

Virtual Prep Session (Pre-Hackathon)

Welcome & Event Overview (15 mins)

- Facilitator intros – quick intros & role
- Hackathon overview: What it is, why we're doing it, and what they can expect
 - What: A 3-day hands-on event in where cross-functional teams will explore real challenges, build prototypes, and pitch creative, AI-enhanced solutions
 - Why: To push innovation forward by experimenting boldly, learning quickly, and exploring how AI can amplify our collective work
- Event Overview:
 - Schedule
 - Day 1: Unpack the problem, generate ideas, identify a concept
 - Day 2: Build a prototype or proof of concept + micro-learning workshops & office hours
 - Day 3: Pitch your solution
 - Deliverables
 - Low-fidelity prototype (solution)
 - Business & marketing plan
 - Intellectual property strategy
 - Pitch deck
- AI Tools and Resources Overview:
 - Review identified prototyping platform and basic functionality
 - Share link to learning resources folder with AI basics course materials, how-to guides, etc.

Framing the experience (tips to get the most out of the event):

- **This is a sandbox.** You're not here to build a perfect product—you're here to explore possibilities. Be open to learning and iterating fast. Don't wait for a "perfect" idea—learn by doing.
- **Embrace blue sky thinking.** Think big. Start with "what if?" instead of "how would we?" This is your chance to imagine radically different approaches without being bound by current constraints.
- **Leverage cross-functional collaboration.** You were selected intentionally for your diverse roles, experiences, and perspectives. Some of you work directly with students; others don't. Some are AI pros; some are curious beginners. That mix is the magic. The best ideas often come from unexpected connections.

Framing AI (how to get the most out of AI):

- Start with the problem, not the tech. What pain point are you solving? For whom?
- AI is only one (powerful) tool in your toolkit. It is a means, not the end.
- Goal = Combine your expertise + AI capabilities to create something student-first, human-centric, and technology-powered

→ **A Word on Bias:** *When you use AI to brainstorm from scratch, it will often give you safe or obvious answers — because it's trained on what already exists. That includes patterns of bias. The magic happens when you use AI to react, remix, or push your thinking — not just start it.*

Team Introduction Breakouts (20 minutes)

- Create space for participants to meet their team members prior to the event:
 - Intros: Provide name, department/role, and a fun fast prompt (e.g., "What's the last thing you used AI for—or what's one thing you wish AI could do for you?")
 - Choose a team captain: Suggested criteria – Has led or participated in a hackathon, strong communicator, comfortable keeping momentum and asking questions

Next Steps & Close (5 mins)

- Reminder to check the shared folder for resources and templates
- Travel & Reimbursement Protocol
- Next steps