



Festival Manual

Updated September 2021





EXPLORE

Planning a *FIRST*® LEGO® League Explore Event

Thank you for organizing an event for our *FIRST*® LEGO® League Explore participants! A festival is the capstone to the *FIRST* LEGO League Explore experience. It is a time for teams to show off all the hard work they have done this season, connect with other teams, be inspired, be challenged and most of all be CELEBRATED! This guide will help you plan a successful event. There may be a few variations in layout, agenda and medals, ribbons etc. in your region, so make sure to connect with your local Program Delivery Partner as you plan. If you are hosting a small or in-school event, you may also wish to reference the Explore Class Pack Event Guide.

Festival Basics

The culminating event for the *FIRST* LEGO League Explore program is called a festival. It is a fun, non-competitive event that lasts two to four hours, depending on how many teams are participating. At a festival, team members:

- share their personal experience with the challenge theme and what they learned by working as members of a team.
- showcase their team model, team poster, and team journey with other teams, volunteer reviewers, and attendees.
- meet as a team with reviewers to answer questions and share more about their team journey.
- participate in a closing celebration where they are honored for their team's strengths and receive an individual acknowledgment of their contributions.



Plan Your Festival

A checklist can be found on page 6. Suggested layout options can be found on page 12. A sample budget can also be found on page 13.

Step 1: Select a Date and Venue

- Select a venue large enough to accommodate at least 15-20 people per team in the area where teams will be displaying their team models and team posters. Keep in mind that team members might be accompanied by parents, grandparents, siblings, friends or other caregivers.
- The venue should also include additional space for other activities, including the closing celebration.
- Secure a space for reviewers to meet with individual teams. Teams may prefer to present in a quieter area as it can be quite loud due to the number of people attending the festival. However, many festivals do have their reviewers visiting the teams in the main area and that is okay.
- Account for any technical needs, such as a sound system and speakers for music (if you plan on playing any) and your emcee, as well as access to outlets and power cords. Keep in mind that some teams may

bring a laptop or tablet to motorize their models and try to make sure that these teams can be near accessible outlets. It's a good idea to remind teams to charge their devices before attending the event.

- Based on the rules of the venue and available space, determine whether the festival will be a public event or invitation-only.

Step 2: Plan Activities

- Reviewing is required at every *FIRST* LEGO League Explore festival. Use the reviewing guide on page 10 to plan how to review teams.
- In addition to reviewing, all events must have at least one (1) additional activity for teams to participate in when they are not in a review session.
- Supplemental activities should relate to STEM or the season's theme. Suggestions can be found on page 9.
- Ensure you have the needed supplies for each activity and volunteers to supervise the students and materials.
- A closing celebration is also required.

Step 3: Plan the Agenda

- Establish a schedule that incorporates all three essential elements: reviewing, activities and closing celebration.
- You may wish to allow teams to move through activities at will or you can schedule them to rotate through the activities. Your activity plan will help you determine your space and agenda.
- Be sure to let everyone involved in the event know what time you would like them to arrive. Keep in mind that teams will need to set up their displays (team posters and models), and reviewers may want time to look over their questions for the event.
- See an example schedule on page 8.



Step 4: Promotion and Registration

- Contact your Program Delivery Partner to post your event in *FIRST* systems and to determine how teams will register for your event.
- Begin promoting your event as early as possible to recruit volunteers and allow teams to coordinate the logistics needed for them to attend.
- Hang posters and distribute flyers to help advertise. Resources for promoting your event can be obtained from your partner.
- Post the festival information to your organization's website and social media channels and include photos!
- Ask schools or organizations with teams to post the festival information on their website(s) or channels.

Step 5: Recruit Volunteers

- Ask community members, parents, college students, employees of local businesses, etc. to serve as volunteers. Your local *FIRST* teams may be a great resource. Often *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams look for ways to give back to their communities. Volunteering for a *FIRST* LEGO League Explore event is rewarding and fun!
- Ask team family members whether they could serve in one of the above roles and/or help with venue setup, check-in/greeting, cleanup, etc.
- Volunteer roles and descriptions can be found in the table on page 7.

Step 6: Final Preparations

- Complete and distribute team and volunteer packets. Templates can be obtained from your local partner. These are great templates you can customize to ensure all participants have the important information they need.
- Decide what recognition items participants will receive at your event and order the trophies, ribbons, certificates etc. accordingly. Certificates can be found on the *FIRST* website. To order trophies or medals from the *FIRST* preferred vendor, Sports Awards, contact your local Partner.
- Decide whether to provide complimentary refreshments and/or make refreshments available for purchase. Providing refreshments for purchase can be a fantastic fundraiser for a *FIRST* Robotics Competition or *FIRST* Tech Challenge Team if they are volunteering. Make sure to communicate to teams what food will be available, or whether they are permitted to bring in their own food.
- You may wish to have one or more carts available to help teams transport their team materials to the reviewing area.
- Purchase any supplies needed for your planned activity or activities.

Festival Day

Set Up

- Prepare tables where teams can set up their team posters and models. Team members should stand around their poster and model and share their work with attendees as they walk by. Allow enough room for team members and families to gather around the displays.
- Prepare your reviewing space, if applicable.
- Test any sound systems or other technology that you plan to use.
- Make sure you have enough outlets and extension cords available for teams who might need them.
- If you have space, set up seating for coaches, team members, and families.



Reviewing

- A reviewing guide (page 10) outlines both the required reviewing process and best practices.
- The reviewing and award materials **must** be used and **may not** be modified. Only the awards listed on page 11 may be distributed.
- Have your head reviewer meet with the reviewers to outline their role and responsibilities before the festival begins. This meeting should occur prior to the festival or on the same day, before the festival begins.
- Review the fundamentals and ensure all reviewers understand:
 - This is a non-competitive event.
 - The season theme and tasks.
 - Reviewers must use the approved documents to determine awards and share team feedback.
 - The event should be FUN!
 - The goal of the event is to celebrate teams for their accomplishments.
 - The closing celebration and a high-five line (if local health and safety regulations allow).
- Let reviewers know what recognition items participants will receive.
- Instruct reviewers to be considerate and kind when reviewing team models and team posters. Make sure reviewers know that their role is not to judge teams, but rather to show interest in each team's ideas and acknowledge their hard work.

Welcome Participants

Start your event with an exciting introduction and a few housekeeping items for the day:

- Welcome teams and families.
- Go over the schedule and event layout, including activities and reviewing instructions.
- Point out where to find the bathrooms, emergency exits or procedures.
- Congratulate all participants and get the crowd excited!

During the Festival

- Make sure that all teams meet with reviewers.
- Guide teams to the supplemental activities, if applicable.
- Prepare the certificates and any other awards prior to the start of the closing celebration.
- Remind teams when and where the closing celebration will be held.
- Ensure reviewing sheets are returned to teams after the closing celebration.

Hold the Closing Celebration

- A closing celebration with awards is **required** at every Explore festival. It is a time of celebration and reflection on a job well done.
- Have the emcee wrap up the day and give the teams one more round of applause.



- Recognize each team. EACH child who participates is required to receive an individual recognition item, such as a certificate or ribbon distributed at the closing celebration.
- At a maximum, a team trophy with each team member receiving a medallion may be distributed. Trophies should never be awarded to individual team members. Award names must be from the approved award list on page 11 and each team must receive one.
- If local health and safety regulations allow, participants are often celebrated with a high-five line made up of all your volunteers. If done, this line should be accessible to all participants.
- Thank everyone for their participation - especially the volunteers!

Tip: Consider starting your celebration with a dance party using the *FIRST* LEGO League song "[Teamwork Makes the Dream Work](#)" to draw everyone in and have fun!

Photo Opportunity: Teams love to take photos with the banners, emcee and reviewers during the closing celebration. Plan to have a time/space for those photo opportunities and announce it at the beginning to help keep the celebration moving.

Clean-up

- Make sure teams clean up after themselves and don't forget pieces of their model and poster.
- Ask the teams to help clean up the activities.
- Leave a venue better than you found it so you can use it again for your next event!



Event checklist

Pre-Event Planning

1. Select a Date and Venue

- ... Choose a date and time.
- ... Select a venue. Be sure that the venue will have enough space for the event, and account for any technical needs.

2. Plan Activities

- ... Determine which activities you will offer while teams are not meeting with reviewers.
- ... Plan for any needed activity materials and estimate volunteer needs.
- ... Order needed trophies, medals or other awards.

3. Plan the Agenda

- ... Include a reviewers meeting or schedule one before the big day to set expectations and answer questions.
- ... Include time for all teams to meet with Reviewers.
- ... Include a time for teams to participate in other activity.
- ... Include closing celebrations.

4. Promote the Festival

- ... Communicate information about the date, time, and venue to all involved.
- ... Hang up posters or pass out flyers at community buildings, stores, schools, etc.
- ... Post information on your website and social media

5. Recruit Volunteers

- ... Decide how many volunteers you will need for the festival and their roles. See volunteer roles recommendations on page 7.
- ... Ask community members, *FIRST* teams, parents, college students, employees of local businesses, etc. to volunteer. Remember, volunteers must register and pass the *FIRST* Youth Protection Program.

- ... Customize the volunteer packet with your festival information about timing, parking, food etc. and distribute to all volunteers.

6. Final Preparations

- ... Decide if you will provide refreshments, and if so, purchase any needed supplies.
- ... Print certificates if being used. Consider printing extras just in case.
- ... Borrow or purchase one or more carts for teams to use to transport their models and team posters.
- ... Complete team packet with all needed information about timing, parking, food etc. and send a copy to all teams.
- ... Buy any additional supplies needed for the festival.

Event Day

Hold a Meeting for Reviewers

- ... Some time before the festival starts, hold a brief meeting for Reviewers to let them know what to expect during the event.
- ... Review the festival schedule, the Challenge, the reviewing flow and expectations and the procedures for the closing celebration.

- ... Share the reviewer role document, reviewing sheet and award sheet.

Set Up

- ... Set up a table for each team to display their model and team poster.
- ... If possible, create a separate area for reviewers to meet with individual teams.
- ... Set up the areas where any additional activities will be held.
- ... If you plan to use a sound system, play music, and/or use other technology, test all equipment.
- ... Make sure you have enough outlets and extension cords available for teams.

Volunteer Roles

Role Name	Role Description	Qty
Volunteer Coordinator	The volunteer in this role should be very familiar with your event and your local volunteers. It is their responsibility to assign volunteers to their roles prior to the event as well as oversee the volunteers at the event.	1 Required
Head Reviewer	The head reviewer is responsible for training the reviewers, overseeing the reviewing process and ensuring that teams receive the correct award that the reviewers selected. This person should have previous reviewing experience and may also be your festival organizer but needs to be easily identifiable as the head reviewer during your event.	1 Required
Emcee	The emcee is the announcer for the day. This role can be filled by one of the reviewers or organizers of the festival if volunteers are limited.	1 Suggested
Reviewer	Reviewers visit teams in the main festival display area and/or meet with teams in a separate area. They ask team members about their team journey, their model, and their team poster. Reviewers provide positive feedback and write down notes to help with awards later. Reviewers help to assign awards to the teams they meet with throughout the day from the approved award list. All reviewers should participate in the closing ceremony.	2 Reviewers for every 5-7 teams.
Activities Assistant	Help to supervise the activities available for team members and spectators at the festival.	Qty dependent on number of activities
Team Queuer	Help teams get to their reviewing time/space on time. They may also help transport team models if needed. This is a fantastic role for someone who would like to meet many of the teams that attend the festival and help them feel excited and comfortable for their reviewing.	1-2 queuers for each reviewing room
Load In/Load Out Volunteers	Help setup the venue and help teams load their models into and out of the festival space. Also assist with event clean-up.	5-10, depending on size of event
Ceremony Assistant	Setup and execute the closing celebration (required) and opening ceremony (if applicable).	2-3, depending on size of event
Floater	Assigned to needed tasks onsite and will often fill more than one role.	As needed

Example Schedule

Time		Description
8:00-9:30am	Venue Setup	- Volunteers arrive and are assigned their role for the day. - Set up the registration area, team tables, reviewing and activity spaces. - Meet with your reviewers to go over the timing and flow for the day.
9:30-10:00am	Teams arrive and set up	- Teams set up their models and team posters. - Encourage team members to test the motorized part of their model to make sure it works before the start of the festival.
10:00-10:10am	Welcome and announcements	- Welcome participants, community members, friends, and families. - Let everyone know where to find activities, snacks, bathrooms, etc.
10:10-11:30am	Team displays, reviewing, and additional activities	- Teams share their displays and experiences with other team members, community members, friends, and families. - Reviewers meet with teams and ask questions about the models, team posters, Core Values, etc. - Team members may participate in other activities when they are not meeting with reviewers.
11:30-12:00pm	Closing Celebration	- Bring everyone together. - Wrap up the day and review why everyone is there (what teams have done throughout the season, why it was important, why there is a festival, etc.). - Thank all volunteers for their help. - Invite all volunteers to form the high-five line, if applicable. - Recognize <i>each</i> team with an award.
12:00-12:30pm	Clean Up	- Clean up the venue. - Encourage teams and family members to help.

Suggested Team Activities

While teams are not meeting with reviewers, there needs to be at least one additional activity to occupy them. All activities should be related to STEM or the season theme. See below for some suggestions.

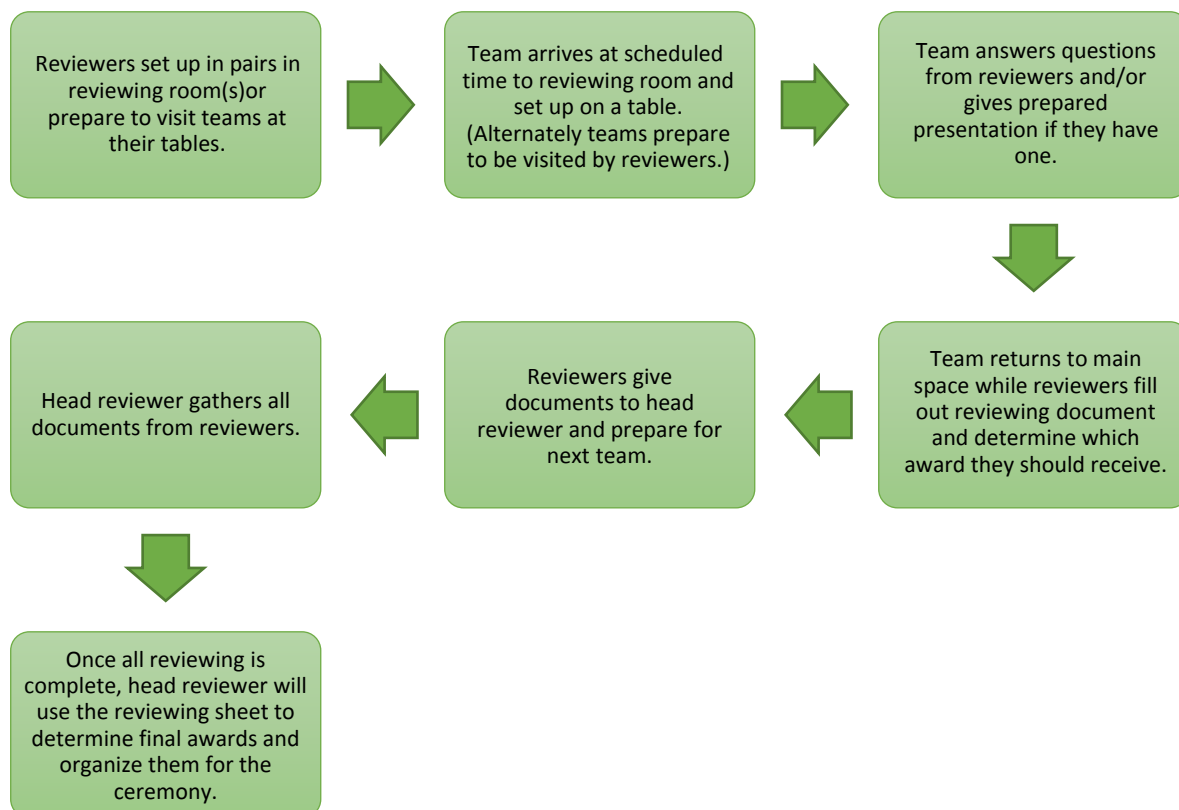
- **Team Model Building Challenge** — Add a team-build activity in which teams are challenged to build a LEGO model during the festival. Be sure to include enough extra LEGO elements for each team in the festival budget if you plan a team-build activity. This is a great way to use past or current Explore sets!
 - Present a new build challenge related to the theme such as "Design a creative way to... travel with your pet, ship your favorite snack so it stays fresh, or deliver something fragile." The models can be made up of individual contributions or the team can work together on one big build.
 - Teams can share their models with other teams or present during the closing celebration when they come up to receive their awards. The completed models can make a great visual backdrop for teams to enjoy, as well as a great photo opportunity.
- **Robot Playground** — Teams love to see, touch and drive the robots used in the other *FIRST* programs. Invite your local teams to come and show off their robots as part of your robot playground. It is fun for everyone and shows off the progression of *FIRST* programs team members can join when they age out of *FIRST* LEGO League Explore.
- **Free Build** — Children just love to play with LEGO elements! Put out a big bucket of LEGO elements and let everyone build away. You can give them a focus and have them all use the same size base plate, or just let them build freely.
- **Museum Programs** – Contact nearby museums or science centers to see if they have any traveling (outreach) programs or exhibits they can staff and supply for little or no cost.



Reviewing Guide

Not all locations and festivals will be able to implement all these best practices, but the ideal flow is what all festivals should be striving toward. You will need 1 head reviewer and enough reviewing volunteers to work in pairs. The number of reviewer pairs needed depends on the number of teams and amount of time you have scheduled. Plan for about 15 minutes per team for queueing, reviewing and completing the reviewing documents.

What should the reviewing process look like at a festival?



Best Practices

- If possible, reviewing should take place in a separate room to ensure minimal distractions and allow team members to be heard. However, reviewing often takes place at the team's table.
- Your reviewing room should include a table for teams to set up their poster/model.
- Reviewers should have a clipboard or other hard surface to write on so they can fill out the reviewing sheet and reference the list of awards.
- **Reviewers should NOT sit behind a table.** Teams should feel comfortable in the reviewing space. Kneeling at their level of simply standing with the team can help. (See photo on page 3 for a reviewer in action).
- Parents, coaches and mentors are allowed in the reviewing rooms, but may be asked to stand in a designated area so they don't make the team members nervous.

Awards

These are the team awards that are given out at *FIRST* LEGO League Explore Festivals.

Each team should receive one award from the approved list. The same award can be given to several teams. The reviewers determine which team receives which type of award.

Challenge Solution Award

These teams showed excellent problem-solving skills to create an innovative and helpful solution to the challenge.

Coding Award

These teams gave effective explanations about how their code made their team model move and showed good communication skills.

Core Values Award

These teams demonstrated great teamwork as they explored the challenge, showing they fully understood the *FIRST* Core Values.

Team Poster Award

These teams showed creativity on their team poster and clearly explained what they had learned through their *FIRST* LEGO League Explore team journey.

Team Model Award

These teams displayed innovation and creativity through the design and building of their model.

Name Your Own Award

These teams can be recognized for achievements outside the award list, for example, the Community Impact Award.

Event Layouts

These are not the only possible layouts for *FIRST* LEGO League Explore Festivals, but they are commonly used.

Ex.1 Team tables are in “pods” allowing teams to walk through and gather around tables with activities on the side in a designated area.

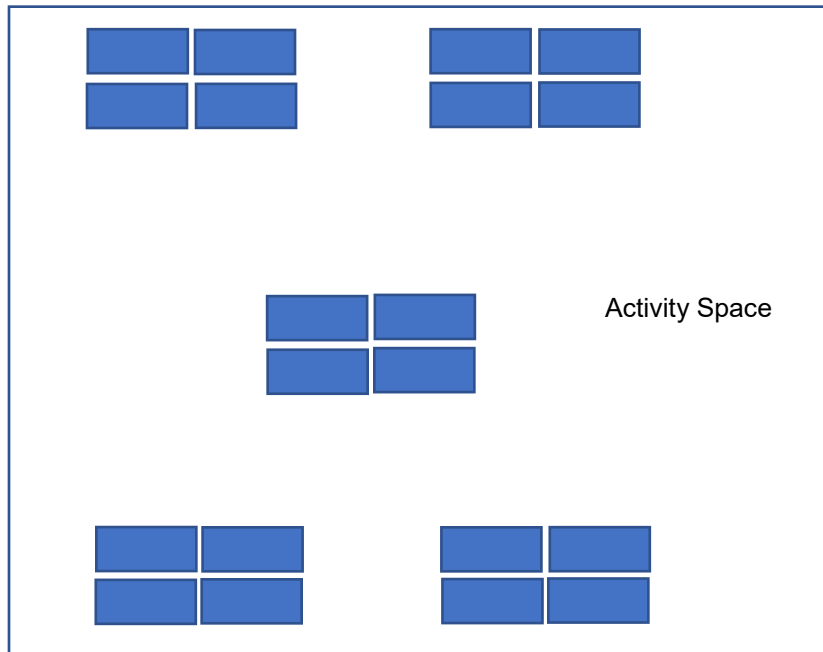
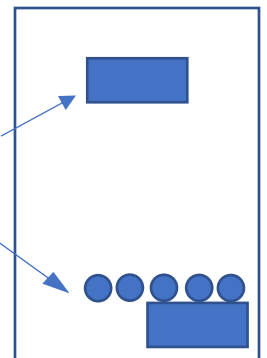
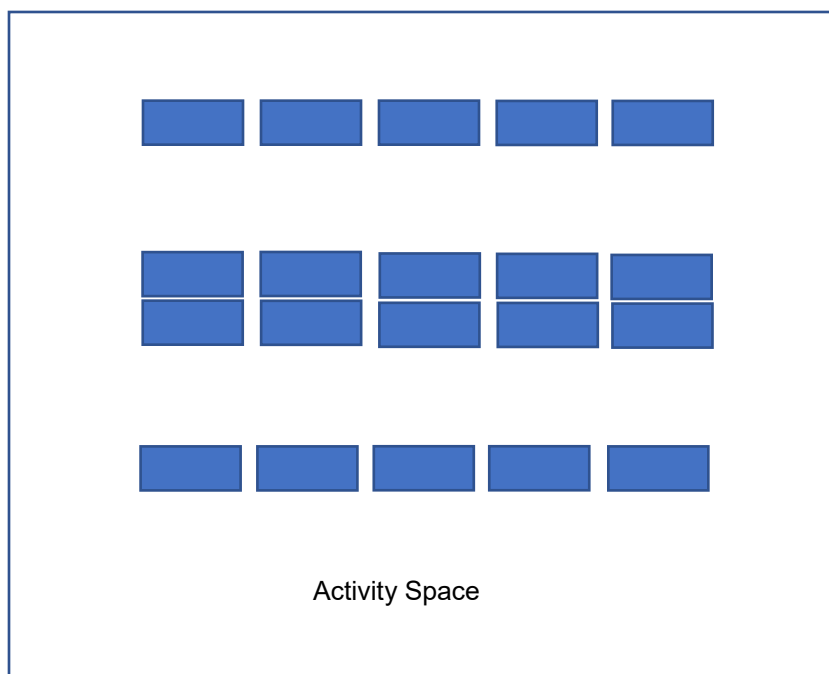


Table for team setup
Chairs for coaches/parents if needed

Reviewing Room Layout



Ex 2. Team tables are in lines allowing flow up and down aisles.



Sample Budget

Your event budget varies based on the size of the event, sponsorship, the cost of the event location, and the amount of time and effort donated by team families and other volunteers. This sample budget will help you remember key items to consider when planning your event budget and is based on 20 teams. Remember to scale up or down based on your event size.

Item	Unit Price	Total
<i>Income</i>		
20 team registrations	\$50.00	\$1000.00
Total		\$1000.00
<i>Expenses</i>		
120 <i>FIRST</i> LEGO League Explore LEGO medallion with ribbon	\$2.55	\$300.00
Event insurance (this varies greatly and may be covered under your location fees or under your organization's insurance)	Varies	Varies
Event location fees (including facilities, tables and chairs, building staff)		\$300.00
Activity supplies ~\$10/team		\$200.00
Volunteer snacks and supplies		\$100.00
Decorations (signs, table cloths etc.)		\$100.00
Total		\$1000.00

Reviewing Sheet



EXPLORE

Name: _____ Team Name/Number: _____

Reviewers are required to tick one box on each separate line to indicate the team's achievement.

Reviewing Criteria:

Beginning: This item was beginning to develop in the team's model, poster, presentation, or answers.

Accomplished: The team clearly showed this item in their model, poster, presentation, or answers.

Exceeds: The team went above and beyond the challenge in this area.

		Beginning	Accomplished	Exceeds
CHALLENGE SOLUTION				
What did your team learn about the challenge?	The team learned about the challenge and explored possible solutions.	☐	☐	☐
How could this impact your community?	The team's solution has the potential to make a great impact on the community.	☐	☐	☐
CORE VALUES				
How did you use Core Values?	Team members explained how they worked as a team and understood the Core Values by giving examples.	☐	☐	☐
What skills did you learn from each other?	Team members demonstrated they learned new skills when working together.	☐	☐	☐
TEAM MODEL				
Describe your team model.	The team described the team model and the solutions to the challenge that it represented.	☐	☐	☐
How did you include your Explore Set in your team model?	The team described how they creatively used one or more of the components in their team model.	☐	☐	☐
CODING				
What part of your model is motorized?	The team explained how they used motor(s) and sensors to make their model move and be interactive.	☐	☐	☐
How did you code your motorized part?	Team members explained how their code made their model move.	☐	☐	☐
TEAM POSTER				
What did you include in your team poster?	The poster showed information about their challenge solutions, team model, coding, and their team.	☐	☐	☐
How does it show your team journey?	Team members told or showed how they worked as a team to create their poster.	☐	☐	☐

Reviewing Questions



EXPLORE

Here are a series of questions to prepare for the event. You can use these questions to help the teams explain their journeys, what they learned and created.

Challenge Solution

- What did your team learn about the challenge?
- How could this impact your community?

Core Values

- How did you use Core Values?
- What skills did you learn from each other?

Team Model

- Can you describe your team model?
- How did you include your Explore Set in your team model?

Coding

- What part of your build is motorized?
- How did you code your motorized part?

Team Poster

- What did you include in your team poster?
- How does it show your team journey?

Awards List

Use the reviewing sheet to help with the allocation of awards. Each team should receive one award. The same award can be given to several teams.

Challenge Solution Award

These teams showed excellent problem-solving skills to create an innovative and helpful solution to the challenge.

Coding Award

These teams gave effective explanations about how their code made their team model move and showed good communication skills.

Core Values Award

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