

18th Annual ROBOFEST® 2017 General Rules

01-15-17

v1.3

Final Version

Note: Rules may be revised or refined during the season. Coaches are required to check the website and/or read emails about the possible changes.



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Forms attached:

- Consent, Release and Media Authorization Form:
www.robofest.net/ConsentReleaseForm.pdf
www.robofest.net/ConsentReleaseForm.docx
- Age Division Waiver Request Form:
www.robofest.net/images/2016-2017/PDFs/AgeWaiverForm17.pdf
www.robofest.net/images/2016-2017/WordDocs/AgeWaiverForm17.docx
- Video Qualifier Submission Form:
www.robofest.net/images/2016-2017/PDFs/VideoSubForm17.pdf
www.robofest.net/images/2016-2017/WordDocs/VideoSubForm17.docx

1 Introduction and Competition Summary

Robofest® is an annual robotics competition designed to promote and support Computer Science and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) learning through autonomous robotics. Robofest is an open competition, allowing teams to use any type of robotics platform and any programming language for the categories shown in Table 1.

Competition Category	Age (Grade*) Divisions	Team Size	Platform	Unknown factors	Reg. Fee**	Note
Game	Jr. (5 th -8 th) & Sr. (9 th -12 th)	Max. 5	Any	Yes	\$50	Each team uses a fully autonomous robot to play this year's game, RoboHit.
Exhibition	Jr. & Sr.	Max. 5	Any	Lighting Conditions	\$50	Each team has complete freedom to show off a creative autonomous robotics project.

(*) School Grade in Spring 2017

(**) Per team. No refunds will be given; some qualifying sites may charge an additional Site Check-in Fee; Sites outside USA may have different fee schedules.

(Table 1) Robofest 2017 Main Competition Categories

Robofest also provides the following “Open” competition categories that will be held during the World Championship (WC). “Open” means any team from around world, (except some countries which host regional competitions), may register online as long as space is available, with no qualification necessary. These events will be held during the Robofest World Championship 2017 at the St. Petersburg Community Center in St. Pete Beach, FL, June 1, 2 and 3, 2017. Detailed information about WC can be found in Section 15.

Competition Category	Age (Grade*) Divisions	Team Size	Platform	Unknown Factor	Reg. Fee**	Note
Vision Centric Challenge (VCC)	Sr. (9 th -12 th)	Max. 3	Any vision-based robot	Partially unknown	\$50	For talented high school and college students. Competitions will be held at the World Championship
	College	Max. 2	Any vision-based robot	Partially unknown	\$50	
BottleSumo	Jr.	Max. 3	Lego NXT or EV3	Partially unknown	\$50	Open, World Championship
	Sr.	Max. 3	Any	Partially unknown	\$50	Open, World Championship
Unknown Mission Challenge (UMC)	Jr. & Sr.	Max. 3	Lego NXT or EV3	Fully unknown	\$50	Open, World Championship
RoboParade	Jr. (4 th -8 th)	Max 5	Any	None	\$50	Open, World Championship
GRAF	Jr. & Sr.	Max 5	Any	None	\$50	Open, World Championship
Robot Drawing Contest	K-3 rd	Individual	N/A	None	\$50	Special Open, World Championship

(*) School Grade in Spring 2017

(**) Per team. No refunds will be given

(Table 2) Robofest 2017 Open Competition Categories

2 General Team Rules

A. Team Formation

- Any organization such as; a school, home school, civic organization, club, etc. can form teams.
- Age divisions and grade levels for each competition category are indicated in the tables 1 and 2. Grade levels denote the student's grade as of Spring 2017.
- For any exceptions in a student's age or grade, the coach must submit an “Age Division Waiver Request Form” to Robofest administration for approval. The general rule is that playing up from Jr. to Sr. Division is fine as

long as the student has exceptional talent in construction of the robot *and* computer programming, and has the maturity to work with other team members. Playing down is discouraged in general. The reason to request playing down must be specified on the form. For either playing up or playing down, coaches should obtain consent from their entire team and their parents.

4. A team member may join multiple teams *in other competitions, not the same category*. For example, a student can join a game team and an exhibition team. When a coach has multiple game teams, a student can join only one game team. Any exception to this rule must be approved by Robofest administration.
5. A team cannot register at multiple qualifying sites.

B. Team Registration

1. Teams are registered by a registered coach; a coach may have multiple teams using same coach ID #.
2. Team registration is done online at www.robofest.net. See Section 4 "Registration Process" for a detailed description of the registration steps.
3. The registration deadline is 10 days before the competition date at each site. If a competition category at a site does not have 5 teams or more, teams registered at the site *may* be asked to move to another site; or teams can enter via Video Qualifier submission. (See Section 9)
4. There may be an additional Site Check-In fee at a qualifying competition site, which will be used solely by the competition host site. Each qualifying site web page specifies the fee amount under "Site Check-In Fee".

3 Team Coach Rules

A. Coach Qualifications and Roles

1. Coaches must be adults with no criminal record.
2. Coaches must sign and abide by the Coach's Pledge. (Section 19)
3. The coach must have a valid email address and must check the email account regularly. Email is the primary and official communication method between the Robofest organizer and the team. If a coach's email address is changed, it is the coach's responsibility to update the email address in the Robofest registration system by logging into the coach's Robofest account. To confirm an email address change, the system will send the coach a confirmation email. The coach will need to confirm by clicking on a link in the confirmation email.
4. Robofest 2017 has multiple qualifying competition sites. A coach using a single coach ID may register **different** teams for multiple qualifying sites.
5. The coach is responsible for entering and updating team information by the update deadline **10** days before the competition. Note that each team member's personalized certificate will be printed based on the information the coach enters on the website. Robofest will charge to reprint certificates due to incorrectly entered information.
6. Team coaches must coordinate pre- and post-assessments (or surveys) online to help Robofest administration gather data regarding students' learning of STEM subjects.
7. Another important role of the coach is to find team sponsors. Team sponsors can be individuals, groups, companies or other organizations that donate cash, products, or in-kind services to the team. The Robofest website can list up to four team-sponsors per team on the web.

B. Coaching Teams

1. Coaches and adult volunteers must not directly work on their team's robot(s). They should teach and/or provide necessary training for the team to solve the challenge problems by themselves.
2. We recommend that coaches recruit technical mentors or assistant coaches if necessary. Coaches are encouraged to contact local IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) chapters (Robofest medal sponsor), ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) chapters, engineers' societies, robotics clubs, tech companies, community colleges, or universities to find volunteer technical mentors.
3. Robofest provides some technical workshops at LTU and/or online. There are books, multimedia curriculum, and other online resources available as well.
4. The team coach is responsible for facilitating, transporting, and overseeing team members for team meetings and at Robofest competitions.

C. Consent & Media Release Form and publicity

1. Robofest attracts media attention. Coaches must collect *Consent & Release Forms* not only for students, but also for the coach him/herself and team volunteers. These paper forms must be submitted by a coach to the hosting site during check-in. Note that the form requires parental signature.
2. Before and after Robofest, please contact newspapers, radio, and TV stations to recognize your teams' efforts and achievements. Let Robofest administration (robofest@LTU.edu) know if your teams were featured in any media outlets.

4 Registration Process – Seven Steps

- Step 1. **New Coaches** Submit new coach registration online at www.robofest.net . After the registration form is submitted, a coach ID will immediately be sent to the coach by email from do-not-reply@robofest.net. COACH REGISTRATION IS CONFIRMED BY CLICKING A LINK IN THE EMAIL CONFIRMATION SENT TO YOU. If you do not receive the confirmation email, contact robofest@LTU.edu or 248-204-3568 to resolve the problem. An incorrect email address in the coach registration form may be the cause. Please also check your spam folder before contacting us.
- Returning Veteran Coaches** are encouraged to use their prior coach ID and password. If you forgot your password or ID, click on the "Forgot Password" link.
- Step 2. **Team Registration** will begin on November 18th, 2016. Using the coach ID and password, the coach can create teams after selecting a qualifying site. During this step, the coach must accept the Robofest 2017 Coach's Pledge (Section 19).
- All the team member names, grades, and genders must be entered. Student contact information is not made public. Exhibition teams must enter a short project description in this step including the theme of their exhibition, functionalities of the robots, and any other information that describes the exhibition. Please register early, since a competition division of a site will be closed when the number of teams registered is equal to the maximum capacity for the division.
- Step 3. **Registration Fee Payment:** After creating all of your teams, pay the registration fee(s) online using a major credit card through PayPal. A PayPal account is NOT required. You will receive a payment confirmation email from PayPal, which can be used as a receipt.
- Or, you may choose the option to send a check payable to LTU Robofest to: **LTU Robofest, 21000 West 10 Mile Rd., Southfield, MI 48075, USA**. Make sure to **WRITE THE TEAM NUMBER(S) IN THE MEMO LINE OF THE CHECK AND INCLUDE A HARD COPY OF THE INVOICE PAGE FROM THE WEB WHEN YOU MAIL THE CHECK**. Your team registration will be complete once LTU receives the check.
- Step 4. **Consent & Release Form:** Print the Consent & Release form and send it to students' parents. Get the signed forms from parents. Turn in all signed forms at the event.
- Step 5. **Team Photo Uploading:** Take a team photo and upload it to the coach account on the web. Steps are: Logon to your coach account. Click on "Team Management" tab. "Upload team photos" link on the left menu bar. Select the site and team.
- The requirements for the photos are: (1) standard **landscape picture** file such as jpg, gif or tif (width: height ratio should be 4:3 or 16:9) (2) smaller file size is recommended (3) must show all the team members listed (4) adult coach and volunteers may be in the picture (5) must show the identifiable team ID and team name (write down or print the number on a paper and hold it when taking the photo **or** edit the photo file to add text). The team ID number is established in **Step 2** above. The photo must be uploaded within **3 weeks** after the team registration **and** 10 days before the qualifying date. **If no photo is uploaded before the deadline, certificates for the team will not have a team photo**. There will be special prizes for Best Team Photos. Please upload the team photo as early as possible, since the uploading date is one of the selection criteria for the award.
- Step 6. **Robot Photo Uploading:** Take a photo showing your team robot(s), if your team desires. Upload the photo using the coach's web account **10 days before** your qualifying competition date. The robot photo requirements are the same as in (1), (2), and (5) in **Step 5** above.
- Step 7. **FINAL UPDATES:** Coaches must be sure to update any team information including Exhibition Description and team video links. The final update deadline is **10 days** before the competition date for each qualifying site. This is a hard deadline, as time is needed to print and ship all the participant certificates to each site.

5 Team Volunteers

The team cannot work without the help of various volunteers for technical mentoring, financial sponsorship, transportation, constructing playing fields, preparing food, taking pictures, videotaping, etc. The Robofest website will list up to five volunteers per team. LTU/Robofest has become a Certifying Organization for the President's Volunteer Service Award, or PVSA (www.presidentialserviceawards.gov). All Robofest team and site volunteers are encouraged to track service hours. To register, please contact Dr. Chung at cchung@LTU.edu.

6 Common Sense Rules for Education

Construction of the robot as well as all programming for the student competition should be done solely by the students. Parents, teachers, mentors, or coaches may not directly assemble the robots or directly write the program code for the team at any time during the preparation period or during the competition. Any direct participation is a violation of the rules. The offending team will become ineligible for any awards.

Only team members with name badges will be allowed in the pit (team table) area during the competition. **No adults are allowed in the pit area during the work time for all competition categories.** If a team coach must enter the area, they must receive permission from one of the judging proctors. It is strongly suggested, for security purposes, that the coach have assistants watch the team table area from the spectator area, especially when the team is competing. The use of wireless communication to interact with adults by students in the pit area is prohibited.

7 Robofest Assessments or Surveys

We will continue to assess the impact of robotics competitions in STEM education. The purpose of the assessment (or surveys) is to quantify and analyze students' interest in STEM subjects and improvements in STEM skills through Robofest. Competitions can drive students to work harder resulting in improved skills. We believe that students participating in robotics competitions will hone STEM skills and demonstrate skills they would not have gained outside of the competitions. To prove this, we need measurable data to quantify the students' experiences. We can use this data to highlight successes and determine areas for improvement. They will be assessed before and after the competition to see the level of improvement. Another group of students who did not participate in the competition will act as a control group and take the same pre- and post- assessments. Pre-assessment/survey instruction will be sent to all coaches registered at a site. Coaches will receive post-assessment/survey instruction in April. This assessment is anonymous and results may be published in a journal on education research.

8 Team Responsibilities on Robofest Competition Day

- All teams must observe the check-in time set by the site host organizer.
- Things to bring to the Robofest venue:
 - Robot(s), spare parts, and extra batteries (or charger)
 - A laptop or other computer for each team to solve unknown factors or adjust to the lighting conditions. It is **not** recommended that different teams share a computer.
 - A power strip and power cable
 - *Exhibition teams*: poster boards to introduce the exhibition including a description and all the necessary materials for the exhibition
 - Signed Consent & Media Release forms for team members, coach, and team volunteers – *required*.
 - Site check-in fee, if your qualifying site charges a check-in fee. Check your site home page.
- General Rules During the Robofest Competition:
 - No food or drink is allowed inside the competition area.
 - Flash photography is not allowed inside the competition area.
 - Be respectful of all teams. Do not make unnecessary noise which might disturb other teams in the pit area.

9 On-Line Video Qualifier Submission

If there is no qualifying site near the team location (or under special circumstances) Game and Exhibition teams may register for On-Line Video Qualifier Submission. There will be two separate categories – International and US. Video Qualifier teams are required to pay the same registration fee as on-site participating teams. Robofest will ship participation medals and certificates to Video Qualifier Team Coaches. Trophies will also be shipped to winning teams. The following are the suggested video contents:

- Start with the team ID/name and team member introduction, around 5 seconds for each member.
- Introduce features of the robots, around 5 seconds for each robot.
- Demonstrate Game or Exhibition. The video should not be edited once the demo has started. See Game rules as well as the submission form for details about how to prepare the video.
- 2-minute question and answer session (interview-style). Questions may be prepared and asked by the coach.
- Rolling credit and/or acknowledgement (recommended).

Adults may help produce the video. If students were involved in the video production work, it should be acknowledged in the credits. The coach must **email** a signed "*Robofest Video Qualifier Submission Form*" along with the video link to robofest@LTU.edu. The Deadline for Video Qualifier Submissions is Sunday April 23, 2017, 11:59pm Eastern time.

10 Warm-up Competition

A Warm-up competition to create videos for Game Judge Training will be open to a small number of registered teams and registered judges. The event will be held at LTU on February 18, 2017 and may or may not be open to the public.

11 Judging and Prizes

Approximately 20% of the total number of teams for each division at each Official Qualifying Competition site will win trophies to be presented during the award ceremony. Detailed judging rules are explained in each category's rules. Every registered team member will receive a certificate of achievement and a *personalized* medal during the award ceremony of the Qualifying Competition. All teams must stay for the closing ceremony.

12 Team Photo Contest

The best team photos will be selected from those uploaded. Every team is automatically entered once the team photo is uploaded to the registration system. Selection criteria includes upload date, team spirit, unity, harmony and uniqueness. Please make sure that only registered students are included in the team photo.

13 Michigan Championship

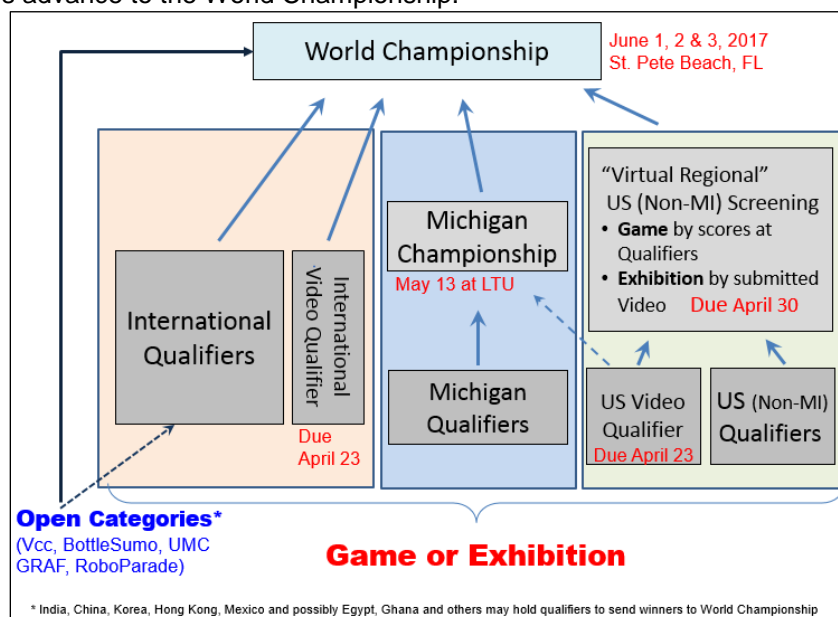
Winning teams from Michigan Qualifying competitions will be invited to the Michigan Championship at Lawrence Technological University on May 13, 2017. The total number of teams advancing from each qualifying site/competition division will be decided in proportion to the number of teams registered at the site in each division.

14 US Sites (Non-MI) Advancement to World Championship through "Virtual Regional"

- Winning Game Teams from Non-Michigan Qualifying competitions will advance to the World Championship based on qualifying scores. Their scores will be sent for screening by the Site Host.
- Winning Exhibition Teams from Non-Michigan Qualifying competitions will advance to World Championships based on a Video Screening. Winning Exhibition teams must submit a video of their robot exhibition by Sunday, April 30, 2017 by emailing video link to robofest@ltu.edu.

15 World Championship

Top Game and Exhibition teams from MI Championships, International Qualifiers and Video Screening advance to compete in the World Robofest Championship in St. Pete Beach, FL on June 1-3, 2017. The total number of teams advancing from each qualifying site/competition division will be decided in proportion to the number of teams registered at the site in each division. As part of World Championship there will be Open Competition categories offered. These are open to any team* and registration will be taken on a first come, first served basis. Figure 1 summarizes how teams advance to the World Championship.



(Figure 1) World Championship Advancement Structure

16 Robot Drawing Contest

A new robot drawing contest will be open to Robofest participants and non-participants in K-3rd grade. It will be held on June 1st during the Robofest World Championship in St. Pete Beach, Florida. Contestants will be required to draw a picture of a robot in accordance with a specified theme to be announced at the start of the competition. Contestants must also write (in English) a description of their robot and its function. Volunteer translators will be recruited as necessary. A panel of judges will review the entries and decide the winners.

17 Robofest Scholarships

We are very pleased to announce a new scholarship opportunity for distinguished Robofest team members who choose to attend Lawrence Technological University. Submit your application, along with a 400-word essay regarding your Robofest experience, your career goals, and a letter of recommendation from one of your Robofest adult coaches or mentors for a chance to earn a \$3,000 annual renewable scholarship. Deadline date: April 1st. The [application](#) can be found on the [LTU.edu Scholarship](#) website.

18 Reordering Certificates and Trophies

Robofest can re-print participant certificates for a minimum charge. Winning teams may also request personalized winner/place certificates or additional trophies for a fee. Please contact the Robofest office at robofest@ltu.edu for additional information.

19 Robofest 2017 Coach's Pledge

As a Robofest coach, I have read and agree to abide by the Robofest 2017 rules as they exist now and as they may be set forth during the Robofest season.

As a coach, I am responsible for communicating and enforcing the Robofest rules to team members, team volunteers, and others affiliated with my team. I understand that any rule updates, guidelines, additional information, and announcements will be communicated to me, officially via emails. I am responsible for reading the information and I will relay it to all the people affiliated with my team. If any changes are made to my email account, I will notify Robofest administrators as well as update my coach profile.

As a Robofest coach, I understand that the students come first. Robofest is about the students learning computer technologies, science, engineering, and mathematics. Everything my team does starts and ends with the principle: the students do all of the work. My team members will do the designing and building of the robot, problem solving and programming. Adults can help them find the answers, but cannot give them the answers or make the decisions in detail.

I intend to uphold and maintain the Robofest spirit.