

AI for Impact Challenge (AIIC) 2025

Official Problem Statement & Submission Guide

Issued by The AI Equity Project | Contact: kiran@theaiequityproject.org

I. Background & Purpose

Access to information is one of the most powerful determinants of opportunity. Yet, in an age of generative AI and vast digital knowledge networks, that access remains deeply uneven. The very people who could benefit most from AI tools — elders, immigrants, rural residents, low-income families, and non-native English speakers — are often the ones left behind.

Despite impressive advances in artificial intelligence, the systems we build today are rarely designed to understand the needs of underserved communities. Voice assistants struggle with accents. Health tools require fast internet. Educational platforms assume digital fluency and stable hardware. The result is a growing gap: not just a lack of access to information, but a lack of usable, human-centered access.

The **AI for Impact Challenge (AIIC)** asks students to reverse this trend. Our central question:

How can we make access to information more human, more equitable, and more effective?

Whether it's navigating healthcare, accessing public services, understanding legal rights, or simply staying connected — the ability to find and use relevant information shapes every aspect of modern life. AIIC empowers students to design solutions that do not just answer questions, but actually work for the people who need them most.

No prior AI experience is required. In fact, we believe the most meaningful solutions often come from local insight and empathy, not just technical skill. This challenge is your opportunity to build something useful, personal, and community-driven.

II. The Challenge

Prompt

Identify a specific person, group, or community in your local area who struggles to access critical information — whether because of language barriers, digital exclusion, cognitive or physical limitations, or other structural obstacles.

Then, design and prototype an AI-based solution that meaningfully improves their access. Your solution should be human-centered: tailored to the actual needs, habits, and constraints of your chosen users.

Your submission should include evidence that your solution is rooted in the needs of real people. You should demonstrate that you have engaged directly with users or stakeholders through interviews, observations, or other forms of local research.

Examples of Appropriate Problem Areas

- Spanish-speaking parents navigating public school special education systems
- Seniors in rural towns unable to refill prescriptions due to voice menu systems
- Visually impaired individuals trying to use online banking platforms
- Undocumented workers unaware of their local tenant rights
- Elder caregivers struggling to find in-language dementia care guidance
- Parents of autistic children overwhelmed by poorly filtered online advice
- Public housing residents missing out on local services due to inaccessible portals
- Indigenous language speakers unable to access emergency alerts

III. Community Engagement

To succeed in AIIC, you must understand your user. We strongly encourage teams to:

- **Identify someone specific.** A single grandparent, a local teacher, a nonprofit staffer, etc.
- **Interview them** to understand their goals, challenges, and familiarity with technology.
- **Design with them, not for them.** Incorporate their feedback into your solution.
- **Reflect on your role.** Are you solving their problem, or simply what you imagine it to be?

Solutions that demonstrate **authentic engagement** will be scored more favorably than those that are purely hypothetical.

IV. What to Submit

You must submit all of the following to be considered for judging:

1. **Introduction Video**

A 3–4 minute video introducing your team, user(s), and problem. Should explain your user, your context, and the “why” behind your solution.

Note: Format guidelines will be provided upon chapter approval or by email request.

2. **Prototype / MVP**

This may include:

- A working app or tool
- A demo of a model

3. **Impact Sheet**

A form (provided by AIIC) documenting your process, testing, and user validation.

4. **Optional: Proposal**

A structured write-up of your approach, goals, and anticipated impact. Proposals are a way to gain feedback on your idea from AI professionals.

Note: A template will be provided after chapter approval or upon request.

5. **Required: 4-Page Research Report**

See template on next page.

V. 4-Page Report Template

Note that this is a simplified template for you to understand the work you will be undertaking. A detailed template will be provided once your chapter is approved.

Section 1: Introduction

Describe the person or group your solution targets. Explain the core problem they face and how this is connected to the general problem.

Section 2: Related Work

Summarize 1–3 existing efforts (tools, papers, or policies) that attempt to address similar issues. Critically evaluate how they fall short or are inaccessible in your context.

Section 3: Methodology

Explain how you designed and built your solution. Describe the data you used, the models or tools applied, and the feedback you gathered. Be very detailed here as this is critical in evaluation.

Section 4: Results/Evaluation

Present your results and/or the current impact of your work. This might include:

- Outcomes from testing with users
- Initial adoption or usage
- Metrics of success (qualitative or quantitative)

Please aim to use as many quantitative metrics here as possible.

Give your solution and similar solutions to the target user(s) and evaluate on your metrics of success. Note their comments.

Section 5: Limitations & Future Work

Acknowledge what your solution cannot yet do. Briefly explain how it could be expanded, tested more rigorously, or made more scalable in the future.

Section 6: Citations

Use MLA or APA format. Sources may include datasets, academic papers, product websites, or interview transcripts (with permission).

 **Tip:** If you're new to writing research-style papers, refer to examples from science fair projects, nonprofit reports, or public health studies. Clear, organized writing matters more than formality. We highly recommend overleaf along with their templates for the most professional papers.

VI. Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be judged based on the following rubric:

- **Impact & Relevance** (25%) — Are you solving a real and important problem for real people? (this is not how many people you impacted, a metric that is not considered)
 - **User-Centered Design** (25%) — Have you actively engaged with/discussed with/planned around your target user?
 - **Innovation** (25%) — Is your solution original, creative, or especially well-targeted?
 - **Feasibility** (15%) — Can this solution work in the real world, even at a small scale, and if not currently, have you identified why?
 - **Clarity & Communication** (10%) — Is your submission well-documented and compelling?
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VII. Deadlines & Support

Refer to the official **AIIC 2025 Timeline** for key dates. You may submit questions at any time by emailing:

 kiran@theaiequityproject.org

Once your chapter is accepted, you will be provided access to:

- Official templates for the **video** and **proposal**
 - A mentor or liaison for project feedback
 - Submission forms and deadlines
 - Any resources you deem to need for your solution
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VIII. Final Note

The AI for Impact Challenge exists to democratize innovation. Whether your team builds a chatbot that helps one person, or cleans a dataset used by a community org, you are making a difference. This challenge is not about perfection — it is about purpose.

We look forward to seeing what you build.

The AI Equity Project
www.theaiequityproject.org