

Critical milestones checklist

Use this checklist to ensure you hit all essential deadlines:

3 months before:

- Core team assembled
- Objectives and themes finalized
- Budget approved
- Venue booked
- Mentor recruitment launched

2 months before:

- Registration opens
- Marketing materials distributed
- Technology infrastructure planned
- Challenge brief drafted

1 month before:

- Registrations closed
- Teams formed and notified
- Pre-event training scheduled
- Mentors and judges confirmed and briefed

2 weeks before:

- Final logistics confirmed
- All materials prepared
- Technology tested
- Schedule distributed to all

1 week before:

- Final reminders sent
- Venue setup planned
- Contingency plans reviewed
- Team roles rehearsed

Event day

- Setup completed early
- Registration desk ready
- Technology functioning
- Team briefed and positioned

1 week after:

- Thank-you communications sent
- Feedback collected
- Certificates distributed
- Social media highlights shared

1 month after:

- Final report completed
- Lessons learned documented
- Budget reconciled
- Next steps planned

Common Timing Mistakes to Avoid

- Starting too late: Less than 8 weeks is rarely sufficient for quality planning
- Unrealistic deadlines: Assuming tasks will take less time than they actually do
- No buffer time: Not accounting for unexpected delays or issues
- Overlapping critical tasks: Scheduling too many major milestones simultaneously
- Ignoring dependencies: Not sequencing tasks that rely on each other
- Front-loading all work: Finishing too early and losing momentum before the event
- Procrastinating communications: Waiting too long to send participant information
- Skipping rehearsals: Not testing technology and processes in advance