Guidance

TechFirst for schools

Helping young people gain practical skills, get confident with AI and explore future careers in tech.

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TechFirst is giving 1 million young people the chance to build their skills, get confident with AI and explore future careers in tech. Schools and colleges can take part in a range of activities in person and online.

TechFirst is committed to widening access to opportunities in technology. The programme aims to reach young people from all backgrounds, including those underrepresented in the sector.

What TechFirst offers

Secondary schools and colleges can access:

- technology and computing enrichment activities
- careers inspiration and employer engagement
- opportunities to explore emerging technologies, including AI
- national competitions and challenges
- online learning resources
- government certification for excellence in technology and computing education through TechFirst Schools Recognition

Local support

TechFirst is delivered through regional delivery partners across the UK. These organisations work with schools, colleges, employers, local authorities and community organisations to deliver tailored sessions and events, and to connect young people with local opportunities.

Schools leading the way in technology and computing education can also apply to become a Bronze, Silver or Gold TechFirst School. The programme recognises schools that are helping young people develop

technology skills and preparing them for future careers.

School and colleges seeking to bring the benefits of TechFirst to their students should get in touch with their local delivery partner:

- North East: TechFirst@rtcnorth.co.uk
- North West: TechFirst@in4group.co.uk
- Yorkshire & Humber: TechFirst@rtcnorth.co.uk
- East Midlands: TechFirst@in4group.co.uk
- West Midlands: TechFirst@digitalinnovators.co.uk
- East of England: TechFirst@techeducators.co.uk
- London: TechFirst@stem.org.uk
- South East: TechFirst@stem.org.uk
- South West: TechFirst@techspark.co
- Wales: Wales@cyberfirstschools.co.uk
- Northern Ireland: TechFirst@belfastmet.ac.uk
- Scotland: TechFirst@educationscotland.gov.scot

Online learning resources

Ada Computer Science

TechFirst has partnered with the Raspberry Pi Foundation to support Ada Computer Science, a free online platform for teachers and students aged 11 to 19.

Developed in partnership with the University of Cambridge, the platform provides curriculum-aligned computing and technology resources, including teaching materials, coding projects, revision content and termly challenges. New resources are also being developed for younger learners aged 11 to 14.

Explore Ada CS and register for an account.

Competitions and challenges

TechFirst Girls Competition

The TechFirst Girls Competition is a free, UK wide competition for girls aged 12 to 13, delivered by IBM. It invites teams to solve interactive technology challenges, build their problem-solving skills and discover future careers in the UK's fastest growing sectors.

There will be tech prizes for the top scoring teams in each region and nation, along with several national school prizes to be won.

The competition is open to:

- Year 8 pupils in England and Wales
- S2 pupils in Scotland
- Year 9 pupils in Northern Ireland.

No prior knowledge or coding experience is needed to take part.

Building on the success of the CyberFirst Girls Competition, which ran from 2016 to 2025, this year marks the start of a new and expanded competition

under TechFirst. Alongside cyber security, participants will see new challenges spanning artificial intelligence, semiconductors and quantum computing.

Key dates for the 2026 competition:

- 5 October to 10 November: Registration period (registration is completed by teachers)
- 11 November: Competition starts
- 20 November: Competition ends
- Spring 2027: Regional celebration events for winning teams and schools

> Registration is open now. Teachers can find out more and register students at TechFirst Girls Competition.

UK Bebras Challenge

UK Bebras is a free, national challenge open to all young people aged 6 to 19. Organised by the Raspberry Pi Foundation, it runs every November over a two-week window. Students get 45 minutes to tackle interactive, age-appropriate tasks online that challenge their computational thinking. No prior coding experience is required, and every participant receives a certificate.

Key dates for the 2026 Challenge:

- 1 September: Registration opens
- 9 – 20 November: Challenge window

Registration is open now. Teachers can find out more and register students at UK Bebras.

About TechFirst

TechFirst for schools is part of TechFirst, the government's flagship tech skills programme opening pathways into the UK's fast-growing tech sector.

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