

# Instructions for Signing up as a Judge for the 2026 U.S. National Innovator Challenge (NIC)

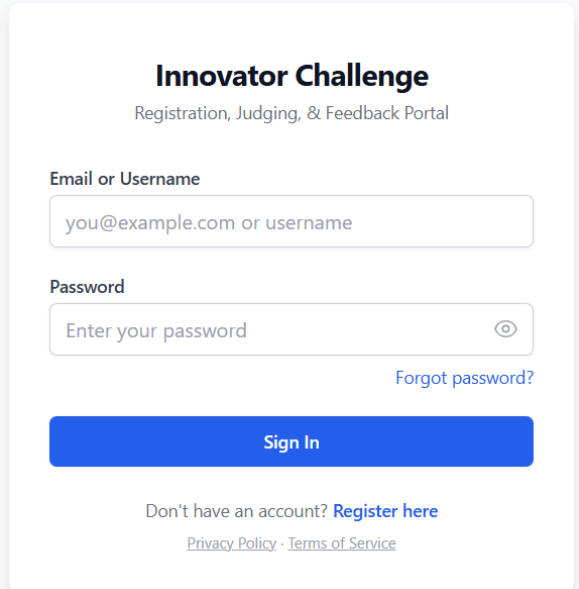
Use this link to get to the NIC Judging Portal:

<https://nic-judging-feedback-portal.web.app/login>

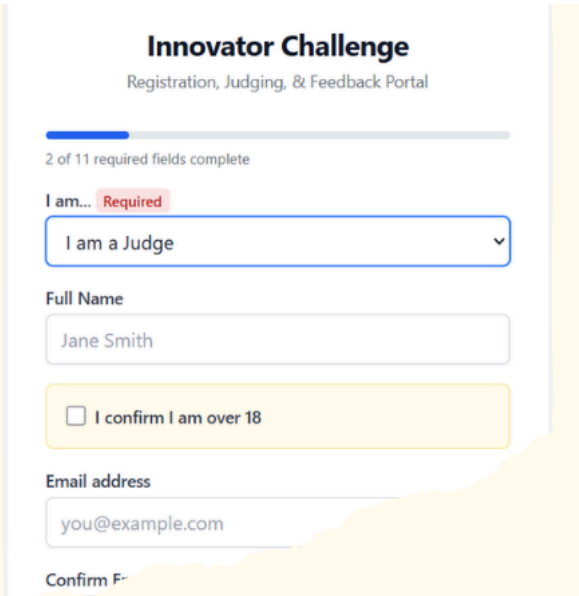
If you already registered in 2026 to be a judge for an earlier program (like the Independent Innovator Challenge) you do not have to register again. You simply enter your “Email or Username” and “Password” to log in.

Click on “Forgot password” if you have forgotten your password and check your email.)

If you have not previously registered, click on “Register here” and complete all of the fields on the registration form.

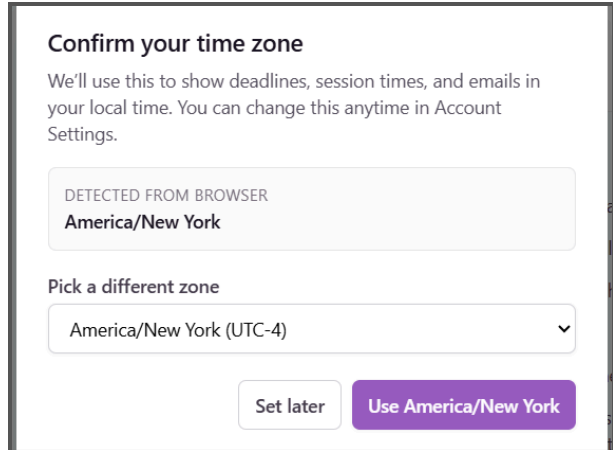


The screenshot shows the login page for the Innovator Challenge. At the top, it says "Innovator Challenge" and "Registration, Judging, & Feedback Portal". Below this, there are two input fields: "Email or Username" with the placeholder text "you@example.com or username" and "Password" with the placeholder text "Enter your password" and a toggle icon. A "Forgot password?" link is located below the password field. A blue "Sign In" button is centered below the fields. At the bottom, there is a link "Don't have an account? Register here" and two smaller links: "Privacy Policy" and "Terms of Service".



The screenshot shows the registration page for the Innovator Challenge. At the top, it says "Innovator Challenge" and "Registration, Judging, & Feedback Portal". Below this, there is a progress bar showing "2 of 11 required fields complete". The first field is "I am..." with a "Required" label and a dropdown menu showing "I am a Judge". Below this is the "Full Name" field with the text "Jane Smith". There is a checkbox labeled "I confirm I am over 18". Below that is the "Email address" field with the text "you@example.com". The "Confirm F" field is partially visible at the bottom.

Confirm your time zone or select a different time zone.



**Confirm your time zone**

We'll use this to show deadlines, session times, and emails in your local time. You can change this anytime in Account Settings.

DETECTED FROM BROWSER  
America/New York

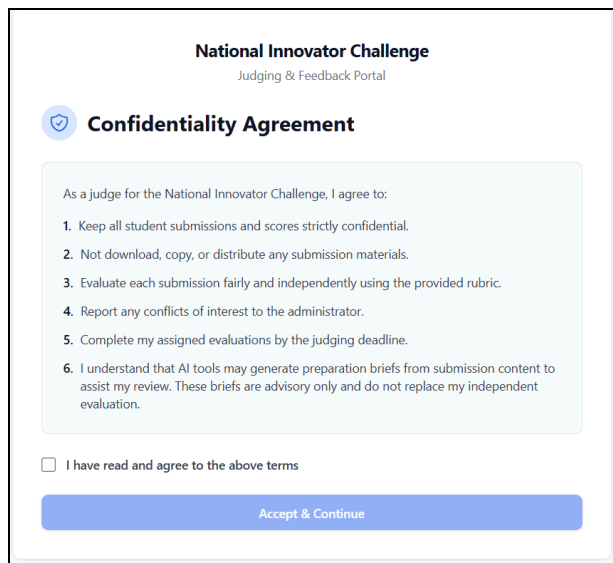
Pick a different zone

America/New York (UTC-4) ▼

Set later Use America/New York

Read the Confidentiality Agreement

Click on the checkbox to agree and press "Accept & Continue."



**National Innovator Challenge**  
Judging & Feedback Portal

**Confidentiality Agreement**

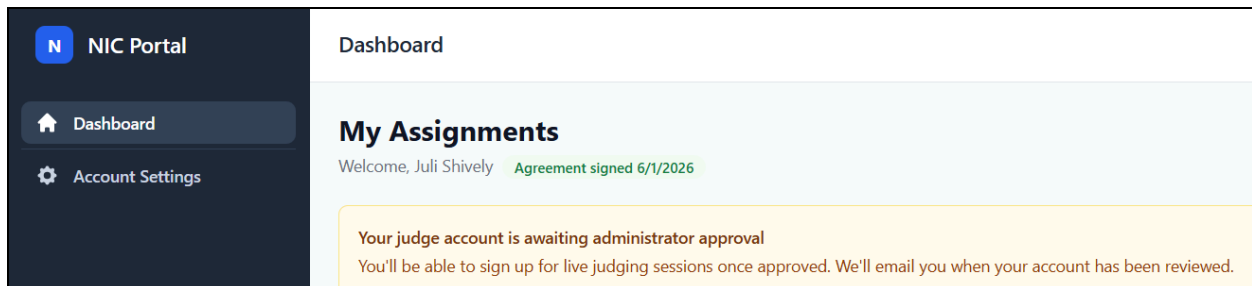
As a judge for the National Innovator Challenge, I agree to:

1. Keep all student submissions and scores strictly confidential.
2. Not download, copy, or distribute any submission materials.
3. Evaluate each submission fairly and independently using the provided rubric.
4. Report any conflicts of interest to the administrator.
5. Complete my assigned evaluations by the judging deadline.
6. I understand that AI tools may generate preparation briefs from submission content to assist my review. These briefs are advisory only and do not replace my independent evaluation.

I have read and agree to the above terms

Accept & Continue

You will receive the Welcome page and the message below indicating you will receive an email once your judge account is approved. You should expect to receive approval within 24 hours.



**NIC Portal**

Dashboard

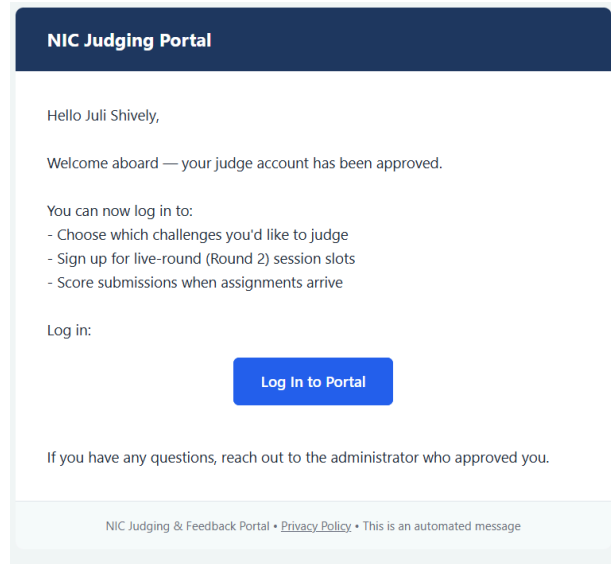
Account Settings

**My Assignments**

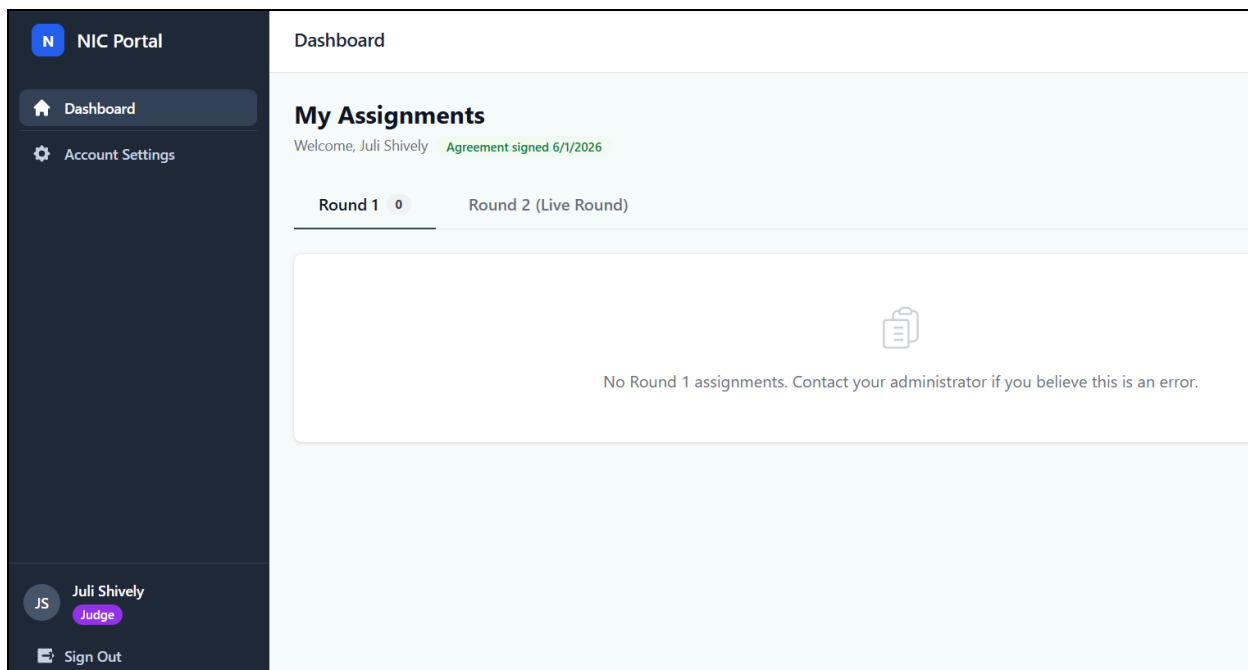
Welcome, Juli Shively Agreement signed 6/1/2026

Your judge account is awaiting administrator approval  
You'll be able to sign up for live judging sessions once approved. We'll email you when your account has been reviewed.

Once you have received your approval email, you can log in to the NIC Judging Portal using the credentials you created when you registered.



When you log in you be on your dashboard. Everything you need can be accessed through the dashboard



Under Account Settings you can review and/or edit the information you provided when you registered.

Round 1 judging can be done anytime within the program dates (at a time that works best for you) because there is no interview or live judging with the student innovators in this round.

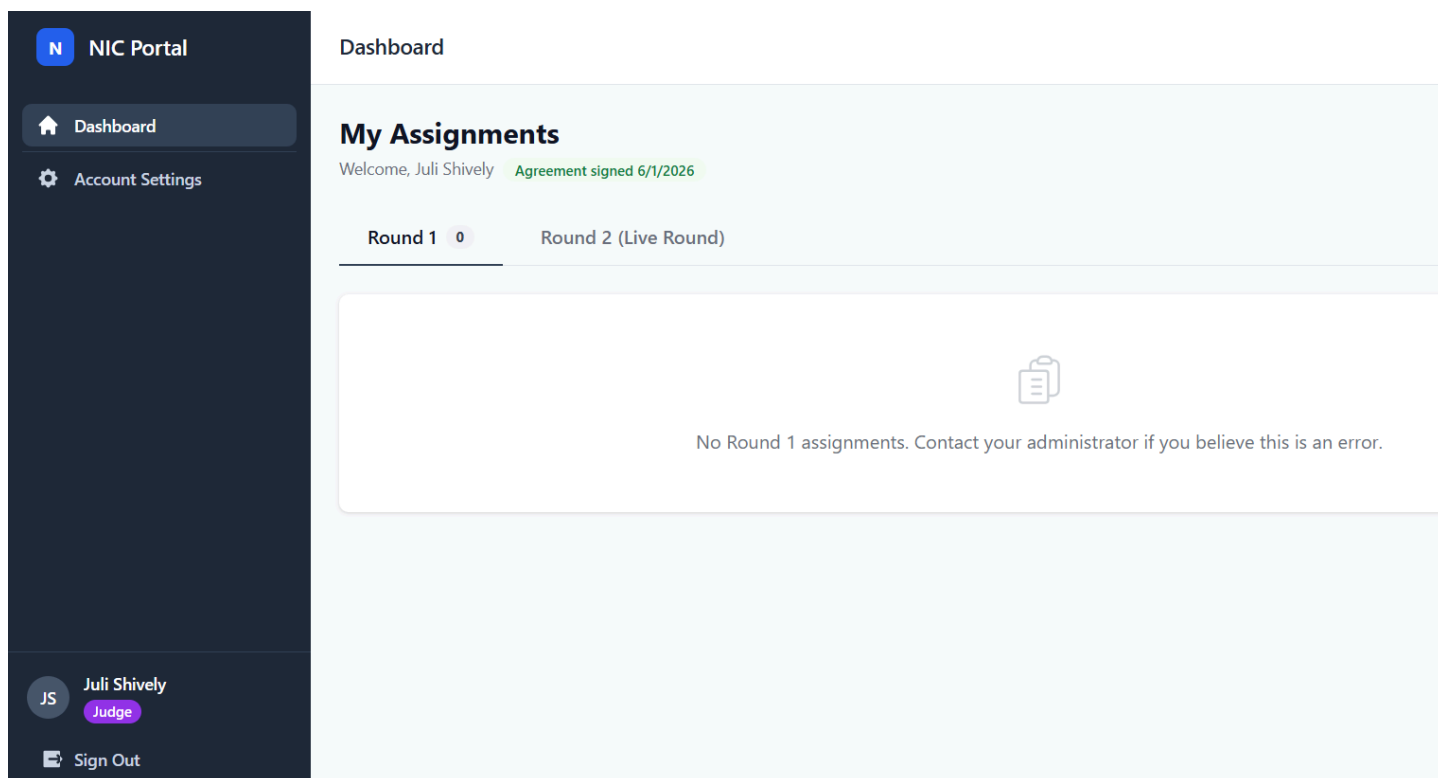
Round 2 judging will have specific dates/times, that once firmed up, will be listed under the “Account Settings” option. If you do not see the dates/times listed, they have not been finalized and as soon as those dates/times have been finalized, you will receive an email so that you can log back in to your account on the portal and select the date/time you are available to judge, if you selected to be a Round 2 judge.

When the NIC team assigns projects to judges, you will be able to see your assigned projects for Round 1 or Round 2 of the competition under “My Assignments” in the center of the dashboard.

If you have any questions please write to [nationalinnovator@hewittlearning.org](mailto:nationalinnovator@hewittlearning.org).



When you log in you be on your dashboard. Everything you need can be accessed through the dashboard



The screenshot displays the NIC Portal dashboard. On the left is a dark sidebar with navigation options: 'NIC Portal' (with a blue 'N' icon), 'Dashboard' (with a home icon), and 'Account Settings' (with a gear icon). At the bottom of the sidebar, the user's profile is shown as 'Juli Shively' with the initials 'JS' and the role 'Judge', along with a 'Sign Out' button. The main content area is titled 'Dashboard' and features a 'My Assignments' section. A welcome message reads 'Welcome, Juli Shively' followed by a green notification 'Agreement signed 6/1/2026'. Below this, there are two tabs: 'Round 1' with a '0' indicator and 'Round 2 (Live Round)'. The 'Round 1' tab is active, showing a message with a document icon: 'No Round 1 assignments. Contact your administrator if you believe this is an error.'

Under Account Settings you can review and/or edit the information you provided when you registered.

Round 1 judging can be done anytime within the program dates (at a time that works best for you) because there is no interview or live judging with the student innovators in this round.

Round 2 judging will have specific dates/times listed under the “Account Settings” option. If you do not see the dates/times listed, they have not been finalized and as soon as those dates/times have been finalized, you will receive an email so that you can log back in to your account on the portal and select the date/time you are available to judge, if you selected to be a Round 2 judge.

When the NIC team assigns projects to judges, you will be able to see your assigned projects for Round 1 or Round 2 of the competition under “My Assignments” in the center of the dashboard.

2026 Ceiba Connections. All rights reserved.