2026 Chicago Hackathon | FAQ

1.1.1. General Information

Question	Answer
What is the hackathon about?	The event is about leveraging the power of geospatial data to develop innovative solutions that address real-world challenges at HERE.
When will the event take place?	April 15 & 16 2026 (Wednesday and Thursday)
For how long does the hackathon last? How long will the event be? Starting and closing hours.	8:30am - 6pm both days
Where is the location?	**HERE Technologies Chicago Office** 425 W Randolph St. Chicago, IL 60606

1.1.2. Participation and Eligibility

Question	Answer
Who can participate in the hackathon? Are there any eligibility criteria?	Active university students (either Bachelor's, Master's or PhD)
Can I participate in more than one location?	While this year we will be hosting several on-site hackathons around the world in Mumbai, Berlin, Krakow, Chicago, Guadalajara, and Cairo, to participate in the event you need to be studying in the country where hackathon takes place.
Do I need to form a team, or can I participate individually?	• We encourage students to apply to hackathon in teams. If you apply as a team, during registration all your teammates should populate field "Team/group name" with the same team's name

	• If you apply individually, the organizers will form a team from applicants that applied individually
How many members can be in a team? Requirements for a team?	The team consists of up to 3 members
Can I join a team at the event?	At the event, the teams will already be created, so you can't join a team at the event. Team formation happens during registration, either when you register as a team or after the organizer closes the registration (March 31, 2026) and creates teams from individual applications.
What skills do I need to have to join the hackathon?	The hackathon's target audience is students from geoinformatics and computer science. However, we also welcome students from different fields of study who have experience working with spatial data, programming, or data analytics!

1.1.3. Registration

Question	Answer
How can I register for the hackathon?	Registration is online at here.com/events
Is there a registration fee?	Registration is free.

1.1.4. Preparation and Requirements

Question	Answer
What should I bring to the hackathon?	Laptop, charger, and photo identification.
Do I need to bring my laptop?	Yes.
What do I need to prepare for the hackathon?	• brainstorm ideas on how you can improve a digital map • think about sensor data e.g. from your mobile phone, car sensor data, GPS trajectories, open data from the web

	• think about your skills and how you can setup a project to improve an existing digital map Tools/Software skills • GIS (e.g. QGIS, ArcGIS, etc.) • JavaScript frameworks for visualization • Python and Jupyter notebooks • libraries to work with movement, mobility and/or geospatial data • R and the corresponding geospatial libraries • Java or other tools • any tool of your choice that help you to solve the mission (interoperability and OSS is likely an advantage to combine several tools in a workflow)
Do I need to sign an NDA?	Yes.
What is an NDA?	An NDA, or Non-Disclosure Agreement, is a legal contract between two or more parties that outlines confidential information they wish to share with each other for certain purposes, but want to keep private from others. Here's a simple breakdown: • **Purpose**: To protect sensitive information from being shared with anyone outside the agreement. • **Parties Involved**: Usually between companies, or between a company and an individual (like a student or employee). • **Confidential Information**: This can include anything from business plans, product designs, to research data. • **Obligations**: The parties agree not to disclose the information to others and to use it only for the agreed purpose. In essence, an NDA helps ensure that any important or sensitive information you share remains protected and isn't used inappropriately.
Why do I need to sign an NDA?	Students need to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) for a hackathon to ensure that any ideas, projects, or sensitive

	information (e.g. HERE data) shared during the event remain confidential. This helps protect everyone's work and encourages a safe environment for innovation and collaboration.

1.1.5. Event Logistics

Question	Answer
Will there be any pre-event workshops or sessions?	No
Will meals be provided during the event?	Yes, breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided both days.
Is accommodation provided for participants?	No, accommodations are not provided.
Will there be transport provided?	No, students are responsible for their own transportation to the event. The HERE Chicago office is easily accessible via CTA, Metra or Amtrak. There is no public parking in the building, so we encourage the use of public transit to the event.
Is there any technical support available during the event?	Yes, HERE IT will be on site during the event to provide assistance as needed.

1.1.6. Judging and Prizes

Question	Answer
How will the projects be judged?	At the conclusion of the Hackathon, each team will have 10 minutes to present their solution to the judges and fellow participants. There will be a panel of 3-4 judges who evaluate each solution and select a winner.
Who are the judges?	HERE North America staff will be part of the judging panel.
What are the criteria for judging?	Criteria for judging will be catered to the individual problem statement for the event. However, in general terms, solutions will be judged on the following:

	• Presentation & explanation of the solution • Scalability • Speed & efficiency • Robustness & flexibility • Accuracy • Visualization of results • User-friendliness
What are the prizes for the winners?	The winning team will be awarded summer internships (working student contracts) at HERE Technologies. Depending on team size, interns will work up to 20 hours per week for up to 12 weeks. The work setup will be hybrid, with time spent both in the office and at home.
What is the Grand Hackathon?	This will be an event all the winners of the regional hackathons can participate in. They will be given a new problem statement to be worked on during their internship period. Winners of the grand hackathon will have the potential opportunity to present at there HERE Imagine engineering event in late September.
What are the prizes?	2nd and 3rd place teams will be awarded amazon gift cards.
Will participants receive any certificates or recognition?	All hackathon participants will receive certificates confirming their participation.
Will I get a participation certificate?	Yes

1.1.7. Additional Opportunities

Question	Answer
Are there any opportunities for internships or job offers?	The hackathon is an opportunity to win an internship at HERE. All job offers are available in this link.
Will there be mentors available during the hackathon?	Yes, HERE North America will be available for technical support, and there will be on-site help from the GeoSpatial Community of Practice.

1.1.8. Support

Question	Answer
How can I contact the organizers for more information?	Reach us via email at geohack@here.com
What if I have to leave the event early?	If participants leave the event early and do not attend the final project presentations, they will not be eligible for a Certificate of Participation or the potential first prize.
Can I volunteer for the hackathon?	At this time, we are not accepting volunteer applications.

1.1.9. Themes and Tools

Question	Answer
What are the themes or problem statements for the hackathon?	All problems will be geospatial in nature.
Are there any specific technologies or tools we need to use?	Students are welcome to use any technology or tools at their disposal. However, HERE will not provide any additional software or hardware outside of WiFi access.