works with both social significance and industrial value and respond to new trends in AI, develop forward-looking solutions, and promote the digital transformation of society, and contribute to global sustainable development.

## **1.3 Competition Purpose**

The Competition is dedicated to building a cross-cultural co-creation platform, deepening people-to-people exchanges between China and the United States, and encouraging young makers to develop innovative prototypes to solve social problems with an entrepreneurial spirit through the integration of Chinese and

American cultural perspectives and cross-border cooperation. The competition not only emphasizes the open-source sharing culture and guides the transformation of creativity into practical applications, but also encourages young people from both countries to focus on the well-being of humanity's future. It promotes the joint development of maker culture and ecosystems between China and the United States, supports the optimization of youth maker communities and maker space environments, fosters the growth and success of young makers, and ultimately facilitates the sharing of innovative solutions and collaborative actions.

## **Chapter II – Organizational Structure and Responsibilities**

### **2.1 Host and co-organizers of the Competition**

The "China-U.S. Young Makers Competition" (hereinafter referred to as the "Competition") is hosted by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and is co-organizers by the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange, Tsinghua University, Beijing Gehua Media Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Municipal Office for Zhangjiang Science City Development and Management and American related partners. The China University Science Park Alliance and the Innovation Center for China-U.S. Youth Exchange Secretariat provides corresponding support. The competition encourages and welcomes relevant units and institutions to actively participate in event preparations.

Regional selection competitions are organized by local organizers, which must have the resources and capabilities to support the competition, provide the necessary venues and funding for the regional selection competitions, and be responsible for the organization and review activities. The organizers must strictly follow the competition rules and procedures set by the working group (see Attachment 1: Requirements for Regional Selection Event Organizers of China-U.S. Young Maker Competition).

## **2.2 Working Groups of the Competition**

The Competition will set up working groups, review working groups, and supervision working groups. The working group is responsible for the formulation of the overall plan of the competition, the selection and approval of the organizers of the regional selection competitions, the arrangement and organization of the final competition process, and other specific work. It is also responsible for the approval of review rules, the appointment of review working group members, the public announcement and final confirmation of the final review results, and the formulation, review, and release of other related competition documents. A secretariat under the working group is responsible for the execution and implementation of specific work.

## **2.3 Review Group**

The review group of the competition is responsible for the formulation of review rules and procedures, the recommendation of competition review results, and the organization and implementation of the final review work. Its members are composed of representatives appointed by the host and co-organizers of the competition. Regional selection competitions should also establish regional review groups, responsible for implementing the review rules and procedures established by the competition review group. The specific review work of the regional and final competitions is carried out by the reviewers hired by the review group. After the list of reviewers for each region is confirmed, it must be submitted to the competition review group for review, and the competition review group has the right to make suggestions on the composition of the regional review members.

## **2.4 Review Expert Database**

The competition establishes a review expert database, which is composed of expert representatives appointed by the host, co-organizers, and various China-U.S. Young Makers Exchange Centers. Each region can also recommend experts. After the final review by the working group, they will enter the competition review expert

database. The review expert database is updated every year. The members of the review committee in the review expert database include university and research institute experts, technology experts, designers, senior makers, investors, etc. To highlight the distinctive features of the competition, young maker representatives (including outstanding participants from previous competitions) will be selected as judging experts. Each year, the review working group will draw a designated number of review committee members from the members of the review expert database as review candidates for the projects of this competition. The number of reviewers for the regional and final competitions should in principle be an odd number of more than 5 people. Reviewers review the entries according to the competition review rules.

## **2.5 Supervision Group**

The Supervisory Group is responsible for overseeing the organization and review process of the competition, scoring, confirming, and announcing competition results, coordinating, and handling complaints and appeals during the competition, etc. The Supervision Group is accountable to the Competition Working Group and is composed of representatives appointed by each hosting unit. The competition establishes a Discipline and Supervision Committee to supervise the organization and review work of the competition and related work of the co-organizing units, and to deal with behaviors that violate the competition's discipline. Within the scope allowed by applicable laws, the Competition Working Group reserves the final interpretation of these rules.

# **Chapter III - Eligibility and Team Registration**

## **3.1 Eligibility**

The China-U.S. Young Maker Competition is open to any Chinese or American citizen, or individuals who have obtained permanent legal residency in China or the United States.

Applicants should meet the age requirement of being 18 years or older and under 40 years old at the start of the competition registration (For the 2026 competition, applicants' birth dates must be no earlier than June 1, 1986, and no later than June 1, 2008). Participants are responsible for understanding their legal rights to attend and participate in this event and must bring valid identification issued by the government to the competition.

Participants cannot be (1) employees of the organizing entities [namely, the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange, Tsinghua University, Beijing Gehua Media Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Municipal Office for Zhangjiang Science City Development and Management and American related partners, or employees of any parent company or subsidiary of these entities]; (2) direct relatives of any employee of these entities.

### **3.2 Competition Track**

The 2026 China-U.S. Young Maker Competition is divided into a main track and a vocational college track (hereinafter referred to as the "sub-track"). The main track and sub-track are distinguished at the time of registration, and during the regional competition, reviews can be done separately or jointly for the main track and sub-track. After the review, the teams are ranked according to their track, determining the final advancing and winning teams.

### **3.3 Team Registration**

Registrants must log into the official website of the China-U.S. Young Maker Competition, select their respective track, and complete the team registration. Registrants can choose to participate individually or as a team.

When registering as an individual, they must choose to participate in the Chinese or American competition based on their school/organization's location. When registering as a team, they must choose to participate based on the team leader's school/organization's location.

To promote exchange between Chinese and American youths, each sub-competition zone must recommend at least one China-U.S. jointly formed team to advance to the finals.

In principle, individuals, or teams (including China-U.S. joint teams) participating in the China competition should choose the nearest Chinese regional competition and participate in the competition according to the requirements of the selected region. The competition will not set up separate competitions for individuals or teams (including China-U.S. joint teams).

The same project can only choose one regional competition and one track to register, and multiple registrations in multiple regions or tracks are not allowed. If a project is found to be registered in multiple regions or tracks at the same time, the competition working group has the right to cancel its qualification.

### **3.4 Registration Requirements**

- a. When registering as a team, the total number of team members must not exceed 5 people (including the team leader), and the team leader is the contact person and representative of the team.
- b. Chinese and American participants are encouraged to form teams at a main track competition.
- c. For the China division vocational college track, two-thirds or more of the team members must be full-time students or graduates of vocational colleges. For teams of 2, both members must be from vocational colleges; for teams of 3, at least 2 members; for teams of 4, at least 3 members; and so on. For the U.S. division vocational college track, participants must be students or graduates of community colleges.
- d. Before the start of the regional selection competition, teams can replace one or more members, but the team leader cannot be replaced.
- e. A participant can only participate in one project as an individual or a team.

- f. Each participating project can have at most one guiding teacher, who cannot participate as a team leader or member.
- g. Individual participants or teams must sign the China-U.S. Young Maker Competition Participant Declaration when registering. Successful registration is considered full acceptance of the competition declaration (see Attachment3: Declaration of Participants in the China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition).
- h. There is no registration fee for this competition.

## **Chapter IV - Competition Requirements**

### **4.1 Entry Requirements**

Entries must revolve around the competition theme "Co-making the Future" and address specific challenges outlined in Section 1.2, presenting feasible innovative solutions. Entries must take the form of a "brand-new product prototype" that clearly articulates the social or technical problem being solved and reflects an intercultural collaborative perspective. The competition encourages participants to proactively respond to the new opportunities brought by artificial intelligence, integrating cutting-edge technologies and open-source tools into innovative practices to drive social digital and intelligent transformation and sustainable development.

### **4.2 Innovation Requirement**

The contest values the maker ethos and encourages innovation and originality. The contestants' projects should address an unexplored problem or propose a new solution, and should not duplicate previous works or existing market solutions. must demonstrate the results of the team's or individual's efforts or joint efforts over the past year (The period from the end of the 2025 Finals to the start of the 2026 Finals), and clearly show the workload and progress of the team or individual during the offline selection process of the sub-competition area. The submitted works must innovate on both the social and technological fronts. The entries must be new works created by the team within the last year and not published publicly, Entries must not have been commercialized,

mass-produced, or sold during the period before the registration date of the sub-competition area and during the competition, and must not have received commercial investment (including but not limited to venture capital, angel investment, private equity funds, and other investment-related support, rewards, loans, or equity investments), must not have received government policy investment, must not have reached the finals in previous competitions, and must not have won first prize or higher in other provincial-level or above competitions.

Teams selected by the sub-region to participate in the final should not have entered the finals of previous Competitions, nor should they have won any provincial-level (inclusive) or above awards in in previous editions of the Category A discipline competitions recognized by the Ministry of Education for national college students.. The entries must be innovative results of the team's independent research and development with complete intellectual property rights (if the innovative results involve related patents, the participants must be the first author). They cannot rely entirely on existing technological achievements of universities, research institutions, and enterprises. If the entries directly or indirectly use the related patents or unsecured and unpublished technological results of the participants' affiliated universities, research institutions, and enterprises, they must clearly declare and obtain written authorization from the patent holder or the competent leader. The competition working group and each regional selection competition organizer will strictly check the innovation of the entries. If any entries are found not complying with the competition rules, their qualification will be canceled.

### **4.3 Presentation Requirements**

Participants are required to complete the design work of their entries during the regional selection round, create a demonstrable product prototype, and provide ample evidence that the main body of work is achievable by the team or individual themselves, rather than being the result of years of research from laboratories or research institutions. The prototype should present achievable social innovation or technological innovation functions and possesses clear application scenarios and interactive carrier

forms, capable of demonstrating its operational logic and value pathways through real or simulated scenarios.

The competition encourages showcasing the design, validation, and iteration process of projects (such as design sketches, process proposals, testing records), reflecting the makers' spirit of continuous exploration and practical improvement, rather than merely presenting the final outcome. The prototype or model that will eventually be presented in the final competition should be of appropriate size to be displayed, assembled and moved in the competition venue. Teams advancing to the finals from the regional preliminary must complete improvements, upgrades, and testing of the product prototype, and enhance system integrity and implementation quality.during the finals stage.

#### **4.4 Technical Application Requirement**

Entries are encouraged to employ open-source technologies, rely on open standards, or adopt properly licensed technical solutions, ensuring that the origins of all technologies are clearly documented and compliant. Projects may freely choose their technical platforms and tools, provided they are implemented in conjunction with specific application carriers and system requirements. Priority should be given to universal or widely compatible hardware environments to enhance the solution's scalability, replicability, and promotability, thereby fostering an open, collaborative, and innovative maker ecosystem.

#### **4.5 Intellectual Property Requirements**

- a. The entries must be innovative achievements independently developed by the team with full intellectual property rights (if the innovation involves related patents, the participant must be the first author). They cannot rely on existing technological achievements from universities, research institutions, or enterprises. If the entry directly or indirectly uses relevant patents of the participating university, research institution, or enterprise, or if it is an unpatented and undisclosed technological achievement, a clear statement

must be made, and written authorization from the patent holder or the relevant leadership must be obtained.

- b. Participants must guarantee the originality of the entries and must not infringe any third party's intellectual property or other rights. Also, the content should comply with applicable laws and regulations (including but not limited to the relevant laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America). Participants agree to take full responsibility for requests and claims resulting from the infringement of third-party intellectual property or other rights and protect the competition's organizers, contractors, and their agents and defend them, ensuring they do not suffer any loss compensation requests or prosecutions.
- c. The intellectual property of the entries belongs to the participants, but the rights and interests of the competition's organizers and contractors should be appropriately considered. The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, as the competition host, and the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange, Tsinghua University, Beijing Gehua Media Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Municipal Office for Zhangjiang Science City Development and Management and American related partners, as the competition co-organizers, have the right to permanently use this competition's entries for demonstrations and partial or complete publications (not involving technical details) within the worldwide scope. Other wholly owned subsidiaries of the competition contractors also have the aforementioned rights. If the competition contractor uses the entries for other purposes, it needs to negotiate with the participant team. After the participant team agrees, they sign an agreement on the use of the entries.
- d. Within the scope permitted by applicable law, the competition working group reserves the final interpretation right of these rules.

## **Chapter V - Competition Process Arrangement**

The 2026 China-U.S. Young Maker Competition consists of three stages:

Stage 1: Competition Launch, Participant Registration, and Regional Preliminary Rounds

Stage 2: Optimization of Works for Finalists

Stage 3: 2026 China-U.S. Young Maker Competition Finals

The specific schedule is as follows:

### **Stage 1: Competition Launch, Participant Registration, and Regional Preliminary Rounds**

From April 2026, to late June , 2026

April 2026: Competition Launch

- The China-U.S. Young Maker Competition officially commences.
- The competition is divided into two regions: China and the United States. The Chinese region includes these sub-regions, namely Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, Xiamen, Chengdu, Xi'an, Wenzhou, Shenyang, Suzhou, Wuhan, Shenzhen, Hangzhou and Haikou. The U.S. region includes eastern and western sub-regions. The number of competition zones is subject to the final announcement.

Participant Registration for the 2026 China-U.S. Young Maker Competition

- Participants must register through the official website of the 2026 China-U.S. Young Maker Competition.
- They need to read the registration instructions and select the regional preliminary round they wish to participate in.
- Participants should prepare carefully for the regional preliminary round according to the schedule provided by each sub-region based on the registration information on the competition's official website.

Regional Preliminary Rounds

- The regional preliminary rounds will continue until late June 2026.

a. Selection Contest Process

The organizing institutions of each sub-region are responsible for organizing the preliminary rounds. The 2026 regional selection contests must be conducted in the form of offline competitions and reviews.

The format of offline competitions is not limited to hack-a-thons, make-a-thons, or other innovation competitions. The organizing committee will provide a reference document outlining the process for conducting maker competition events. The competition will involve on-site demonstrations and evaluations. The sub-regional judging panel will evaluate the participants' projects based on the competition's evaluation criteria and select the winners.

#### b. Advancement Quotas and Replacement Rules

After the completion of the preliminary rounds, each sub-region must recommend and announce the list of teams or individuals advancing to the finals based on the judging results.

##### \* Main Track

For the main track of each sub-region, the top 5 teams in the score ranking will be recommended to advance to the finals. To promote youth exchanges between China and the United States, it is required that the advancing teams must include at least one China-U.S. jointly formed team project. If the top five rankings do not include a China-U.S. jointly formed team project and such a project exists in the sub-competition zone, the highest-ranked China-U.S. jointly formed team in that zone shall replace the lowest-ranked team to ensure at least one China-U.S. jointly formed team qualifies. If no China-U.S. jointly formed team exists in the sub-competition zone, only the top four ranked teams will be recommended to advance to the finals. For the encouragement of U.S. youth to engage in exchanges in China, the eastern and western sub-regions of the U.S. region may each recommend seven teams to advance to the finals.

##### \* Sub-Track

For the sub-tracks of each sub-region, the winning teams will be recommended to advance to the finals based on the score ranking, considering the number of participating vocational education teams. If the number of participating teams in a sub-track is less than 10, no separate quota for advancement will be set. If there are 10 to 29 participating teams, 2 teams can be recommended. If there are 30 or more participating teams, 3 teams can be recommended.

If the teams or individual projects recommended by a sub-region pass the review process for the finals, the list of advancing teams will be announced in the order of the sub-region's submission. If a winning team is found to have serious qualifications or innovation issues that do not comply with the theme of the competition, their advancement qualification will be revoked, and the sub-region will select substitute teams in order.

Each sub-region must submit the recommended team information to the competition organizing committee (see Attachment 2: Statistical Table of Awarded Teams in the China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition Regional Competitions) before 24:00 on June 20, 2026.

## **Stage 2: Optimization of Finalist Teams' Projects**

From June 20, 2026, until the finals

To achieve better presentation and stronger competitiveness, teams that have qualified for the finals can iterate and upgrade their projects. The competition organizers and sub-regional institutions will provide assistance and support to the teams as much as possible, including additional resources. Entries advancing to the final competition must reflect the outcomes of the iterative training from each regional division.

## **Stage 3: Grand Finals**

Mid-to-late July, 2026 (Please refer to the organizing committee's final notice in case of any schedule changes.)

The finals will be held in mid-to-late July, 2026, and specific arrangements will be notified separately. The participants in the finals will consist of teams and individuals recommended by the Chinese and American sub-regions in the main track, sub-tracks, and China-U.S. joint teams, as confirmed by the organizing committee.

Each team consists of no more than 5 young makers who meet the competition requirements. The participating projects should be based on innovative concepts, open-source software, or software and technologies based on open standards. They should utilize general-purpose hardware platforms and demonstrate the integration of software and hardware. The teams will further develop their product prototypes based on the creative ideas they used in the sub-regional preliminary rounds. During the finals, the judging panel will comprehensively score the projects and select the winning teams.

## **1. Evaluation Process**

Before the formal evaluation, the organizers and some members of the judging panel will review the alignment of the recommended projects from each sub-region with the competition's themes, innovation requirements, and intellectual property requirements. Qualified projects will proceed to the evaluation stage. In the finals, separate evaluations will be conducted for the main track and sub-tracks, with different experts assigned to evaluate each category.

## **2. Evaluation Criteria**

The final judging panel will comprehensively evaluate the projects based on factors such as pioneering spirit and innovative breakthroughs, problem orientation and social value, technical implementation and product completeness, team collaboration and open-source contributions, application prospects and development potential. The judges will consider these factors to determine the winners of each award category.

a. Main Track:

The main track final competition consists of two rounds of reviews. In the first round, all final teams will be divided into 6 groups based on the results of a lottery draw (including 5 groups from the Chinese competition area and 1 group from the American competition area). According to the ranking within each group, the top 9 teams from each group, totaling 54 teams, will be selected. Among them, the top 5 teams from each group, which is 30 teams in total, will advance to the second round, while the teams ranked 6th to 9th in each group, which is 24 teams in total, will be awarded the third prize.

In the second round of review, the 30 teams will be evaluated, and the top 10 teams will be selected for the first prize and the next 20 teams for the second prize. After comprehensive deliberation by the final competition review experts, the final winning teams will be determined.

#### b. Sub-Track

The sub-track will have one round of evaluation in the final. The top 15 teams will be selected based on their scores, and the final winning teams will be determined based on comprehensive evaluation by the final judging panel.

### **3. Competition Discipline**

Please refer to the "Competition Discipline Handbook" issued for the rules and regulations of the final competition.

### **4. Award Setup**

The specific award setup for the finals (including award tiers and prize money for the main track and sub-tracks, as well as details on all special awards) is detailed in Chapter VII.

a. Main Track: There will be 10 first prizes and 20 second prizes. The winning teams or individuals will receive certificates and cash awards presented by the competition organizing committee; there will also be 24 third prizes and a number of outstanding awards, with recipients receiving certificates of merit from the competition organizing committee. The competition organizing

committee will provide financing and technology transfer consulting services for all winning projects that require them.

- b. Sub-Track: There will be 3 First Prize, 5 Second Prizes, and 7 Third Prizes. The winning teams or individuals will receive certificates and cash rewards from the competition working group. There will be several Excellent Prizes, and the winners will receive award certificates from the competition working group. The competition organizing committee will provide financing and technology transfer consulting services for all award-winning projects that require them.
- c. The competition will set 2 awards for the China-U.S. Joint Team projects. The "China-U.S. Youth Cooperation Excellence Award" certificate will be awarded to the first-place team of the China-U.S. Joint Team, and the other teams will receive the "China-U.S. Youth Cooperation Award" certificate.
- d. The competition may set up one special award named by the supporting unit according to the need, which can be awarded together with other awards.
- e. The competition will set the "Best Organization Award" to recognize the university with the most projects that have advanced to the final in both the main track and sub-track. The winning university will receive an award certificate.
- f. The competition will set up the "Best China-U.S. Cultural Exchange Award" to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to promoting China-U.S. cultural exchanges during the planning and organization of the competition.

## **5. Announcement of Evaluation Results**

After the evaluation working group selects the winners for each award, the shortlisted projects will undergo a 3-day public announcement period on the official competition website. During this period, anyone can report any potential violations or irregularities related to the shortlisted individuals, teams, or projects to the competition working group. If an investigation confirms the validity of the report, the

competition working group reserves the right to revoke the awards of the individuals or teams involved in the violations. They may also decide not to grant them any prize money or withdraw any other rewards or special arrangements previously planned for them. Reporters must provide their real names, affiliations, contact information, and substantial and verifiable evidence. Otherwise, the working group will not accept the report. It should be noted that if the competition working group does not discover or confirm any infringement of the rights of third parties (including but not limited to intellectual property rights) by the participating or shortlisted projects during the evaluation or public announcement period, the organizers and organizers shall not be held responsible for any potential infringement.

## **Chapter VI - Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation working group will organize expert reviews and score all project works. Each project's score is based on the following evaluation criteria:

### **1. Preliminary Selection in the Sub-competition Areas**

Each sub-competition area's selection committee will score based on the following criteria, considering the unique features of the participating works. The scoring criteria are based on a hundred-point system.

Evaluation Criteria	Reference	Balance
The spirit of pioneering and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity and Uniqueness: Does the work provide novel ideas or solutions that are distinctly different from existing products?</li> </ul>	Maximum 40 points

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question Novelty: Does an overlooked issue have been identified or an innovative perspective have been provided for a common problem?</li> <li>• Cross-border Integration Level: Does the maker team combine diverse professional backgrounds (e.g., engineering + design) and cross-cultural perspectives?</li> <li>• Streamlined Prototyping: Does the maker team focus on the core innovation points rather than excessively developing commercial features or packaging?</li> </ul>	
<p>Problem orientation and social value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand Clarity: Is there a specific need or pain point for a specific real problem?</li> <li>• Solution Effectiveness: Can the solution directly address the stated problem, and are the effects measurable?</li> <li>• Topic Relevance: Does it address social issues of common concern to China and the United States, such as sustainable development?</li> <li>• Beneficiary Scope: Can the scale of population benefit from the solution, and how about is the extent of improvement for specific groups?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 30 Points</p>

<p>Technical Implementation and Product Completeness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional Usability: Does the prototype possess key functionalities? Can it be demonstrated in practice, and accomplish core tasks?</li> <li>• Technical Appropriateness: Is the selected technical path appropriate, and are the difficulty and innovation balanced?</li> <li>• User Experience Friendliness: Is the work easy to understand and interact with, and are the interface and experience intuitive and user-friendly?</li> <li>• Improvement Potential: Is there a clear iteration plan and does it have expansion potential?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 20 Points</p>
<p>Team collaboration and open-source sharing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of Cooperation: Do the members of the Chinese and American teams have clear division of labor and give full play to their respective advantages?</li> <li>• Process Transparency: Are the creative process, challenges encountered and solutions documented in detail?</li> <li>• Resource Openness: Are technical documents, code, and design files provided in an open source manner and well organized?</li> <li>• Community Interaction: Does the team actively collect community opinions to promote the development and improvement of the project?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 10 Points</p>

**2. Final Round**

a. Final Round Review Process

The final round entries are those recommended based on the preliminary selection in the sub-competition areas and are works that have been further refined and improved.

The review panel will organize judges to score all competition entries. The scores awarded by the judges will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to the participants.

**b. Final Round Scoring Criteria**

The scoring criteria are based on a hundred-point scale. The scoring rules are as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Reference	Balance
The spirit of pioneering and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity and Uniqueness: Does the work provide novel ideas or solutions that are distinctly different from existing products?</li> <li>• Question Novelty: Does an overlooked issue have been identified or an innovative perspective have been provided for a common problem?</li> <li>• Cross-border integration level: Does the maker team combine diverse professional backgrounds (e.g., engineering + design) and cross-cultural perspectives?</li> <li>• Iterative progressiveness: Compared to the preliminary competition, does the creativity have undergone significant deepening and enhancement?</li> </ul>	Maximum 20 Points

<p>Problem-oriented and Social Value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand clarity: Is there a specific need or pain point for a specific real problem?</li> <li>• Effectiveness of solution: Can the solution directly solve the problem? is the effect measurable?</li> <li>• Widespread benefits: How about is the range of people who can benefit from the solution, especially vulnerable groups or people with special needs?</li> <li>• Value validation: Does research data provide survey results to prove the social value of the work?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 20 Points</p>
<p>Technology realization and product integrity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Product maturity: Does the work have developed into a mature prototype close to practical application, rather than a conceptual demonstration?</li> <li>• Technology implementation degree: Compared with the preliminary competition, does the technical implementation have been a qualitative leap and do key technical problems have been solved?</li> <li>• User friendliness: Can the work be easily understood and interacted? Is the interface and experience intuitive and friendly?</li> <li>• Operating reliability: Is stability demonstrated in the demonstration? and can it operate reliably under different conditions?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 30 Points</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of cooperation: Do the members of the Chinese and American teams have clear division of labor and give full play to their respective advantages?</li> <li>• Process transparency: Are the creative process,</li> </ul>	

<p>Team collaboration and open source sharing</p>	<p>challenges encountered and are solutions documented in detail?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource openness: Are technical documents, code, and design files provided in an open source manner and well organized?</li> <li>• Feedback response: Do they actively collect and respond to user and community feedback, and continue to optimize the product?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 10 Points</p>
<p>Application prospects and development potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry alignment: Does it align with industry development trends and can it address market gaps or pain points?</li> <li>• Path feasibility: Is the transformation path from idea to application clear and realistic?</li> <li>• Resource matching degree: Are the resources required for application implementation to match the team's capabilities?</li> <li>• Promotion possibility: Can the work be replicated and promoted in a wider range of scenarios, with potential for scale?</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum 20 Points</p>

c. Avoidance Principle

The final competition will strictly adhere to the following avoidance principles:

If one or more members of a participating team are from the same school or institution as any of the judges, those judges will recuse themselves from evaluating that team and will not score it.

Judges affiliated with the organizing institution of a regional selection event will recuse themselves from evaluating teams recommended by their own sub-region and will not score them.

e. Dispute Resolution

In case of tied rankings in the second round of the main track or sub-track evaluations, teams with higher scores in the innovation and creativity section will be given priority in the ranking.

If the difference in scores between projects is greater than 0.5, the organizing committee and the supervisory committee will not accept any appeals or objections raised by the final competition judges. The ranking will strictly follow the results based on the judges' scores. If the difference in scores between projects is equal to or less than 0.5, the organizing committee and the supervisory committee will accept appeals or objections raised by the final competition judges. The final decision on whether to reconsider the appeal will be determined by a vote among all members of the final competition judging panel. If the vote determines that a reconsideration is required, a subsequent vote will be conducted to decide on the appeal. If the vote determines that a reconsideration is not required, the original ranking based on the judges' scores will be followed.

## **Chapter VII - Awards**

### **1. Regional Selection Events Awards**

The specific award categories for the main track and sub-tracks of each regional selection event will be determined by the respective regions.

### **2. Final Competition Awards**

The final evaluation of the China-U.S. Young Maker Competition will strictly follow the evaluation rules to assess the project works and determine the winning teams. The evaluation process will differ for teams in different tracks: individual evaluation for the sub-tracks and joint evaluation for China-U.S. joint teams competing against other teams in the main track.

#### **a. Main Track Awards**

10 First Prize: (ranked 1st to 10th), with a First Prize certificate and a cash prize of RMB 15,000 each.

20 Second Prize: (ranked 11th to 30th), with a Second Prize certificate and a cash prize of RMB 8,000 each.

24 Third Prize: (ranked 6th to 9th in each group in the first round), with Third Prize certificates.

All teams that are shortlisted as finalists in the main track, other than the aforementioned award winners, will be awarded a Certificate of Excellence by the organizing committee of the competition.

b. Sub-Track Awards

3 First Prize: (ranked 1st to 3rd), with a First Prize certificate and a cash reward of 15,000 RMB.

5 Second Prizes: (ranked 4th to 8th), with a Second Prize certificate and a cash reward of 8,000 RMB each.

7 Third Prizes: (ranked 9th to 15th), with a Third Prize certificate.

All teams that are shortlisted as finalists in the sub-track, other than the aforementioned award winners, will be awarded a Certificate of Excellence by the organizing committee of the competition.

**The aforementioned cash rewards are pre-tax amounts in Chinese yuan (RMB).**

The competition organizers will distribute the cash rewards to the winning teams or individuals after deducting applicable taxes in accordance with relevant laws.

### **3. Special Awards**

a. The competition establishes two awards for China-U.S. joint teams. Based on the scores of the China-U.S. joint teams, the team ranked first will receive the "China-U.S. Youth Cooperation Excellence Award" certificate, and the remaining teams will receive the "China-U.S. Youth Cooperation Award" certificate.

b. The competition may establish one special award named by the supporting unit according to the need, which may be awarded together with other awards.

- c. The competition establishes the "Best Organization Award," which will be awarded a certificate to the university with the highest number of projects advancing to the final competition in both the main track and sub-track.
  - d. The competition establishes the "China-U.S. People-to-People Exchange Contribution Award" to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to promoting China-U.S. People-to-People exchanges during the planning and organization of the competition.
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**In case of any discrepancies between the Chinese and English versions, the Chinese version shall prevail.**

**The final interpretation rights belong to the Working Group of the China-U.S. Young Maker Competition.**

# Attachment 1

## Requirements for Regional Selection Event Organizers of China-U.S. Young Maker Competition

The China-U.S. Young Maker Competition invites applications from organizations to host regional selection events in China and the United States. The organizing institutions should meet certain criteria and possess the necessary resources and capabilities to ensure the smooth progress of the competition. The specific requirements are as follows:

1. The organizing institution must have experience, resources, and capabilities in organizing maker competitions and activities.
2. The regional selection event should recruit a total of 20 or more participating teams.
3. The organizing institution is responsible for providing the necessary venues and funding for the selection events, including rental fees for the venues and production/printing costs for promotional materials.
4. The organizing institution is responsible for covering the transportation expenses for the finalist teams to attend the final competition (Excluding international transportation expenses for the U.S. region).
5. The organizing institution commits to following the competition rules and procedures established by the working group, including organizing pre-competition training, registration, selection events, judging, and other supporting activities for the regional selection event.
6. Encourage eligible regional selection events to conduct maker workshops for nurturing maker teams. Combine mentor training with courses and leverage organizations such as the College Student Maker Alliance and Maker Education Bases, as well as various social forces, to establish a complete innovation support ecosystem.
7. The regional selection event organizer should share the growth process of the maker teams through the competition's official website and WeChat and other platforms. Collaborate with local media to track and promote the maker teams, record their stories, and share their innovative experiences. The

regional selection event organizer should submit team stories, photos/videos from the competition, and media coverage materials as requested by the working group for unified promotion and reporting (see Attachment 4: Guidelines for Promotion of China-U.S. Young Maker Competition).

8. The regional selection event organizer should conduct maker workshops to cultivate maker teams. Combine mentor training with courses and leverage organizations such as the College Student Maker Alliance and Maker Education Bases, as well as various social forces, to establish a complete innovation support ecosystem.
9. Upon receiving the official notification, the regional selection event organizer must submit a confirmation letter of acceptance to the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange before the official launch of the competition.

Regional selection event organizers that have successfully applied will enjoy the following rights:

1. Representatives from the regional selection event organizers will participate in the opening ceremony of the 2026 competition.
2. The regional selection event organizer will be recognized as the organizing institution for the regional selection events in the competition's promotion.
3. The regional selection event organizer can send two representatives to attend the final competition and subsequent activities, with travel expenses covered by the organizer of the regional selection event (Excluding the U.S. region).
4. The regional selection event organizer will receive guidance documents provided by the working group, including source files for promotional materials, competition schedule and format guidelines, suggestions for the composition of the judging panel, and evaluation rules.
5. The working group will collaborate with universities, enterprises, and social resources to provide consulting and guidance services to the regional selection event organizers.

## Attachment 2

### Statistical Table of Awarded Teams in the China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition Regional Competitions

1. Visit the official website to access the information statistical table (including the feedback form for awarded team information and the feedback form for awarded projects).

#### 2. Video Recording Guidelines:

1) The video should not exceed three minutes in length and should be in .mov or .mp4 high-definition video file format. Please upload the original video file to Baidu Cloud (<https://pan.baidu.com/>) (The team from The U.S. region may choose a similar cloud platform to ensure that the secretariat of the competition can download the relevant video materials.).

2) The video content should include, but is not limited to, the problem the participant intends to solve, a description of the participating project, a demonstration of the project's functionalities, and an introduction of the participant.

#### 3. Photo Submission Guidelines:

1) Please provide three types of photos, including photos of the project, a team photo, and individual photos of team members.

2) The photos should be no smaller than 2MB, with clear and well-defined subjects.

3) Please include a signature on individual photos.

4) The total number of photos should not exceed 10.

5) Please package the photos and upload them to Baidu Cloud (<https://pan.baidu.com/>).

6) Organize all the materials into one folder, following the naming convention: Region + Team Name + Project Name + Rank; for example, "Xiamen Game Guy Intelligent Nebulizer Companion 3".

## Attachment 3

### Declaration of Participants in the China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition

I, the undersigned (participating team), voluntarily participate in the 2026 China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition (referred to as the Maker Competition). The Maker Competition is hosted by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. The competition is co-organized by the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange, Tsinghua University, Beijing Gehua Media Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Municipal Office for Zhangjiang Science City Development and Management and American related partners. The host, co-organizers, and their respective subsidiaries (collectively referred to as the "Organizing Units") have the opportunity to participate in the organization and promotion activities of the China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition now and in the future.

I, the undersigned (participating team), voluntarily make the following declarations:

#### 1. Intellectual Property Rights

- a. I (participating team) guarantee the originality of the work and that it does not infringe upon any third-party intellectual property rights or other rights, and its content complies with applicable laws and regulations (including, but not limited to, the relevant laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America). I (participating team) agree to assume full responsibility for any claims or claims arising from the infringement of third-party intellectual property rights or other rights, and to protect the host, co-organizers, and their agents, and to defend them against any claims or prosecutions for loss or compensation.
  
- b. The intellectual property rights of the participating works belong to the participants, but due consideration should be given to the interests of the competition organizing units. The organizing units of this competition have the permanent and free right to use the participating works of this competition for demonstration, partial or complete publication worldwide (excluding technical details). If the organizing units of the competition use

the participating works for other purposes, they must negotiate with the participating teams and sign an agreement on the use of the participating works with the consent of the participating teams.

- c. During the competition and evaluation period, I (participating team) cannot transfer or license the participating works to any third party.
  - d. I (participating team) hereby guarantee that if I transfer the participating works to any third party after the end of this competition or permit any third party to use the participating works in any form or dispose of the participating works in any other form, I will ensure that any such action involves the written consent of any third party and confirms that the host and co-organizers continue to have the aforementioned free right to use the participating works and any other rights mentioned in this declaration.
  - e. I (participating team) agree to bear full responsibility for any disputes or claims arising from the violation of the aforementioned guarantees, and guarantee that the organizing units do not suffer any losses as a result, and compensate the organizing units for any losses suffered.
2. I (participating team) guarantee and declare that the participating project is new work created within the last year (The period from the end of the 2025 Finals to the start of the 2026 Finals) and not publicly published, before and during the participation in this China-U.S. Youth Maker Competition, the project has not been commercialized, not been mass-produced or sold, and no commercial investment has been obtained and has not received investment, rewards, loans, or equity investments from, including but not limited to, venture capital institutions, angel investment institutions, private equity funds, and other investment sources, and no government policy investment, no entry into the finals of previous China-U.S. Youth Maker Competitions, and no provincial (or above) awards in previous editions of the Category A discipline competitions recognized by the Ministry of Education for national college students I (participating team) agree that individuals (participating teams) and works that violate this rule may be prohibited from participating in the competition or have their achievements revoked by the competition working group.

3. Regarding the use of my photos, portraits, or quotations by the organizing units, I (participating team) agree to the following terms:
  - a. I (participating team) grant the organizing units an irrevocable and perpetual full authorization to use my name, image, portrait, quotation, or any part thereof (collectively referred to as "My Portrait") in promotional materials, and in any and all manners, in any and all media, including but not limited to print, photographs, film, video, television, CD-ROM, DVD, and online computer media, such as the Internet, for distribution or display worldwide.
  - b. I (participating team) acknowledge that the use of my name, image, or statements by the organizing units will reflect on the reputation of the organizing units, and I am not aware of any factors that would have a negative effect. I understand that the organizing units have no obligation to compensate for the use of "My Portrait." I further understand that the organizing units do not acquire any ownership rights or interests in my information as a result of this declaration. I (participating team) agree that the organizing units have the copyright to any photographs, video films, and any other works created by the organizing units as derivative works of this declaration
  - c. I (participating team) also agree that when the participating units use "My Portrait" or any part thereof, they have no obligation to identify my identity by name or in any other way. I (participating team) waive all possible rights and claims regarding the organizing units' use of "My Portrait," including but not limited to the right of publicity, the right to privacy, the rights relating to defamation of character, and all rights related to the approval of materials produced by the organizing units that include "My Portrait," regardless of whether "My Portrait" is considered to be tarnished, distorted, or altered in my own view, or whether it is intentional or for other purposes.
4. In addition to the above terms, I (participating team) also agree to the following:
  - a. The host and co-organizers shall not be responsible for any circumstances that not caused by their own actions during the Maker Competition, including but not limited to personal injury, emergency medical accidents, and/or property damage.

- b. I should be aware of and pay attention to all potential risks involved in the Youth Maker Competition. I should be responsible for my own safety in various activities of the Youth Maker Competition.
5. I (participating team) agree that my personal information may be shared with one of the co-organizers of the Maker Competition or relevant partners, for the purpose of issuing final prizes, etc.
6. I (participating team) guarantee and declare that any statements I provide to the host, co-organizers, and supporters as part of this declaration represent my true beliefs and understanding.
7. Each participant must hold a valid identification document issued by the government to participate in this event. To the extent permitted by applicable law, the competition working group reserves the right to interpret these rules.
8. I (participating team) declare that I have read this declaration and fully understand the terms and rights authorized and released therein.

I also declare that I have the complete authority and authorization to sign this release agreement.

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## **Attachment 4**

### Guidelines for Promotion of China-U.S. Young Maker Competition

Each regional competition can design promotional materials, including flyer, posters, and souvenirs, based on the event's branding elements provided by the competition organizing committee. However, it is necessary to follow certain guidelines to maintain consistency in the promotional style across all regions.

The content of the competition's title, namely “2026 共创未来中美青年创客大赛”, “2026 Co-Making the Future-China-U.S. Young Maker Competition” and its abbreviation “2026中美青年创客大赛”, “2026 China-U.S. Young Maker Competition”, should not be changed or altered.

In the external promotion of the regional competitions, it is required to prominently display the names and logos of the competition host, co-organizers and the supporters, including the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China as the host and the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange, Tsinghua University, Beijing Gehua Media Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Municipal Office for Zhangjiang Science City Development and Management and American related partners as the co-organizers, the China University Science Park Alliance and the Innovation Center for China-U.S. Youth Exchange Secretariat as the supporters. The organizing institutions and co-organizers of the regional selection events also have the right to be represented.