

A day in the life of an Invention Convention Judge



Judging is a critical element of an invention convention.

While all kids are “winners” by the mere fact they received an invitation to the National Invention Convention and Entrepreneurship Expo (NICEE), a prime goal of the inaugural event is to elevate the discussion around youth innovation to the national level and highlight students with inventions to the media and the world.

That’s where judging comes in.

Since innovation, invention and entrepreneurship happen in every industry and every career, anyone can be a judge. Typically, judges are also engineers, marketers, teachers/professors, attorneys, fire marshals, police personnel, and other professionals, for starters.

Judges arrive at the venue and get complimentary lunch and join their peers for a short **training session that starts at 11:00AM.**

In training **judges learn about what the kids have done to get to NICEE, what we look for in awarding inventiveness, and how the process of judging works.** This includes a detailed discussion of the judging rubric. Examples are given, and questions are asked and answered, with demonstrations used to complete the training experience. It’s all very intuitive and structured for quick learning.



After training, **Judges attend the opening ceremony with all the students, and then are released to their judging circles.** Each “circle” is a U-shaped area (rectangular tables set up in a “U” configuration). At each, roughly 8 students are assigned to you and your peer judges. Introductions are made around the circle, and participation awards are handed out. Then **the presentations begin** — typically there is one kid dying to go first, but you can start with anyone. **That student will “pitch” for four minutes to their student peers in the group,** and the Judges will facilitate a group



discussion about the project. Typical questions include: What do you like about it? What would you change about it? Would you use it? How much would you pay for it? – And, so on. **Judges use this time to elicit answers specific to the judging rubric.** After each child completes his/her project presentation — we target 8-10 mins per student project — **the judges take a moment to record the results** into their smartphones, and then they move on to the rest of the students in the circle, using the same process until all kids are done.

The process takes about 90 minutes to complete. When done, judges retire to the judges’ lounge for refreshments and to ensure their scores have all been received properly and the judging is complete. Judges are

welcome to stay for dinner and the awards ceremony if they would like. or can leave right away, satisfied in having impacted the students in their judging circle with an experience they will remember the for rest of their lives.

Please join us and make a difference!

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