13×13 Innovation Competition | Rules

English translation for reference. Please consult the Turkish original for the source wording.

Organization

Başakşehir Living Lab Innovation Competition 13 is organized by Başakşehir Municipality and Başakşehir Living Lab. The planning and administration of the competition, jury formation, challenge management, bootcamp, prototyping, proof of concept (PoC) and final stages are coordinated by Başakşehir Living Lab.

Purpose

The competition aims to develop innovative, feasible and measurable solutions for real needs faced by public institutions, local governments, the private sector and society. It encourages participants to go beyond generating ideas: to test and prototype their solutions, develop PoCs and validate them with user and impact data.

Concept

The competition is designed around developing feasible and measurable solutions for 13 challenges identified from real needs.

The challenges will be prepared jointly by the organizing team, relevant institutions and the units that own each problem, and published as “Challenge Cards” before applications open. Each card will clearly describe the problem, expected outcomes, pilot setting and success criteria.

Participants will select at least one of the 13 published challenges and apply with a solution proposal that directly addresses it. Solutions may take the form of software, hardware, a service, a process, a design, a data or artificial intelligence application, social innovation, or a hybrid of these.

The proposed solution is expected to:

- Directly address the selected challenge;
- Meet a real need;
- Be feasible and capable of further development;
- Be demonstrable as a prototype, MVP or PoC;
- Be testable in the designated pilot setting; and
- Produce a measurable output or impact.

The aim is to develop promising ideas during the competition, test them with the institutions responsible for the problems and turn suitable projects into pilot implementations. The goal is to produce sustainable, scalable solutions that can be tried under real conditions rather than remain at the idea stage.

Who May Participate

The competition is open to the following participant profiles:

- Youth: middle-school, high-school, university and college students, and recent graduates;
- Researchers: academics, lecturers and independent researchers;
- Institutions: public institutions, NGOs and private-sector organizations;
- Startups: entrepreneurs and teams with an MVP or PoC; and
- General Applications: individual participants and owners of innovative ideas or solutions.

Selection and Evaluation Process

Applications will be evaluated in four stages: preliminary screening, jury evaluation, PoC development and final presentation.

Stage 1: Preliminary Screening

Preliminary screening will be carried out by the Başakşehir Living Lab (BLL) evaluation committee. Applications will be checked for compliance with the competition rules and the selected challenge.

Preliminary Screening Criteria

- The application form is completed in full and on time;
- The participant meets the stated application requirements;
- The problem and proposed solution are presented clearly and understandably;
- The project aligns with the purpose and scope of the competition; and
- The application meets basic ethical, legal and technical requirements.

Applications that do not meet these conditions or contain incomplete information will not proceed to jury evaluation.

Stage 2: Jury Evaluation

Projects that pass preliminary screening will be evaluated by expert jury members in a hybrid format, through online meetings and, where necessary, in-person meetings.

Jury Evaluation Criteria

- Accurate definition of the problem and alignment with the solution;
- Innovation and originality of the solution;
- Technical and operational feasibility;
- Potential to develop a prototype, MVP or PoC;
- Testability in a pilot setting;
- Capacity to generate measurable outputs and impact;
- Benefit to target users or society;
- Sustainability and scalability; and
- Team competence and capacity to deliver the project.

Stage 3: PoC Development

At least 78 projects selected following jury evaluation will qualify for the PoC development stage.

At this stage, participants are expected to prepare a testable proof of concept (PoC) demonstrating the core functions of their proposed solution. The PoC must directly address the selected challenge and, where possible, be suitable for testing in the designated pilot setting.

Stage 4: Final Presentation

The 78 projects that complete the PoC development stage will present to the jury in the final. Presentations may take place in person or online according to the schedule determined by the organizer.

Finalists are expected to:

- Clearly explain the problem and their developed solution;
- Demonstrate their PoC in working or presentable form;
- Explain the project's feasibility and expected benefits;

- Share a pilot implementation and scaling plan; and
- Answer the jury members' questions.

Following the final evaluation, the highest-performing projects will be selected against the stated criteria and the prize winners announced.

Evaluation Weights

- Technical competence: 30% - General Jury;
- Feasibility: 20% - Technical Jury;
- User feedback: 30% - Users; and
- Impact of the application: 20% - General and Technical Juries.

Schedule

Stage 1: Announcement and Applications

- Competition announcement: Saturday, 7 November 2026;
- Application and project submission deadline: Friday, 15 January 2027, 23:59.

Stage 2: Preliminary Screening

- Screening: Monday, 18 January to Monday, 25 January 2027;
- Announcement of screening results: Wednesday, 27 January 2027.

The BLL evaluation committee will review applications for eligibility, completeness of documentation and alignment with the selected challenge.

Stage 3: Jury Evaluation

- Jury evaluation: Thursday, 28 January to Wednesday, 10 February 2027;
- Announcement of projects advancing to PoC: Friday, 12 February 2027.

The jury will select six projects for each of the 13 challenges, for a total of 78 projects advancing to PoC development.

Stage 4: Bootcamp and Mentorship

- Bootcamp and mentorship day: Saturday, 13 February 2027.

Stage 5: PoC Implementation Period

- PoC launch and orientation: Monday, 15 February 2027;
- PoC trial period: Monday, 15 February to Wednesday, 31 March 2027.

Participants will receive mentorship, training, technical support and project development opportunities. They are expected to prepare a testable PoC that demonstrates the solution's core functions.

Stage 6: Final Presentations

- Final presentations: Friday, 9 April to Saturday, 10 April 2027;
- Format: in person or online.

Projects that complete PoC development will present their solutions to the jury. The final evaluation will determine first, second and third place for each challenge.

Stage 7: Awards Ceremony

- Awards ceremony: Tuesday, 27 April 2027;

- Venue: Başakşehir Municipality Conference Hall.

The organizer may change the competition schedule when necessary. Changes will be announced through the competition's official communication channels.

Prize Distribution

Youth

- First place: TRY 150,000; Second place: TRY 100,000; Third place: TRY 50,000.

Researchers

- First place: TRY 210,000; Second place: TRY 120,000; Third place: TRY 70,000.

Institutions

- First place: TRY 270,000; Second place: TRY 140,000; Third place: TRY 90,000.

Startups

- First place: TRY 240,000; Second place: TRY 130,000; Third place: TRY 80,000.

General Applications

- First place: TRY 180,000; Second place: TRY 110,000; Third place: TRY 60,000.

Prize Rules

- Each participant category will be evaluated independently;
- The same project cannot win a prize for more than one challenge;
- Team members are responsible for dividing any prize won as a team; and
- Prizes will be transferred to the accounts requested from the winners within no more than 150 days after the winners are announced.

Participation Conditions

Participation in the competition is free of charge.

Students, recent graduates, academics and researchers, entrepreneurs and startups, public institutions, NGOs, private-sector representatives and individuals with innovative solutions may apply.

Applications may be submitted by individuals, teams or institutions. Team applications must designate one team representative. Institutional applications must have a representative authorized by the institution.

The submitted project is expected to directly solve the selected challenge, involve an original or improved approach, be developable to prototype, MVP or PoC level, and comply with the competition's ethical and legal requirements.

In all categories except General Applications, developing a PoC is mandatory to qualify for a prize. The expected scope and adequacy of the PoC will vary according to the participant category, the nature of the project and the difficulty level appropriate to that category.

Developing a PoC is not mandatory for General Applications; these projects will be assessed against the relevant evaluation criteria.

Participants under 18 must have the consent of a parent or legal guardian to enter. The applicant is responsible for the accuracy of the information and documents submitted.

If a submitted project is not original, has been copied and/or is subject to a third party's claim of rights over the design or project, the applicant bears full responsibility.

By applying, participants are deemed to accept these rules and the conditions stated in the competition's published Challenge Cards.

The institution organizing the event reserves the right to amend these event rules when necessary.

Grounds for Exclusion

A project may be excluded from evaluation in the following circumstances:

- Application information is incomplete or untrue;
- The project is not directly related to the selected challenge;
- Another person's project is used without permission;
- Intellectual property or personal data rights are violated;
- Submission deadlines are missed;
- The participant does not take part in mentorship, PoC or final stages; or
- The participant breaches ethical rules or the competition rules.

Jury Members

- Başakşehir Living Lab managers;
- Technology development specialists;
- Department managers from public institutions;
- Financial-sector experts;
- Academics;
- Teachers;
- Entrepreneurship and innovation experts;
- Mentors;
- Managers of entrepreneurship organizations;
- Investment-fund managers and angel investors;
- International project coordinators;
- Senior private-sector executives;
- Advanced-technology specialists; and
- Designers.

The Başakşehir Living Lab team reserves the right to change the jury members.

Abbreviations and Definitions

- BLL (Başakşehir Living Lab): the Başakşehir Living Lab Innovation and Technology Center.
- Challenge (Problem Area): an area of need or a problem identified from real needs for which solutions are sought in the competition.
- Challenge Card: a briefing document for each problem area describing the problem, expected solution outcomes, pilot setting and success criteria.
- PoC (Proof of Concept): an initial testable implementation or validation exercise demonstrating that the proposed solution's core functions work and are feasible.
- MVP (Minimum Viable Product): a version of the core product or service built with minimal effort and features to gather early feedback from its target audience and assess market need.

- Prototype: an early sample or model version of a product built to test a concept or process, or to be replicated and learned from.
- Bootcamp: an intensive program in which participants develop their projects through training, mentorship and hands-on work over a defined period.
- Startup: an enterprise or entrepreneurial team developing an innovative product, service or business model with growth and scaling potential.
- Mentor: a person who guides participants and supports project and solution development through their expertise, knowledge and experience.
- Mentorship: each online or in-person meeting where experience is shared with aspiring entrepreneurs or people or institutions interested in learning about an incubation center.
- Hybrid Format: an event, evaluation or program delivered through a combination of in-person and online methods.