

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

Industrial Automation & AI Challenge 2026

25-26 September 2026 · Kyiv · Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute (KPI)

EDIH Kyiv Hitech · Ukrainian Cluster Alliance (UCA) · APPAU · KPI

Partnership framework

Industrial Automation & AI Challenge 2026 is being developed as a national platform bringing together industrial enterprises, universities, student and professional teams, system integrators, technology companies, clusters and EDIHs. A partner joins not only the event itself, but a pipeline: **challenge -> team -> prototype -> pilot -> scaling**. The focus is not merely on two days of intensive networking and matchmaking, but on the **launch of long-term partnerships**.

1. About the event

Industrial Automation & AI Challenge 2026 is a two-day national event focused on Industry 4.0-5.0. Day 1 is dedicated to innovation ecosystem development, the role of universities, EDIHs and clusters, workforce challenges, and the presentation of real business cases. Day 2 is a hackathon for Junior and Senior teams, followed by final pitches and an awards ceremony.

- National scale: participation of at least 15 Ukrainian universities.
- Focus on real business cases from industrial enterprises and EDIH Kyiv Hitech services.
- Dedicated tracks for student and professional teams.
- Direct interaction with system integrators, technology companies, mentors and the university community.
- Post-event support: the strongest solutions may progress to pilot projects, grant support, internships or commercial projects.

2. How to participate

The partnership model provides for one or more practical roles and, optionally, a financial package that determines the level of visibility and the number of representatives.

Partner role	Best suited for	What the partner does	Main value
Challenge Partner: development of practical challenges (cases)	Industrial enterprises, infrastructure operators, customers	Submits a real case, appoints a case owner, provides context/data, mentors teams, and considers follow-up implementation of the strongest solution.	Access to talent, expertise, integrators and a potential pilot.
Technology & Demo Partner	System integrators, IT/OT companies, equipment and software vendors	Demonstrates solutions; provides technologies, APIs, licences or equipment; engages mentors; may support a special award category.	Showcase of capabilities, B2B contacts, talent and potential customers.
University & Talent Partner	Universities, departments, laboratories, employers	Forms teams, engages mentors, presents laboratories, and offers internships, vacancies, thesis topics and R&D projects.	Business partnerships, practical challenges and career opportunities for students.
Cluster / Regional Partner	Clusters, associations, regional ecosystems	Engages enterprises, universities and teams from the region; supports logistics and co-financing.	Regional visibility and direct integration of regional teams into the national ecosystem.
Institutional / Donor Partner	Public authorities, donors, development agencies, financial institutions	Supports regional teams, selected thematic areas, prizes, logistics or post-event pilots.	System-level impact on the development of Industry 4.0-5.0 and human capital.

3. Benefits for participants in the existing EDIH Kyiv Hitech ecosystem

The Hackathon is designed to advance both the Living Labs programme and the EDIH service provider network. Therefore, active participants in these mechanisms receive additional benefits - without any automatic influence on the competition or supplier selection.

Status	Additional benefits
Active Living Lab participant	Free individual access; priority in submitting own cases and participating in thematic sessions; opportunity to co-moderate a domain; priority inclusion of cases in the 30-day backlog (task plan) within the Living Lab; early access to the development of micro-pilots.
Certified EDIH Service Provider	Up to 2 complimentary individual slots; Certified EDIH Service Provider designation; priority involvement as a technical mentor and in thematic matchmaking; eligibility for consideration for TBI / PoC / pilot activities subject to alignment with the client need, SLA requirements and absence of conflicts of interest.
First EDIH SME cohort / Challenge Partner	Complimentary participation for designated representatives; priority support in structuring and packaging the case; post-event routing to the relevant service, Living Lab or provider.
Important rule Ecosystem status provides access and priority in engagement, but does not guarantee a contract, referral or winning outcome. Customer First principles, transparency and competency fit take precedence over partnership or financial status.	

4. Financial partnership

Financial participation is structured around three main categories. A larger or purpose-specific contribution may be agreed individually.

Package	Contribution	Key opportunities
General Partner (exclusive)	from UAH 200,000	Terms agreed individually.
Strategic Partner (up to 3)	from UAH 150,000	Maximum brand visibility; up to 6 representatives; participation in a key programme segment subject to agreement; a dedicated activity or award category; priority networking; brand integration into a dedicated track, zone or activity ("powered by...") subject to agreement. Dedicated promotion of the brand's products and services.
Main Partner (up to 5)	from UAH 80,000	High brand visibility; up to 4 representatives; participation in partner activities; matchmaking; opportunity to support a case, prize, Demo Zone or another activity.
Thematic Partner (up to 7)	from UAH 30,000	Typically curates a dedicated thematic area (market segment). Logo placement on the website and in event materials; up to 2 representatives; participation in all sessions; mention in final materials; opportunity to support a specific team, prize or service component.

For the exclusive General Partner contributing from UAH 200,000, the terms, visibility and set of integrations are agreed individually. The Industrial Automation & AI Challenge 2026 name remains the shared brand of the organisers; brand integration is available for individual tracks, zones or activities.

5. In-kind contributions

A financial contribution may be supplemented or partially replaced by an agreed in-kind contribution if it genuinely reduces event budget costs or directly strengthens the work of the teams.

- equipment, software, cloud credits, licences, APIs and datasets;
- prizes or targeted funding for teams;
- logistics and accommodation for regional teams;
- infrastructure, technical support and catering;
- defined expert or mentoring work with a specific deliverable.

Standard participation of partner employees, publication of information through the partner's own social media, logo placement, or participation in a panel discussion do not, by themselves, constitute an equivalent to a financial contribution.

6. Participation and access

The Hackathon is a professional event; therefore, market participants without a partnership or ecosystem role are offered paid access. This helps maintain the quality of the audience while creating tangible value for participation in EDIH and partner networks.

Category	Conditions
Student / member of a registered team	Free of charge.
Representative of a partner university / mentor / jury member	Free of charge by invitation or within the allocated quota.
Active Living Lab participant	Free of charge.
Certified EDIH Service Provider	Up to 2 complimentary slots per organisation.
Challenge Partner / first EDIH SME cohort	Complimentary slots according to the role.
APPAU / UCA member / partner cluster member	Discounted Community Pass - UAH 900 for 2 days.
Other market participant	Standard Industry Pass - UAH 2,500 for 2 days; Early Bird - UAH 1,300 until the announced deadline.

Day 1 is open to all registered participants according to their quota or ticket. Day 2 includes restricted-access working areas: external visitors may attend the Demo/Expo area and final pitches, while access to team working materials and case information is governed by the applicable IP/NDA rules.

7. What partners receive

- Direct contact with industrial enterprises, universities, student and professional teams.
- The opportunity to demonstrate technologies and capabilities in the context of real challenges rather than through promotional presentations alone.
- Access to the talent pipeline - internships, vacancies, project teams and R&D teams - strictly through voluntary participant opt-in.
- Participation in matchmaking and the development of post-event pilots.
- Visibility in event communications in line with the partner role and financial package.
- For Challenge Partners - the opportunity to test approaches to solving their own challenge and define the next investment step.

8. Partnership rules

- A financial contribution does not grant the right to influence competition results.
- A partner representative serving on the jury does not evaluate a team or case where a direct conflict of interest exists.
- IP, NDA, data confidentiality and use of results are governed by separate Hackathon rules and the arrangements for each specific case.
- A partner does not receive automatic access to all team results. Access is limited to public materials and the results of the partner's own case within the agreed rules.

- Partnership benefits are activated after confirmation of the role and fulfilment of the agreed cash and/or in-kind contribution.
- Any commercial interest of a Technology Partner must be transparently disclosed; cases should be formulated in a vendor-neutral manner wherever possible.

9. Partnership after Demo Day - post-event pilots

A key distinction of Industrial Automation & AI Challenge 2026 is that the process does not end with the awards ceremony. For relevant cases and teams, the following pathway is created:

Hackathon -> 30-day Review -> TBI / PoC -> Pilot -> Scaling

Two weeks after the event, EDIH Kyiv Hitech convenes a wrap-up meeting with all relevant partners (Challenge Partners, Technology Partners and Living Lab participants) to identify pilots and next steps. EDIH supports the routing of promising results to the appropriate Living Lab, service, provider, university team or funding source.

10. How to become a partner

Three steps

- 1) Choose the role(s) that best match your objectives.
- 2) Choose a financial package or propose a specific in-kind contribution.
- 3) Agree with the organisers on the case, activity, participation quotas and post-event opportunities.

Partnership contact: Anhelina Kipen, anhelina724@gmail.com

Website / registration page: <https://hackathon.clusters.org.ua/>

Early partnership confirmation deadline: 5 September.