



# CONGRESSIONAL APP CHALLENGE HACKATHON

## *What is a hackathon?*

- A hackathon is a one or two-day **competitive event** where high school and middle school students collaborate with their peers, and attend workshops, in order to develop and showcase their programming projects.
- Hackathons encourage and recognize our nation's young programming talent, provide students from various backgrounds, especially those with limited technology backgrounds, with an entrepreneurial educational opportunity.

## Virtual Event Best Practices

- Virtual Hackathons can be held over any video conferencing platform, such a Zoom.
  - Feel free to use breakout rooms and allow students to communicate in the chat, so as to help team-building and collaboration.
  - Allow the students to screen share, so that they can present their apps and projects as efficiently as possible
- Plan to have one or multiple local STEM educators or other guest professionals who will be able to guide the students and provide feedback.
- Encourage collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- Be sure to adequately advertise the hackathon through email reminders and social media posts.

## In-Person Event Best Practices

Rep. Eric Swalwell has hosted a Congressional App Challenge Hackathon each year. The first part of the hackathon is focused on forming teams, brainstorming ideas and coding. The second half is then focused on preparing for the presentation and pitching the idea.

**Tip:** To increase engagement, offices may host a launch events, hold a hackathon, post regular reminders on social media, and stay in touch with teachers.



Rep. Eric Swalwell (CA-15) hosts a two-day hackathon.

**Promote your Hackathon on Social Media. Please refer to our [Graphics page](#) for example graphics as well as [this link](#) for sample texts. For questions, please email [cad@congressionalappchallenge.us](mailto:cad@congressionalappchallenge.us).**

**\*Important Disclaimer:** This is a reference for informational purposes only. This is created to display examples of what other MOCs have done. It is not meant as an event or 'how-to' template. Check in with House Administration Committee for specific guidelines on App Challenge events.