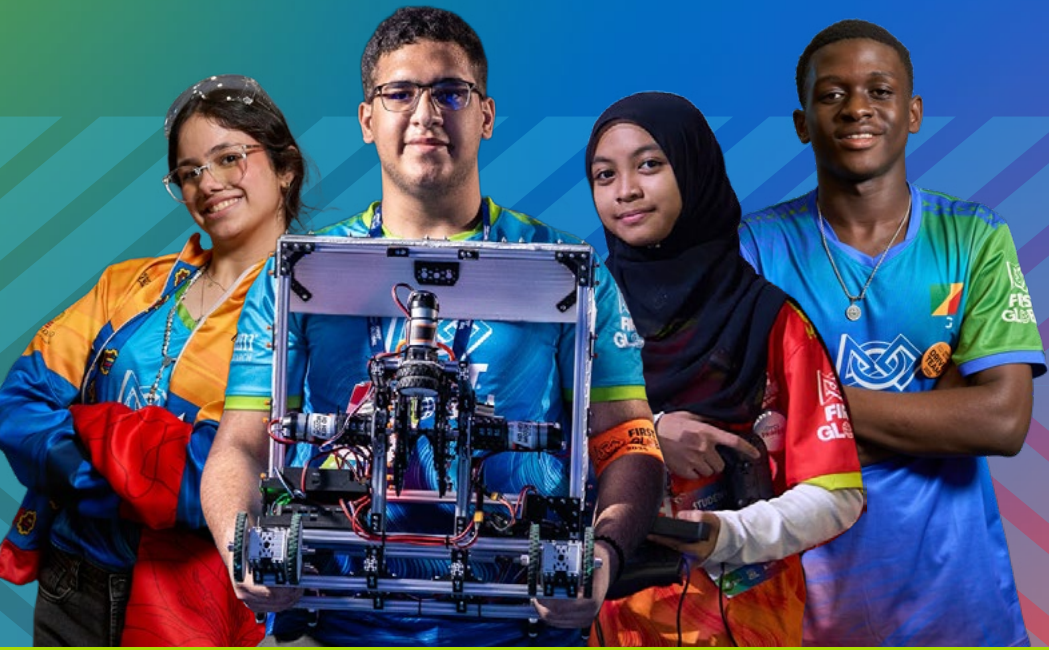




2025 IMPACT REPORT



**FIRST GLOBAL
CHALLENGE 2025**
PANAMÁ CITY

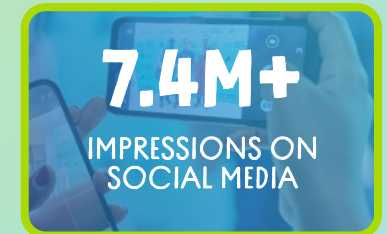
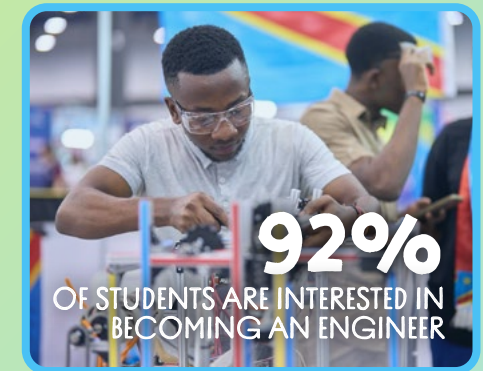
TITLE SPONSOR



2025 AT A GLANCE

“While we all strive for a perfect world, there are always conflicts between countries, which makes you think we can never have peace. *FIRST* Global [negates] that idea and shows that all countries have the potential to come together and unite to face global issues.”

—Male participant, Team Antigua and Barbuda



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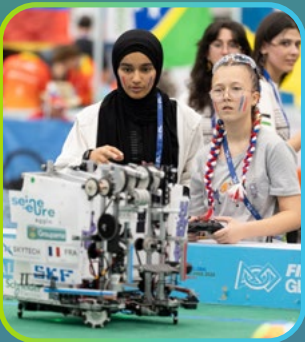
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SUPPORT MORE GLOBAL IMPACT



IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE...

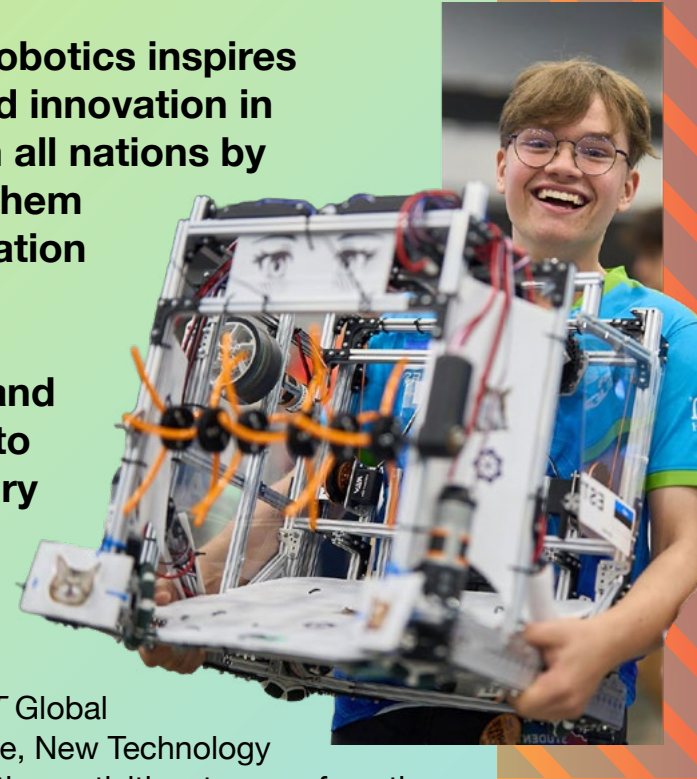
EVERY KID HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL.

FIRST Global empowers the next generation with the skill sets and determination to lead the way to that brighter future.



THE FIRST® GLOBAL PLAYBOOK

The sport of robotics inspires leadership and innovation in students from all nations by empowering them through education in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to be the visionary global citizens our world needs.



Through the *FIRST* Global Robotics Challenge, New Technology Experience, and other activities, teams of youth from every nation develop their technical and interpersonal **skill sets** as they compete in a season themed around an **important global issue**.

By nurturing **cross-cultural communication** and **cooperation** among high school students around the world, *FIRST* Global prepares them to **collectively tackle the world's greatest challenges** and develop solutions that improve quality of life for all.

LEARN MORE AT FIRST.GLOBAL >



FOUNDER'S LETTER

Greetings to the *FIRST* Global Community, Each year, I search for the right words to capture what we've accomplished together. How do you describe something as extraordinary as nearly every nation on Earth coming together in cooperation? How do you explain the feeling of watching nearly 200 young robotics teams symbolically, and literally, restore balance to a world in need?

This year, we gathered in Panama: a country known for connecting continents, bridging oceans, and representing the biodiversity of the planet itself. There was no more fitting place for our *Eco Equilibrium* Challenge, where students applied their technical knowledge and creativity to protect the ecosystems that sustain life on Earth. But more than building robots, they built bridges — between cultures, across generations, and toward a shared future.

As the world around us is increasingly divided, we are proud that every country represented at *FIRST* Global signed our [Declaration of Interdependence and the Bill of Responsibilities](#).



These weren't just symbolic gestures. They were acts of commitment to something larger than all of us: a belief that technology must be guided by values, and progress depends on respectful cooperation.

While other sports simply entertain the world, our sport prepares it. It's the only sport where every participant can go pro, where the skills learned today solve the problems of tomorrow. It's a sport where everyone is on the same team, every match runs on teamwork, and where life is not a spectator event. These students are not simply watching the world change; they are the ones changing it.

As always, the enormous commitment of our volunteers, sponsors, and partners made this all possible. This year, we are particularly grateful for the support of Lam Research, the Bezos Earth Fund, the Tullman Family Office, FUNDESTTEAM, and the many other remarkable supporters dedicated to delivering STEM education to the world's two billion young people.

To our students, mentors, volunteers, sponsors, and partners: thank you. Thank you for believing in what *FIRST* Global stands for, and for helping us build a movement that's more urgent than ever. Thanks to you, we're not just imagining a better future. We're building it together.

With gratitude,




← BE A SUPPORTER



ROBOTICS IS OUR SPORT



A NEW GLOBAL HOLIDAY: ROBOTICS IS A SPORT® DAY

In 1989, robotics became a sport with the founding of FIRST®. On 16 July 2017, the Opening Ceremony of the 2017 FIRST Global Challenge launched the sport of robotics around the globe. This year we debuted **Robotics is a Sport Day** on 16 July, an annual celebration of the international sports revolution that is changing lives around the world. Through it, we sent more than 2,000 signatures to national officials worldwide.

Just like athletes in any other sport, robotics demands teamwork, strategy, and dedication, offering young innovators a platform to develop STEM skills and leadership abilities. What sets robotics apart is that it's the only sport where everyone can go pro.

Since 2023, four countries have declared **Robotics is a Sport**, with an additional **120 countries** working to achieve the same. Join in at **FIRST.GLOBAL/SPORT**.



“To me, **robotics is a sport** because it brings together the same elements we see in any high-level competition: **strategy, teamwork, discipline, pressure, and the drive to improve every single day**. In robotics, just like in sports, we train, we fail, we learn, and we come back stronger. It challenges both the mind and the spirit. **We compete, but we also collaborate**. We face opponents, but we also help them. For me it is the **greatest form of sport**, even though I love football.”

—Male participant, Team Angola



90%



PROMOTED
DECLARING
ROBOTICS A SPORT
IN THEIR COUNTRY

85%



NOW FEEL LIKE A
ROBOTICS ATHLETE

83%



HOSTED ROBOTICS
ACTIVITIES IN THE
COMMUNITY



CELEBRATING STEM, INNOVATION, AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION

Lam Research is honored to have served as the *FIRST* Global Challenge’s title sponsor for the third consecutive year. As a leading semiconductor manufacturing equipment company, our technology powers devices everywhere—from smartphones to robotics. This partnership reflects our commitment to transformative learning and STEM education.

STEM opens doors to discovery, innovation, and solutions for society’s greatest challenges.

From clean energy to medical breakthroughs, progress begins with curiosity and the drive to improve our world. Each student at the *FIRST* Global Challenge embodies the values of curiosity, teamwork, agility, problem-solving, and compassion—essential qualities for success, both in the competition and throughout life.

The world needs innovators who approach obstacles with optimism and view others as collaborators; this describes each participant at *FIRST* Global. Kindness, courage, and vision are vital for a better future.



Whenever doubt arises, the achievements made at the *FIRST* Global Challenge will empower these students to make a positive difference in the world.

On behalf of Lam Research, we wish you the best in every challenge you take on. Thank you for your passion and commitment to making the world a better place.

– **Steve Fine**, Chief Communications Officer and Head of Social Impact Programs; Lam Research, 2025 Title Sponsor

“Even as a kid, I loved understanding how things worked. That passion eventually steered me toward mechanical engineering—and now to Lam. Being able to mentor a team brings it full circle.”

–Danielle “Dannie” Paulk, Silfex manufacturing engineer and *FIRST* Global Volunteer



OUR GLOBAL REACH

91%
OF
EUROPE
(43/47
countries)

87%
OF ASIA
(41/47
countries)

100%
OF NORTH
AMERICA
(29/29
countries)

100%
OF
AFRICA
(54/54
countries)

92%
OF SOUTH
AMERICA
(11/12
countries)

71%
OF
OCEANIA
(12/17
countries)

TEAMS REPRESENTED

This year 191 teams participated in the season. Click on a team to view their 2025 profile page on the *FIRST* Global website.

 AFGHANISTAN	 BANGLADESH	 BURKINA FASO
 ALBANIA	 BARBADOS	 BURUNDI
 ALGERIA	 BELARUS	 CABO VERDE
 AMERICAN SAMOA	 BELIZE	 CAMBODIA
 ANGOLA	 BENIN	 CAMEROON
 ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	 BERMUDA	 CANADA
 ARGENTINA	 BHUTAN	 CAYMAN ISLANDS
 ARMENIA	 BOLIVIA	 CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
 ARUBA	 BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	 CHAD
 AUSTRALIA	 BOTSWANA	 CHILE
 AUSTRIA	 BRAZIL	 PEOPLE'S REP. OF CHINA
 AZERBAIJAN	 BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	 CHINESE TAIPEI
 BAHAMAS	 BULGARIA	 COLOMBIA

 COMOROS	 EQUATORIAL GUINEA	 GUATEMALA
 CONGO	 ERITREA	 GUINEA
 DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO	 ESTONIA	 GUINEA-BISSAU
 COOK ISLANDS	 ESWATINI	 GUYANA
 COSTA RICA	 ETHIOPIA	 HAITI
 COTE D'IVOIRE	 FIJI	 HONDURAS
 CROATIA	 FINLAND	 HONG KONG, CHINA
 CUBA	 FRANCE	 HOPE
 CYPRUS	 GABON	 HUNGARY
 CZECHIA	 GAMBIA	 INDIA
 DENMARK	 GEORGIA	 INDONESIA
 DJIBOUTI	 GERMANY	 ISLAMIC REP. OF IRAN
 DOMINICA	 GHANA	 IRAQ
 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	 GREAT BRITAIN	 IRELAND
 ECUADOR	 GREECE	 ISRAEL
 EGYPT	 GRENADA	 ITALY
 EL SALVADOR	 GUAM	 JAMAICA

 JAPAN	 MALAWI	 NEPAL	 PUERTO RICO	 SOMALIA	 TÜRKIYE
 JORDAN	 MALAYSIA	 NETHERLANDS	 QATAR	 SOUTH AFRICA	 TURKMENISTAN
 KAZAKHSTAN	 MALDIVES	 NICARAGUA	 ROMANIA	 SOUTH SUDAN	 UGANDA
 KENYA	 MALI	 NIGER	 RWANDA	 SPAIN	 UKRAINE
 KIRIBATI	 MALTA	 NIGERIA	 SAINT KITTS & NEVIS	 SRI LANKA	 UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
 REP. OF KOREA	 MARSHALL ISLANDS	 NORTH MACEDONIA	 SAINT LUCIA	 SUDAN	 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
 KOSOVO	 MAURITANIA	 NORWAY	 ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	 SURINAME	 UZBEKISTAN
 KYRGYZSTAN	 MAURITIUS	 OMAN	 SAN MARINO	 SWEDEN	 VANUATU
 LAO PEOPLE'S DEM. REP.	 MEXICO	 PAKISTAN	 SÃO TOMÉ & PRÍNCIPE	 SWITZERLAND	 VENEZUELA
 LATVIA	 FED. STATES OF MICRONESIA	 PALESTINE	 SAUDI ARABIA	 SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC	 VIETNAM
 LEBANON	 REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	 PANAMA	 SENEGAL	 TAJIKISTAN	 BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS
 LESOTHO	 MONGOLIA	 PAPUA NEW GUINEA	 SERBIA	 UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA	 U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
 LIBERIA	 MONTENEGRO	 PARAGUAY	 SEYCHELLES	 TIMOR-LESTE	 YEMEN
 LIBYA	 MOROCCO	 PERU	 SIERRA LEONE	 TOGO	 ZAMBIA
 LITHUANIA	 MOZAMBIQUE	 PHILIPPINES	 SLOVAKIA	 TONGA	 ZIMBABWE
 LUXEMBOURG	 MYANMAR	 POLAND	 SLOVENIA	 TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	
 MADAGASCAR	 NAMIBIA	 PORTUGAL	 SOLOMON ISLANDS	 TUNISIA	

FIRST GLOBAL CHALLENGE PANAMA

The world's ecosystems sustain millions of diverse species. The 2025 theme of *Eco Equilibrium* challenged *FIRST* Global teams to protect this variety of life by exploring how to strike a balance between progress and preservation, utilizing technology to help restore biodiversity, protect ecosystems, and ensure a healthy, sustainable planet for generations to come. In the robotics challenge, six national teams worked together as a Global Alliance to restore a healthy planet by removing barriers and maximizing biodiversity in three ecosystems. Teams then divided into two Regional Alliances to secure protection into the future.

87%

NOW UNDERSTAND BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGES AND 83% WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE ADDRESSING THEM

72%



OF STUDENTS WANT TO RETURN AS MENTORS / VOLUNTEERS



“*FIRST* Global is important because it transforms robotics into a tool for global unity. It inspires young people to use technology to solve real problems while building bridges between cultures. The *FIRST* Global experience goes far beyond building robots or winning. It shows that when we give young people the right tools and a greater purpose, they not only build incredible machines, but also learn to build a better world.”

—Male participant, Team São Tomé & Príncipe

SEASON ACTIVITIES

Throughout the season, teams participated in 16 Social Media Challenges, showcasing their culture and championing STEM in their communities. Some of the activities includes hosting meetings with other teams, celebrating Robotics is a Sport day on 16 July, taking action to support biodiversity in their community, talking with government or community leaders and advocating for the sport of robotics, organizing outreach activities, getting in the news, and several teams even met with their nation's Olympians! And the Skills Challenge enabled teams to show off their robots' abilities in performing the actions required for the *Eco Equilibrium* game.



NEW TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCE

The New Technology Experience (NTE) is a fundamental component of *FIRST* Global's annual program. It was established as a means for the student community to stay current with cutting-edge technology, become experts in emerging fields, establish stronger network connections among their peers, and improve competitiveness for college, internships, and employment.

The *Eco Equilibrium* NTE challenged students to explore the role of technology in preserving Earth's biodiversity. Students developed their own solutions to protect the incredible variety of life that sustains us — whether genetic diversity, species diversity, or ecosystem diversity — while also helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. From 74 submissions, 10 finalist teams presented their innovations to judges in Panama City, from which three winners were selected to receive the *FIRST* Global Innovator Award, in Honor of Fred Smith.

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
United Arab Emirates	Islamic Rep. of Iran	Colombia
Semi-Permeable Sodium Alginate Hydrogels for Cell and Genetic Preservation	Pyrogard: AI-Networked Wildfire Sentinel for Ecosystems	RENOVA - Restoration of Native Wetlands for Life and Environment

Honorable Mentions: Team Poland & Team Republic of Moldova

“*FIRST* Global matters because it connects robotics with real issues that our world is facing. Every year's theme teaches us something meaningful about the challenges humanity must solve, and it inspires us to think critically and creatively. This year's *Eco Equilibrium* theme really showed how important balance and sustainability are.”

—Female participant, Team Cambodia

93%

OF STUDENTS NOW UNDERSTAND HOW STEM CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS IN THE REAL WORLD

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NTE



FIRST.GLOBAL/NTE >

70%

PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THEIR SOLUTION



VOLUNTEERS

Each year the **FIRST Global Challenge event** is made possible through the hard work of an army of dedicated mentors and volunteers.

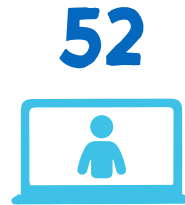
The **Global STEM Corps (GSC)** is *FIRST Global's* network of grassroots volunteers who motivate and mentor teams as they design, program, and build their robots in preparation for the competition.



MENTORS SUPPORTED TEAMS



TEAMS RECEIVED HELP THROUGH THE GSC



LAM EMPLOYEES VOLUNTEERED IN THE GSC

“The world needs the *FIRST Global Challenge – the Coopertition®*, *Gracious Professionalism®*, STEM skills, and more... It’s the best week of the year. I’m a small piece of a large event making a huge impact towards a better future for all.”
 —Barbara, 2025 volunteer

International volunteers fill a range of roles, with more than 20 different technical and non-technical positions, ranging from robot inspectors and technical judges to queuing and pit administration. This year boasted the greatest number of alumni returning to volunteer for the event.



VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTED THE GSC AND EVENT



COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



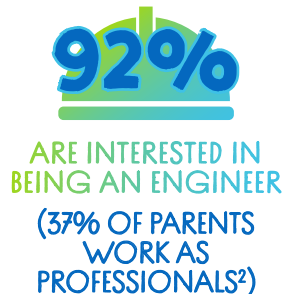
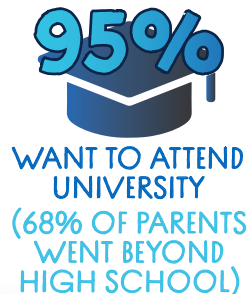
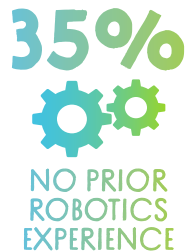
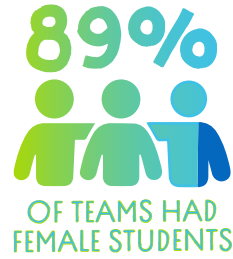
OF EVENT VOLUNTEERS WERE ALUMNI

“The *FIRST Global Challenge* is a one-of-a-kind experience that I feel both honored and privileged to be a part of. I volunteer to support FGC, but also feel like I gain as much as I give by interacting with so many talented, compassionate people.”

—Teresa, 2025 volunteer



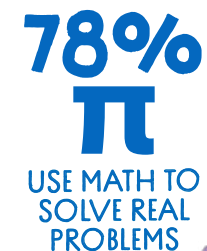
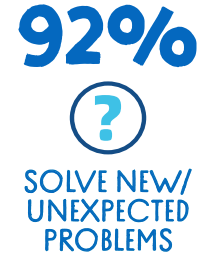
IMPACT IN NUMBERS



¹Pew Research: Poor live on ≤\$2/day;
Low-Income on ≤\$10/day.

²Have specialized/university-
level knowledge & training, such
as a doctor, engineer, or lawyer.

STUDENTS ARE NOW MORE CONFIDENT TO:



“FIRST Global impacted me in a way that I can't even describe. I really feel like I can make a difference in my country, something that I never thought I'd be able to do. FIRST Global helps kids from every part of the world see that they can do something for the planet. This was the best experience in my whole life.”

—Male participant, Team Guinea-Bissau

Data sourced from FIRST Global student and mentor post-participation self-evaluations.



“Here is a bold statement: **Human potential is the most powerful resource on Earth.** It’s the only resource that grows stronger the more you invest in it and it’s limitless. When young people are supported, challenged, and inspired, **nothing** can match their transformative power.

By encouraging young people to imagine boldly, build with confidence, and lead with compassion, *FIRST* Global is cultivating a generation of innovators who will shape progress in every arena — from music and STEM to the evolving global workforce. Their determination is a powerful reminder of the hope our future holds.

The Tullman Family Office is proud to stand with *FIRST* Global as we invest in the ideas, talents, and creativity that will shape tomorrow.”

—Cayley Tull, President,
Tullman Family Office
2025 Gold Sponsor

THROUGH PARTICIPATING, STUDENTS:

92%



GAINED
IMPORTANT
TECHNICAL
SKILLS

93%



FEEL THEY CAN
USE THEIR
SKILLS TO MAKE
A DIFFERENCE

93%



WANT A CAREER
SOLVING
IMPORTANT
PROBLEMS

97%



APPRECIATE
THE TALENTS
OF OTHERS
WORLDWIDE

94%



VALUE
WORKING
ON A TEAM

78%



PLAN TO KEEP
IN TOUCH
WITH OTHER
FG ALUMNI

93%



WILL SEEK TO
COLLABORATE WITH
OTHERS TO SOLVE
COMPLEX PROBLEMS

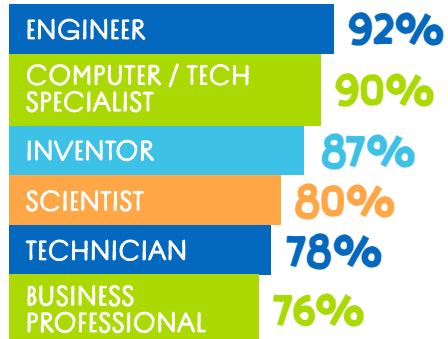
Data sourced from *FIRST* Global student and mentor post-participation self-evaluations.



BEZOS
EARTH
FUND

“FIRST Global really changed me and made me more confident in my skills. I learned how to communicate better, solve problems under pressure, and trust my team. It also inspired me to think bigger about my future in engineering. It’s an experience that shaped who I am now.” —Female participant, Team Kyrgyzstan

CAREER INTEREST



89%

LEARNED ABOUT STEM CAREERS ON THEIR TEAM

90%

WANT A JOB/ CAREER THAT USES SCIENCE / TECH

Data sourced from FIRST Global student and mentor post-participation self-evaluations.



76%
PLAN TO CONTINUE EDUCATING LOCAL YOUTH ABOUT STEM/ ROBOTICS

“The **FIRST Global Challenge** is the most amazing event. Watching it online cannot compare to how it feels to be here. Each time I attend, I’m filled with enormous hope. In a world flooded with negative headlines, this community reminds us of what’s possible. They bring an infectious spirit, incredible creativity, and a commitment to solving real problems.

We’re living in an age of extraordinary technological innovation, and it’s clear that STEM is the path forward. From climate change to biodiversity loss, the challenges are real, but so is our potential.

These young innovators are our future leaders. With the passion I see here, I believe these students will help shape a future we will all be proud of.”

—Dr. Andy Jarvis, Director of the Future of Food, Bezos Earth Fund 2025 Diamond Sponsor





Competitors celebrate at the end of the SpringBots South Africa National Robotics Event.

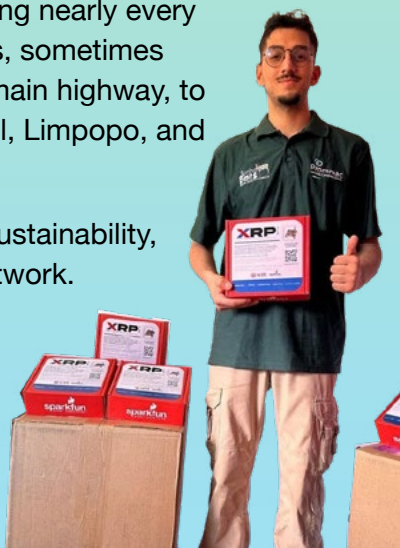
FROM ONE TO 100: HOW SOUTH AFRICA BUILT A NATIONAL LEAGUE IN ONE YEAR

In 2024 Team South Africa set a lofty goal. Inspired by *FIRST* Global’s Declare Robotics a Sport campaign, they decided to start 100 new robotics teams across the country and connect them in a competitive league.

With support from a local sponsor, mentor Roxanne Reddy ordered 100 XRP kits, which arrived in February 2025. Soon, Roxanne and her son Jared started spending nearly every weekend on the road. They drove for hours, sometimes down 40 kilometers of gravel road off the main highway, to reach schools in Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and the Eastern Cape.

To keep the program local and ensure its sustainability, SpringBots built a Provincial Champion network.

An experienced educator or coach in each province took responsibility for recruiting schools, distributing kits, and mentoring new teams. Some already ran robotics or



coding clubs. Others started from scratch, using the XRP kit as their first step into the sport.

The league quickly grew through teams of five into 500 young people building and programming robots. Many trained in classrooms that double as community centers, where Provincial Champions offered meals, activities, coding, and robotics in one safe space where kids learned to explore their potential.



“In South Africa we have water problems, we have electricity problems, we have food shortages,” said Roxanne. “These are the kids that are going to create the solutions to stop all of that. Not just for South Africa, but for the world.”

Seven months of hard work culminated on 16 June, South Africa’s Youth Day. Five regional events had each fed two teams into the country’s first-ever robotics national championship, held at the World of Yamaha Theatre outside Johannesburg.

From the national championship, five students were selected from across the teams to become *FIRST* Global Team South Africa and represent their country in Panama. The rest returned to their communities carrying new skills and confidence, ready to mentor the next group of students and continue their robotics journey.

Roxanne has made it clear that their results so far, though impressive, are only a stepping stone to further greatness. “South Africans are capable, and Africans are capable. So that is what we’re trying to do. We’re trying to use the XRP kit to say to teams: ‘Let’s start [*FIRST* Robotics] teams all over.’”





THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

TITLE SPONSOR



DIAMOND



GOLD



SILVER

Bezos Family



ORGANIZING PARTNER



ADVOCATE



Chuck Davis

Val Vavilov

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTERS



Alan & Lorelei Lotvin

Aurel Iancu Giorgos Tsetis

Hellen Zhou

Javier Beeck

startyouup.ai

Joaquin Family Charitable Fund

Durst Group AG – Christoph Camper



Serena Poon & David Sinclair

Orion Judge

Galina Alabatchka

Celestino Amore

Daniel Krizek



MEDIA PARTNERS



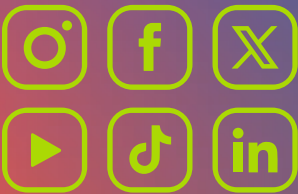
ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATOR





**FIRST.
GLOBAL**

**HOW WILL YOU HELP THIS
GENERATION OF ROBOTICS
ATHLETES CHANGE THE WORLD?**



@FIRSTGLOBAL

**SUPPORT MORE
GLOBAL IMPACT**



FIRST.GLOBAL/DONATE

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