



Hub Operations Policy

Revision History

Rev	Date	Impact	Summary of Changes
5	1 Feb 2025	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change Team and Student Eligibility• General clean-up/clarifications.
4	31 Jan 2023	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates to hub enrollment & licensing
3	2 Feb 2022	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modified sanctioning schedule.• Hub enrollment now initiates license agreement and fee invoice.• Minor edits/clarifications in section 4.2 BRI provides• Modified Appendix A. Hub Hosted Training/Workshops
2	9 Jan 2020	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change email contact• Robot competition rules• Advancement rules to match BEST Competition Rules
1	10 Feb 2019	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Split HROP into 2 documents• This new document contains only Hub Policy

1.0 Purpose

This policy establishes the operational standards and expectations for a BEST Robotics Inc (BRI) hub.

2.0 BEST Robotics Mission and Principles

Our mission is to engage, excite and inspire students to pursue careers in engineering, science, technology and mathematics through participation in a sports-like science- and engineering-based robotics competition.

- Students are the sole participants and primary decision-makers, designers, and builders
- Participation is open to all students
- The program is free to schools—no participation fee
- Equipment and materials are provided at no cost to participating schools
- Schools of any type, size, location, or socioeconomic status are eligible

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all hub partners of BRI. No individual or entity may use any BRI materials, products, or intellectual properties for any purpose without licensed approval by BRI.

4.0 Hub Sanctioning and Enrollment

4.1 Sanctioning

1. To be considered for sanctioning a responsible 501(c)(3) partner organization must sign a Hub License Agreement (HLA) annually and provide the following each calendar year.

1st-Year Hubs	
Due Date	Must Provide the Following
Jan 15	Hub License Application.
Apr 2	Evidence that the hub director has attended a New Hub Workshop, or equivalent training, as approved by BRI.
Apr 2	A business and fundraising plan with a potential sponsor list.

1st-Year Hubs and Veteran Hubs (> 1 Year)	
Due Date	Must Provide the Following
HLA + NET30	Identity of the partner organization and representative signatory, if applicable.
HLA + NET30	Contact information for key personnel (Hub Director, Treasurer, Marketing Representative, Volunteer Coordinator)
HLA + NET30	Signed current-year Hub License Agreement.
Jun 30	Evidence that the Hub is in good financial standing with BRI
Invoice + NET60	Payment of annual Hub license fee, within 60 days of invoice

2. BRI reserves the right to grant extensions or waive the license fee payment based on extenuating circumstances. Extensions will be for 30 days. A late fee may be assessed for any license fees that are not received by the stated deadline.
3. The BRI Board of Directors reserves the right to determine suitability of Hub Licensing application materials.
4. A majority vote by the BRI board of directors is required to sanction 1st-Year hubs. BEST Robotics may suspend or remove sanctioning from any hub for non-compliance, including:
 - Failure to pay the license fee.
 - Failure to pay operational expenses beyond 90 days; or
 - Failure to correct compliance issues within 30 days of notification.

Annual 1st-Year Hub Sanctioning Calendar

Jan 15	New hub applications are due and shall follow the New Hub Application process.
Feb 15	Hub sanctioning for the current year is announced.

4.2 Annual Hub Enrollment

1. Once sanctioned, a hub may continue to operate annually through the enrollment and licensing process, until such sanctioning is removed.
2. The following rules apply to sanctioned hubs:
 - Sanctioned hubs must follow the annual enrollment and licensing procedures defined by BEST Robotics to host or participate in any BEST Robotics activities.
 - BEST Robotics will approve these hub enrollments as they happen.
 - BEST Robotics reserves the right to deny such enrollment for cause.
 - Any hub that fails to participate for 3 years will be de-sanctioned.

Annual Hub Enrollment and Licensing Calendar

Feb 15 - Jun 15	Annual Hub Enrollment via the BEST National Registry. License Agreement is distributed by email upon enrollment. License Fee Invoice is distributed by email upon enrollment.
Jun 30	Deadline for signed license agreements and license fee payments.

4.3 Authorities of Approved Hubs

A sanctioned hub approved for annual operation

- will attend BRI prototype season events.
- will attend BRI hub training, workshops or other related programs
- may access and use BRI copyrighted materials, documents or intellectual property as specified by the license agreement.
- may host competitions or events using the BRI name.
- may advance teams to a championship event.

4.4 BEST Robotics Responsibilities and Provisions

BRI will provide the following to sanctioned hubs:

Business productivity tools such as email, calendar, cloud storage, collaboration, etc.

Hub Logo.

Hub website.

Issue management system and discussion forum (gameboard).

Negotiated purchasing discounts with select vendors.

Bulk ordering opportunities.

Event insurance for any hub events, as requested by the hub.

24/7 Help phone number and online ticket system (support@bestrobotics.org).

Fundraising tools and support.

National fundraising to benefit hubs and/or championships.

In-Kind sponsorships and partnerships benefitting all hubs (equipment, software, etc.)

Program marketing materials (National & game logos, teaser video, animation, flyers, etc.)

Team and volunteer recruiting materials.

Annual policies, competition rules, field drawings, kit lists, judging rubrics and scoresheets.

Hub management tools and materials.

Registration and competition management tools.

Game day management tools.

Robotics competition scoring tools.

Robotics competition compliance tools.

Judging tools.

Training curriculum/materials and workshops (for leadership, volunteers, and participants).

BESTedu Learning Management System.

Nationally run skills challenges (e.g., Simulink Award, Minecraft, BEST IQ, APC, 3DP, etc.).

National off-season activities (e.g., bESTology, autonomous programming, etc.).

5.0 Operational Policies

5.1 General Compliance

1. Hubs must adhere to all processes, procedures and reporting specified in the Operations Handbook.
2. The hub will place orders through the BRI specified system(s) for any bulk purchase coordinated by BRI or nationally donated materials.
3. The hub is responsible for hosting the required training workshops outlined in Appendix A unless otherwise directed or notified.
4. No materials, software licenses, or intellectual property may be distributed for use other than the BRI program.

5.2 Hub Communications and Reporting

1. The hub will maintain accurate contact information in BEST Robotics systems for core team members including email addresses, cell phone numbers and related operations responsibilities (field, kit, awards, etc.).
2. The hub will report prior year financials by February including income, expenses (by major category), sponsors and sponsor levels (monetary or in-kind), and 501c3 status using the BEST Robotics specified system(s).
3. The hub will enter all public hub event details into the BEST Robotics specified system(s).
4. The hub will report all sponsors to BEST Robotics using the specified system(s).
5. Hub-level team demographics and participation data will be accumulated using the BEST Robotics specified system(s).
6. Each hub will participate in assessments of compliance to BEST Robotics policies if requested by BEST Robotics.
7. The hub will collect and report survey data using BEST Robotics specified system(s) if requested by BEST Robotics.

5.3 Hub Representation

1. At least one representative from each hub will:
 - a. Attend the designated annual Hub Training/Workshop each year.
 - b. Attend all required hub training and information sessions as indicated on the annual training calendar.
 - c. Attend the designated Championship(s) to which their teams advance.

5.4 Financial Policies

1. Each hub must operate as a nonprofit organization and provide appropriate documentation upon request. Hubs may either establish a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation or operate under sponsorship of an existing nonprofit, such as a university or foundation.
2. Each hub must appoint a treasurer to manage hub finances.
3. Hubs will not charge teams any fees for participation in the robotics competition unless explicitly approved by BRI.
4. Teams participating in the robotics competition will bear no costs for kit materials provided by the hub except when deemed liable for damages.
5. Hubs may charge teams or individuals a reasonable fee for participation in workshops or other events not directly related to the robotics competition unless explicitly prohibited by BRI.
 - a. Note: All BRI workshops are the property of BRI and may not be used or executed without prior written approval. Workshops and training sessions are separate from the robotics competition and have different requirements for participation.

6. Hubs must maintain and securely retain all financial records for a minimum of seven (7) years.
7. In efforts to secure funding for hub operations and program delivery, hubs must collaborate with BRI when seeking sponsorships from organizations with a national or global presence or those outside the hub's immediate service area. Prior to engaging with such sponsors, hubs must submit an inquiry to bested@bestinc.org.

5.5 Sponsor Levels and Recognition

Table 1 identifies the recognized Sponsorship Levels and corresponding Sponsor Recognition. All BRI hubs are required to recognize these sponsorship levels and provide the recognition indicated.

Hubs will recognize sponsors based on their financial contributions or in-kind donations that benefit the hub and its participating teams.

Table 1. Hub Sponsor Levels and Recognition

Recognized Sponsorship Level	Gift Amount	Recognition
Premier	≥ \$ 15,000	Recognition afforded Diamond level plus ♦ “Sponsored by” status in all advertising for the hub ♦ Company name or logo on event T-Shirts, etc.
Diamond	\$ 10,000 - \$ 14,999	Recognition afforded Platinum level plus ♦ Company name or logo on event T-Shirts, etc.
Platinum	\$ 5,000 - \$ 9,999	Recognition afforded Gold level plus ♦ (Company-provided) banner hung in arena ♦ Appreciation plaque (replaces certificate)
Gold	\$ 2,500 - \$ 4,999	♦ Level recognition in game day program and on website ♦ Company-provided ad in game day program ♦ Appreciation certificate
Silver	\$ 1,000 - \$ 2,499	♦ Level recognition in game day program and on website ♦ Company-provided ad in game day program
Bronze	\$ 500 - \$ 999	♦ Level recognition in game day program and on website
BEST Friends	< \$ 500	♦ Level recognition in game day program

Any modifications or additions to the requirements in Table 1 require approval from BEST Robotics.

5.6 Hub Capacity

1. A first-year hub must host a minimum of 8 teams.
2. An established (> 1 year) hub must host a minimum of 12 teams.
3. The maximum number of teams a hub may host is determined at the discretion of the hub.
4. Each hub must declare the geographic region/area from which it will host teams. BRI will resolve any disputed hub boundaries.
5. A hub may host a team from outside its geographic region IF
 - There is no other hub claiming the team OR
 - The hub where the team should participate cannot accommodate the team. In such case, the team may petition another hub for inclusion in that hub’s competition.

5.7 Team and Team Member Eligibility

1. School teams

- a. The school must have a state-sanctioned curriculum. Home schools are acceptable, given that documentation of home school alliance/group/consortium is provided.
 - b. Only one team per school campus may participate in a given competition season.
 - c. Each sponsoring school must provide a teacher/school-staff sponsor responsible for the team.
 - d. If a school sponsors a team, students enrolled at that school must compete on that school's team. Students may participate on another school's team should there be no team sponsored by their school.
2. Nonprofit youth-oriented organization teams
- a. BRI approved non-profit youth-oriented organizations may sponsor a team. These include:
 - i. Boys and Girls Club
 - ii. Scouting America
 - iii. Girl Scouts of the USA
 - iv. YMCA
 - v. 4-H Club
 - vi. Future Farmers of America (FFA)
 - vii. Big Brothers and Sisters of America
 - b. Only one team per organization per campus or charter is allowed to participate in a given competition season.
 - c. Each sponsoring organization must provide an adult sponsor, affiliated with their organization, to be responsible for the team.

3. All team members must be eligible to compete.

Academic eligibility is determined by sponsoring school/organization

The program targets middle and high school students primarily.

Teams may include students younger than middle school age. The teacher/team sponsor will have discretion to determine their level participation.

5.8 Robotics Competition Event Scheduling

1. Each hub shall hold their season kickoff within the following timeline unless otherwise specified through formal communication (Annual calendar, Hub Operations Handbook, direct email, etc.).

▪ Kickoff Option 1	1 st Saturday in September
▪ Kickoff Option 2	2 nd Saturday in September
▪ Kickoff Option 3	3 rd Saturday in September
2. Advance release of the game rules will be held in strict secrecy and released by the hub director only on a need to know basis. Game rules and details will not be released publicly before the final Kickoff date.

3. The hub will hold the head-to-head competition event eight (8) weeks after their season kickoff.
4. The hub will hold a Demo Day/Mall Day/Practice Day approximately one week before the game competition to promote public awareness of BEST and provide teams the opportunity to practice on the game field.
5. Additional practice days/times may be scheduled at the hub's discretion leading up to the final competition event.

5.9 Robotics Competition Specific

5.9.1 Rules and Scoring

1. The annual game rules and supporting information shall not be provided to teams or others not directly involved in the hub's organization/execution prior to the hub Kickoff.
2. Game secrecy must be upheld by the hub and its participating teams until noon on the final official Kickoff date, the third Saturday in September.
3. Each hub shall comply with and enforce the BEST Competition Rules provided annually.
4. Hubs must use the official systems and tools provided by BRI to score/judge the competition and tabulate results per the competition rules.

5.9.2 Registration

1. The hub will register teams using the BEST Robotics specified registration system(s).
2. The hub will ensure that all students, teachers, and mentors register in the BEST Robotics specified registration system(s) (BEST National Registry).

5.9.3 Kits and Materials

1. Hubs shall assemble and provide each team with a returnable and consumable kit at no cost. Required kit contents are defined in the Returnables Kit List and Consumables Kit List.
2. With prior approval of the Kit Committee, hubs may provide substitute materials if the official materials are not available.
3. Hubs shall inspect robots for kit compliance and disqualify from further competition any team whose robot is non-compliant.

5.9.4 Awards

The following award specifications apply to all hub competitions.

Plaques

- Gold Bezel Plaque
- Walnut finish
- Gold Bezel with 2" gold disk with BEST Logo in center
- Gold brushed plate with black print

- 7" x 9" plaques – Founder's Award for Creative Design, Most Robust Design, Finalist (4th place in head-to-head competition).
- 6" x 8" plaques – All other awards

Trophies

- Marble top and base
- BEST logo on the bottom gold medallion
- Round columns (any color)
- Nameplate on the base, with the hub name and the award title

Trophy Size and Style

Award Title	Height (max)	Topper
BEST Award – 1 st Place	30"	Victory Lady
BEST Award – 2 nd Place	26"	Victory Lady
BEST Award – 3 rd Place	22"	Victory Lady
Head to Head Competition – 1 st Place	24"	Gold Cup
Head to Head Competition – 2 nd Place	22"	Gold Cup
Head to Head Competition – 3 rd Place	20"	Gold Cup

5.9.5 Safety and Liability

1. Hubs should have an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) available at all events. Alternate arrangements for medical coverage are allowed.
2. Hubs must have insurance coverage for all events. BEST Robotics will provide event insurance coverage for any event the hub designates so long as the hub requests the coverage using the BEST Robotics specified system(s).
3. Background checks are highly recommended for all volunteers, especially hub core team members. Team mentors should satisfy the background check requirements imposed by the school they are supporting, if any.

6.0 Advancing Teams to Championship

6.1 Number of Teams

1. BRI determines to which championship each hub may advance their teams on an annual basis.
2. Each championship determines the number of teams that the hub may advance to the championship competition.

3. Each championship determines the number of advancing teams that will be eligible for the BEST Award at the championship.
4. Each championship will announce the number of teams and BEST Award eligibility to each hub no later than two days before the hub's game day event.
5. A hub may advance fewer teams than the total number allotted by the championship but must inform the championship immediately upon advancing the teams.

6.2 Order of Advancing Teams

A hub advances teams to the championship based on their placement in the BEST Award ranking and on their finishing place in the head-to-head robotics competition. Texas UIL championship(s) advance teams based solely on placement in the BEST Award ranking. Teams will advance to the championship in the following order.

1. BEST Award winner, 1st place
2. Head-to-Head competition, 1st place
3. BEST Award winner, 2nd place
4. Head-to-Head competition, 2nd place
5. BEST Award winner, 3rd place
6. Head-to-Head competition, 3rd place
7. BEST Award winner, 4th place
8. Head-to-Head competition, 4th place
9. BEST Award winner, 5th place
10. BEST Award winner, 6th place
11. BEST Award winner, 7th place
12. Etc.

6.3 How to Select Advancing Teams

Step 1. List your hub teams in the rank order of your competition's final results as shown above.

Step 2. As you move down the list, move each team on the list to the "advancing" list unless they have already advanced. Keep their finishing place (e.g., BEST Award Nth place, Game winner Nth place, etc.) with the team for the next step. The resulting "advancing list" will be a list of unique teams (no duplicates).

Step 3. Now, remove any teams on the "advancing list" that exceeds the total allotted number of advancing teams for your hub, as determined by the championship. The result will be a final "advancing" list of unique teams equal in count to the number allotted by the championship.

Step 4. Now, move through the final advancing list, and identify the highest ranking BEST Award winners equal in quantity to the number of teams eligible for participation in the BEST Award, as determined by the championship. These are the teams that are eligible to participate in the BEST Award at the championship.

Step 5. All remaining teams will participate in the championship but are not eligible for participation in the BEST Award; they will not compete in the Team Exhibit and Interviews or Marketing Presentation categories at the Championship.

Example:

Allotment> Teams to Advance = 6,
Teams Eligible for BEST Award = 3

Hub Results	Advancing List	Final Advancing
Team C BEST Award 1 st	Team C BEST Award 1st H2H Place 3 rd	Team C BEST Award 1 st
Team Z H2H Place 1 st	Team Z H2H Place 1 st BEST Award 2nd	Team Z BEST Award 2 nd
Team Z BEST Award 2 nd	Team A H2H Place 2 nd	Team B BEST Award 3 rd
Team A H2H Place 2 nd	Team B BEST Award 3rd	Team A
Team B BEST Award 3 rd	Team D BEST Award 4 th	Team D
Team C H2H Place 3 rd	Team X H2H Place 4 th	Team X
Team D BEST Award 4 th	Team Y BEST Award 5 th	Team Y
Team X H2H Place 4 th	Team E BEST Award 6 th	Team E
Team Y BEST Award 5 th	Team F BEST Award 7 th	Team F
Team E BEST Award 6 th	Team G BEST Award 8 th	Team G
Team F BEST Award 7 th	Etc.	Etc.
Team G BEST Award 8 th	Etc.	Etc.

(list all teams) (no duplicates) (BEST Award Priority)

From the example, Teams C, Z, and B will advance and participate in the BEST Award at the Championship. Teams A, D, and X will advance but will not participate in the BEST Award at the Championship. Note that higher ranked BEST Award teams will always take priority over Head-to-Head teams using this advancement method.

Appendix A. Hub Hosted Training Workshops

Hub Required?	Workshop/Training	When?
Recommended	IR Sensor Training (4 hour workshop)	Jun - Aug (prior to Kickoff)
Recommended	Simulink Workshop (2 days)	Summer
Recommended	Teacher Training (1 day)	Summer