



2026 Competition Brief

Fentress Global Challenge – An International Student Competition

Introduction

The 2026 theme is the Airport of the Future. Airports are extremely complex. Not only are they massive structures, they are also high-volume transportation hubs that offer a wide range of amenities. Increasingly, airports are evolving to include workspaces, commercial centers, cultural programs, and more.

Fentress Global Challenge (FGC) is an international competition for students to envision the future, develop an innovative design concept and present it through graphics and written descriptions. More than 800 entries from 160 countries have competed for top honors since 2011.

Eligibility

FGC is open to students currently pursuing architecture or engineering degrees at accredited universities, and graduates with degrees in architecture or engineering in the last four years.

- Current students must provide digital copies of their student ID and current course schedule
- Graduates must provide a digital copy of their diploma

Entries can be submitted as an individual or a team with a maximum of three members. In the case of team submissions, awards will be split between the members. Participants are encouraged to choose the collaboration format that best aligns with their approach and goals. There is no entry or submission fee to participate in this competition.

Residents of the following countries are not eligible to participate in the 2026 competition: Russia, North Korea, Iran, and Cuba.

Guidelines

1. Participants are challenged to envision an airport in the year 2100 and create a design concept for a new terminal. They are encouraged to utilize forecasts for population growth, environmental conditions, modes of transportation, and other data to inform their design.
2. Participants shall choose one of two site options worldwide:
 - Option 1 – Design a new terminal for an existing airport
 - Option 2 – Design a new terminal for a location that does not currently have an airport



Evaluation Criteria

All entries will be evaluated using the following four (4) criteria:

1. Quality

- Design concept is presented with high-quality graphics and writing.
- Graphic layout of slides is visually pleasing and logical.

2. Clarity

- Graphics and written descriptions are easy to read and understand.
- Information is not repetitive.

3. Innovation

- Design is inspiring and shows the advancement of aviation and technology.
- Graphics and written descriptions explain design approach and solutions.

4. Impact

- Design serves a range of airport users, such as passengers, airlines, vendors, etc.
- Design minimizes negative impacts on humans and the natural environment.

Jury

- A jury of aviation professionals will select the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place award winners.
- Jurors may include airport directors, futurists, sustainability and resiliency experts, architects, etc.

Awards

1st Place US \$10,000

2nd Place..... US \$3,000

3rd Place US \$2,000

Schedule

May 2025 Competition Launch

November 1, 2025..... Deadline for Questions (23:00 UTC)

December 31, 2025 Final Deadline (23:00 UTC)

February 2026..... Announcement of Shortlist

March 2026 Announcement of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Winners



Submission Requirements

Completed entries must be received via the registration portal no later than December 31, 2025 at 23:00 UTC.

Questions may be sent to info@fentressglobalchallenge.com or submitted via the portal by November 1, 2025 at 23:00 UTC. Answers will be posted to the Q+A section of the portal no later than November 21, 2025.

Specifications

- Official language is English
- Measurement may be U.S. Customary System or International System of Units (metric)
- Each entry must include two (2) separate PDF documents – Part 1 and Part 2 (described below)

Part 1 – Design Concept PDF

- Filename format: 2026FGC_Design-Concept-Title_DesignConcept.pdf
- Do not include personal information in Part 1, such as name, university, or country of residence (violations will result in disqualification)
- Eight (8) pages maximum:
 - Landscape orientation – aspect ratio of 4:3 or 16:9 (choose only one)
 - Minimum 10-point font
 - High resolution document with a maximum size of 25MB
- Page details:
 - Page 1 – Introduction of design concept, including Design Concept Title, signature image, and concept summary (maximum 100 words)
 - Pages 2-8 – Additional images and descriptive captions (images may include renderings, diagrams, plans, sections, and perspectives)

Part 2 – Personal Information PDF

- Filename format: 2026FGC_Design-Concept-Title_PersonalInfo.pdf
- Information below is required for all participants:
 - Full legal name (and preferred name, if applicable)
 - Professional bio / curriculum vitae (maximum 100 words per person)
 - Headshot / profile picture
 - University name and location
 - Official university documents for each participant:
 - Current students must provide digital copies of student ID and current course schedule
 - Graduates within the last four years must provide a digital copy of their diploma



Terms and Conditions

By participating in Fentress Global Challenge (FGC) entrants agree to abide by all requirements, guidelines, rules and regulations related to the competition. Entrants include registered individuals and team members, as well as anyone who assists with the development of a submission. All participants are expected to review the terms and conditions carefully to ensure compliance.

1. **Entry Submission:** No changes are permitted to an entry after submission, except with explicit approval from Fentress Architects.
2. **Artificial Intelligence:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) cannot be used to develop any part of the submission, including concepts, images, written content, layouts, and more. Use of AI will result in disqualification.
3. **Intellectual Property:** Participants affirm that all materials submitted are their original work and do not infringe upon the intellectual property rights of any third party. Fentress Architects is not liable for any infringement, and participants indemnify Fentress Architects against third-party claims. Plagiarism of written and graphic content will result in disqualification.
4. **Usage Rights:** Participants grant Fentress Architects and competition sponsors non-exclusive reproduction rights for all graphics and written content to be used in advertising, promotion, exhibition, print publication, and internet purposes related to the competition. Fentress Architects is not responsible for unauthorized use by third parties.
5. **Media Approval:** All published and online media related to the FGC must be reviewed and approved by Fentress Architects.
6. **Prize Terms:** Winners may not transfer, assign, or substitute prizes.
7. **Personal Data Processing:** Entrants acknowledge that personal data may be processed, shared, and used for competition-related purposes. Participants can access, review, rectify, or cancel personal data by contacting Fentress Architects.
8. **Validation and Disqualification:** Fentress Architects reserves the right to verify the validity and originality of entries and entrants, disqualifying any entry not in accordance with the rules. Failure to enforce rights at any stage does not waive those rights.
9. **Rule Changes:** FGC rules and regulations are subject to change without notice.
10. **Contest Integrity:** If FGC is disrupted due to factors beyond Fentress Architects' control, including computer viruses, tampering, or technical failures, Fentress Architects may disqualify competition.
11. **Legal Jurisdiction:** Any claims related to the competition must be brought in Denver, Colorado, USA, and will be governed by the laws of the State of Colorado. The contest is void where prohibited.