

Junior Innovation Challenge – Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Junior Innovation Challenge is part of the **National Innovation Challenge (NIC) – 4th Edition**, organised by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC). It aims to inspire and nurture the next generation of innovators in Mauritius, Rodrigues and the Outer Islands.

This competition provides a platform for participants to develop creative ideas, solve real-life problems, and showcase their talent.

2. Categories

The Junior Innovation Challenge is divided into two categories:

Young Innovator Category

Open to participants aged **6 to 11 years**. The focus is on simple, creative, and hands-on projects that encourage teamwork and problem-solving.

Rising Innovator Category

Open to participants aged **12 to 18 years**. The focus is on more advanced projects, not limited to applying knowledge, coding, design, engineering, and research, with attention to the practicality and potential impact of ideas.

3. Eligibility

- Open to all youngsters in Mauritius, Rodrigues, and the Outer Islands.
- Applications may be submitted **individually** or in **groups of up to 5 members**, with one chosen leader.

4. Participation

Participants are required to:

1. **Identify a problem** in their school, community, environment, or society.
2. **Propose an innovative solution** that is practical, creative, and beneficial.
3. **Explain how the idea will be developed further** into a prototype, model, or concept during the Innovation Sprint.
4. Provide a **basic budget** to show how the seed funding will be used.

Applications can be submitted:

- Online through the MRIC website (www.mric.mu/nic)

Submission of video applications can be done on the online application form or by forwarding the video link to us by email on nic@mric.mu and clearly indicating your full name and contact details.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be judged on:

- **Innovativeness** – Is the idea original and creative?
- **Practicality** – Can it be realistically implemented?
- **Relevance** – Does it solve a real problem?
- **Scalability** – Can it grow or be applied to other contexts?
- **Impact** – How beneficial is it to people or the community?
- **Feasibility** – Can it be done with available resources?

6. Process

Stage 1- Application (Sept – Nov 2025)

Submit online or via video before the deadline (**28 November 2025**).

Stage 2- Administrative Screening (Nov 2025)

Applications are checked for completeness.

Stage 3- Pre-selection (Nov 2025)

Shortlisting of promising ideas.

Stage 4- Audition Phase (Jan 2026)

Selected teams present their idea live to a **jury panel and audience**.

Stage 5- Innovation Sprint (Feb – May 2026)

Selected teams (10 Young Innovator + 10 Rising Innovator) receive **seed funding of Rs 10,000 each**.

They may benefit from mentorship and workshops to develop their projects.

Stage 6- Final Presentation (April 2026)

Teams showcase their final prototype/concept to the jury.

Award Ceremony (May 2026)

Winners are announced during a televised national ceremony.

7. Seed Funding

- **Rs 10,000 per selected project**
- Funds may be used for materials, simple equipment, or development costs.
- Not allowed: paying debts, covering school/home operational costs, or buying unrelated items.

8. Prizes

- **Young Innovator Category**
1st Prize: Rs 50,000 + Trophy + Certificate
2nd Prize: Rs 35,000 + Trophy + Certificate
3rd Prize: Rs 25,000 + Trophy + Certificate
- **Rising Innovator Category**
1st Prize: Rs 50,000 + Trophy + Certificate
2nd Prize: Rs 35,000 + Trophy + Certificate
3rd Prize: Rs 25,000 + Trophy + Certificate

- **Public Choice Award (each category)**
Gift Voucher + Trophy + Certificate

9. Important Notes

- By applying, participants agree that projects may be filmed and featured in the **National Innovation Challenge TV series**.
- Teachers, parents and guardians are encouraged to support, but projects must be **student-driven**.
- Participation of children in the competition **requires the consent** of a parent or guardian.
- Participants must commit to all stages of the competition.

10. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION

The Call for Ideas is open until the **28th of November 2025**. All applications will be treated on merit.

11. Contact us

For more information, please contact us:

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**The MRIC reserves the right to revise and amend
the terms and conditions laid down
in this Guidelines as and whenever necessary.**