

Outreach Terms and Definitions

FIRST® has defined specific terms around outreach and support to ensure all teams can clearly communicate with judges and our community the great things they do to grow FIRST. All teams must adhere to the following definitions in their award submissions and judge interviews.

Category	Defined Terms
Team Support Definitions	Started
	Mentored
	Assisted
	Provided Published Resources
Event Support Definitions	Hosted an Event
	Supported an Event
Advocacy and Audience Support Definitions	Reached
	Advocated

Team Support Definitions:

Started

(a FIRST® LEGO® League / FIRST® Tech Challenge / FIRST® Robotics Competition team) – A team has **Started** a team if they have met one of the following requirements:

1. Helped the team form and ensured sustainability. For example, by guiding a new team on how to be organized, managed, training students or mentors or helping recruit students or mentors.
- OR
2. Funded or sourced funding (i.e., grants or sponsorship) for at least 50% of the team registration fee.

And ALL of the following:

3. The **Started** team agrees that the Starting team did in fact Start them.
4. The **Started** team competes in an official FIRST event during the season.
5. The team provides guidance and support to the **Started** team throughout their first season.

The intent of this definition is to make it clear when a team is responsible for bringing a new group into a specific FIRST program.

Teams are encouraged to loop in [local support](#) when starting new teams so they can provide additional support.

Teams are encouraged to have documentation available (e.g., a letter from the team that has been **Started**) supporting the fact that they did indeed *Start* each team referred to.

Mentored

(a *FIRST* Lego League/*FIRST* Tech Challenge/*FIRST* Robotics Competition team) – A team has **Mentored** a team if they have met BOTH of the following requirements:

1. Providing consistent communication, either in person or via phone/email/video conference to the **Mentored** team, helping with the technical or non-technical *FIRST* program specific issues.
2. The Mentored team agrees that the Mentoring team did in fact Mentor them.

Mentoring a team is a consistent and ongoing relationship. To be considered a Mentoring team, you must be providing regular help to the Mentee team during the season within their schedule. We understand that all teams may not meet as regularly as once a week, however this is a general standard. For some teams, communication may be more infrequent and still considered consistent. We encourage teams to use their best discretion when evaluating these edge cases. Helping teams on a less consistent basis is still immensely valuable and important, however it would simply be considered Assisting a team.

Teams are encouraged to have documentation available (e.g., a letter from the team that has been **Mentored**) supporting the fact that they did indeed Mentor each team referred to.

- Team A regularly sends students to a nearby school to help their *FIRST* LEGO League team(s) with their robot design and project presentations.
- Team A sends an email to Team B asking for advice on future robot design. The two teams email back and forth over a period of time exchanging questions and answers.
- Team A meets Team B at a competition. Team B expresses concern that their team is struggling to keep the team going and is looking for help. The two teams live far away from each other, but over the next year, they exchange many emails, they video chat a few times during the off season and even meet in person.

Examples (but not limited to) that do **not** qualify as Mentoring a team:

- Answering a single email question.
- Inviting a team to your shop so they may make parts on your machinery.
- Hosting a team in your build space during inclement weather when they are unable to access their own facilities.
- Giving a robot part to another team.
- Allowing a team to practice at your practice facility.

Assisted

(a *FIRST* LEGO League / *FIRST* Tech Challenge / *FIRST* Robotics Competition team)

A team has **Assisted** a team if they have met all the following requirements:

1. Providing communication, either in person or via phone/email/video conference, to the **Assisted** team helping with technical or non-technical program specific issues.
2. OR providing funding and/or supplies to the **Assisted** team.
3. And the **Assisted** team agrees that the **Assisting** team did in fact **Assist** them.

Assisting a team is a form of [Mentorship](#), however it does not require long term or consistent communication that is a defining characteristic of **Mentorship**. It is expected that all *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams are constantly assisting their fellow *FIRST* teams, and it is not necessary to try and document or count all the instances of **Assisting** that your team has participated in.

Examples (but not limited to) of **Assisting** a team:

- Answering a single email question.
- Inviting a team to your shop so they may make parts on your machinery.
- Hosting a team in your build space during inclement weather when they are unable to access their own facilities.
- Giving a robot part to another team.
- Allowing a team to practice at your practice facility.

Published Resources

(to a *FIRST* LEGO League / *FIRST* Tech Challenge / *FIRST* Robotics Competition team) – A team has **Provided Published Resources** to a *FIRST* team if they have met BOTH of the following requirements:

1. The team has created resources designed to aid teams with technical or non-technical *FIRST* program specific issues.
2. The resources have been published or presented publicly. (e.g., presented at a conference, published on a team website, posted resources on social media, etc.).

Many *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams have created a wealth of resources that benefit numerous teams. This kind of assistance is enormously valuable to our community and is heavily encouraged. However, these acts do not meet the definition of [Mentoring](#) since they lack consistent communication involved in mentoring. In an effort to recognize and encourage these important efforts, the definition of **Published Resources** was created.

While Publishing Resources is helpful, teams should include information about the [Reach](#) (see definition below) of the resources. Any team can publish resources, and many do, but how much actually gets used is what is more important. Teams are encouraged to have documentation available that outlines the reach of the published resources.

Examples (but not limited to) of **Published Resources**:

- Team creates and publishes a scouting database compiling statistical data from competitions, and the database is downloaded and used by 100 other teams.
- Team creates and gives a presentation of *FIRST* fundraising to an audience of 15 local *FIRST* Robotics Competition and *FIRST* Tech Challenge teams.
- Team develops and publishes a mobile app that contains *FIRST* LEGO League tutorials, and the app is downloaded and used by 50 *FIRST* LEGO League teams.
- Team creates and publishes tutorials for other teams to YouTube, and videos are watched by 2000 users.

Event Support Definitions:

Hosted

(a *FIRST* LEGO League / *FIRST* Tech Challenge / *FIRST* Robotics Competition) event – A team has **Hosted** an event if they have met ALL of the following requirements:

1. Team members are involved in the majority of the planning of the event.
2. Team members are involved in the majority of the on-site event execution or have arranged for and are supervising the volunteers to handle the majority of the on-site event execution.
3. The Hosting team holds primary accountability and takes ownership for the successful operation of the event.
4. Both mentors and students must be involved in the event.

Hosting an event essentially means that this event would not be possible without the efforts and actions of the given team. The team in question must be responsible for the majority of the work that goes into the event. Teams should keep in mind that not all efforts qualify as Hosting and may align more closely with [Supporting](#) an event.

A Host team must demonstrate ownership of a successful event outcome. A team does not qualify as the Host team simply by providing more volunteers than any other team at the event or providing the venue where the event takes place.

Teams are encouraged to provide documentation (e.g., a letter from the organizing body/Regional Director/Affiliate Partner that the event was **Hosted** for) supporting the fact that they did indeed Host the event.

Examples (but not limited to) of **Hosting** an event:

- Team acts as the majority of the planning committee for a *FIRST* LEGO League event, and team members recruit and train the event volunteers.

Supported

(a *FIRST* LEGO League / *FIRST* Tech Challenge / *FIRST* Robotics Competition) event - A team has **Supported** an event if they have met any of the following requirements:

1. Multiple team members are involved in some part of the planning of the event.
2. Multiple team members are involved in the on-site or online event execution for the entirety of the event (i.e., team members have volunteered for the entirety of the event).

Teams **Support** events by helping with the planning or execution of the event. This is less encompassing than [Hosting](#) an event.

Examples (but not limited to) of **Supporting** an event:

- Having multiple team members volunteer for the entirety of an event.
- Having a few mentors serve on a large planning committee for a *FIRST*.
- The majority of the team helping with the setup or tear down of the venue.

Examples (but not limited to) that do **not** qualify as **Supporting** an event:

- Having 1 team member volunteer at an event.
- Helping 1 team member assist with tear down at the end of an event.
- Having 1 mentor serve on a large planning committee for *FIRST*.

Teams are encouraged to have documentation available (e.g., a letter, etc.) supporting the fact that they did indeed **Support** an event.

Advocacy and Audience Support Definitions

Reached

A team's **reach** is the quantity of people that have observed or interacted with the team whether it be digitally or in person. **Reach** is the quantity of people who became aware of your team via a stated medium/event. **Reach** requires tangible metrics or interaction with the team, not merely seeing the team in the background of a show or public exhibit.

Examples (but not limited to) of **Reaching**:

- 6,000,000 people watch a TV show that features a team's robots. This team has Reached 6,000,000 people.
- 1,000,000 people attend an event where the team has an exhibit. However, only 500 of those people see the team's actual exhibit. This team has Reached 500 people.
- 30,000 people attend a football game, where the team performs with their robots during the halftime show. This team has Reached 30,000 people.
- 700 people follow a team on Instagram. This team Reached 700 people.

Please note that not every post is seen by followers. As such, any reach on specific posts should follow this style: Social Media post to 1,000 followers, with 500 who engaged with it (liked, forward, share, etc.), has reached 500 people.

Examples (but not limited to) that do **not** qualify as Reaching:

- 6,000,000 people watch a TV show in which the team's robots are used as background props. Since the robots nor the team have been featured, this team has not Reached the audience.
- 30,000 people attend a football game, where the team's name is shown on the big screen at the stadium. This is not a tangible interaction or observation of the team; thus, this team has not Reached the audience.

The goal of using **Reach** in submissions is to accurately convey the number of people who have become aware of your team. However, it is very difficult to provide exact numbers when it comes to the numerous public demos teams participate in every year. That being said, it is important that teams do not embellish or exaggerate these numbers, as doing so would paint a misleading picture of the team's accomplishments. When in doubt, teams should try and estimate on the low end.

Teams are encouraged to make documentation available that shows the basis of their estimates of Reach. (e.g., Letters from event organizers stating event attendance and specific area attendance) Documented evidence and breakdowns of Reach numbers are far more compelling than simply stating the team's estimated Reach.

Advocated

A team has engaged in **Advocacy** if they meet any of the following criteria:

1. Met with government officials, community leaders, school administration, or business leaders (or their staff) to discuss and engage with and promote policy changes towards the promotion of STEM/FIRST.
2. Served as a resource for government officials, community leaders, school administration, or business leaders (or their staff) as they create policy changes towards the promotion of STEM/FIRST.

As an international program, *FIRST* recognizes that advocacy looks different across communities—shaped by local needs, cultures, and opportunities.

Examples (but not limited to) of engaging in **Advocacy** are:

- Attending an advocacy day where teams from the area met with local officials on after-school STEM engagement programs.
- Working with leaders to craft a bill or resolution that was introduced.
- Engaging with public officials to encourage them to provide funding for STEM/*FIRST* opportunities.

Examples (but not limited to) that do not qualify as engaging in **Advocacy** are:

- Using social media/tweeting to government officials.
- Volunteering for a campaign.
- Hosting a table/tabling/handing out flyers at parade or event (people have to actively engage with the team, it is not a passive act).
- Going to your school and advocating just for your team's benefit.

Teams are encouraged to be specific about when they started an initiative or participated in one. Teams are encouraged to make documentation available (e.g., a letter, etc.) supporting the fact that they did indeed **Advocate**.