

MCM[®]/ICM[®]#

Contest Rules, Registration and Instructions#

January 29 - February 2, 2026

(All rules and instructions apply to both ICM and MCM contests.)

RECENT CHANGES TO THE MCM/ICM RULES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN RED

COMAP'S Mathematical Contest in Modeling (MCM)[®] / Interdisciplinary Contest in Modeling (ICM)[®] is an international contest designed to provide undergraduate students with the opportunity to work as team members to engage in and improve their modeling, problem solving, and writing skills. Teams apply mathematics to model, develop, and communicate a solution to a real-world problem.

2026 Contest Dates and Times:

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MCM/ICM Rules, Registration, and Instructions

[I. Participants and Advisors](#)

[II. MCM/ICM Resource Guides](#)

[III. Changes for 2026](#)

[IV. Contest Rules](#)

[V. Contest Registration](#)

[VI. Contest Instructions](#)

Before the Contest - Preparing a Team

During the Contest - Choosing and Solving the Problem

During the Contest - Preparing a Solution Document

During the Contest - Use of AI Tools in COMAP Contests

During the Contest - Advisor Activities

After the Contest - Submitting a Solution Document: **New online submission process**

After the Contest - Advisor Actions

[VII. MCM/ICM Results and Recognition](#)

[VIII. MCM/ICM Awards and Prizes](#)

[IX. Judging Results and Designations](#)

[X. Internship and Scholarship Partners](#)

Notes:

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I. Participants and Advisors

Team Members: A team may consist of up to **three students currently enrolled in the same school**. Students may be enrolled in any department or program at the school. There is no limit to the number of teams a school may register. The contest is open to all undergraduate and high school students. An advisor must complete the registration process for each team.

School or Institution: For the purposes of participating in the MCM/ICM, a team's school or institution is the primary and comprehensive full-time provider for all of the team members' education studies in all subjects. Tutoring, test-prep, contest-prep, and math- or STEM-learning centers are not considered schools/institutions for the purposes of registering and competing in COMAP contests.

Team Advisors: Any faculty, staff member, or student at the team's institution can fulfill the role of Advisor. The advisor will act as the main point of contact for the team, and does not have to be from the mathematics department. We encourage faculty members to serve as team advisors; however, one team member or another student at the school may act as the advisor.

II. MCM/ICM Resource Guides

[MCM/ICM: Registration Walk Through](#)

The purpose of this article is to assist and guide advisors participating in the MCM/ICM. In the article, COMAP provides information about the contest registration process.

[MCM-ICM: Procedures and Tips for a Great Experience](#)

The purpose of this article is to assist and guide students and advisors participating in MCM/ICM. In the article, COMAP, provides information about the administration of the contests, as well as tips to ensure your contest experience is smooth, satisfying, enjoyable, and successful.

Use of AI Tools in COMAP Contests

This policy is motivated by the rise of large language models (LLMs) and generative AI assisted technologies. The policy aims to provide greater transparency and guidance to teams, advisors, and judges. This policy applies to all aspects of student work, from research and development of models (including code creation) to the written report. Since these emerging technologies are quickly evolving, COMAP will refine this policy as appropriate.

MCM-ICM: Online Submission Process

The purpose of this article is to assist and guide students and advisors participating in MCM/ICM. In the article, COMAP, provides information about the new online submission process using the new online submission

page <https://forms.comap.org/241335097294056>. You will need your team's **control number**, **advisor id number** and your **problem choice** to complete your submission.

III. Changes for 2026

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IV. Contest Rules

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V. Contest Registration

The registration fee for MCM/ICM is \$100 per team. Please register only the teams that will take part in the contest. Registration fees are non-refundable. We accept payment via Credit Card, and payment must be made via our secure web site. Our secure site will process your credit card payment, so your credit card number is protected. Our system will not store your credit card number after it processes your payment. We regret that we are not able to accept other payment forms at this time.

All teams must be registered before 3:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, January 29, 2026. We recommend that all teams complete the registration process well in advance, since the registration system will not accept any new team registrations after the deadline. COMAP will not accept late registrations for MCM/ICM 2026 **under any circumstances. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.** *Note: Advisors do not have to designate specific team members when registering "a team." COMAP suggests you register the number of teams needed well prior to the deadline and then return to the contest site once team membership is set to enter specific students to each "Control Number" team you have registered.*

The 2-part registration process will take advisors through a series of screens that ask for an email address and contact information. Enter the required information as you step through the screens. **Be sure to use a valid current email address** so that we can use it to contact you at any point before, during, or after the contest, if necessary.

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VI. Contest Instructions

Before the Contest - Preparing a Team

During the Contest - Choosing and Solving the Problem

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submission; to generate initial ideas for a structure, for example, or when summarizing, paraphrasing, language polishing etc. There are many tasks in model development where human creativity and teamwork is essential, and where a reliance on AI tools introduces risks. Therefore, we advise caution when using these technologies for tasks such as model selection and building, assisting in the creation of code, interpreting data and results of models, and drawing scientific conclusions.

Guidance for teams

Teams are required to:

1. **Clearly indicate the use of AI tools in their report**, including which model was used and for what purpose. Please use inline citations and the reference section. Also append the Report on Use of AI (described below) after your 25-page solution.
2. **Verify the accuracy, validity, and appropriateness** of the content and any citations generated by language models and correct any errors or inconsistencies.
3. **Provide citation and references, following guidance provided here**. Double-check citations to ensure they are accurate and are properly referenced.
4. **Be conscious of the potential for plagiarism** since LLMs may reproduce substantial text from other sources. Check the original sources to be sure you are not plagiarizing someone else's work.

Citation and Referencing Directions

Think carefully about how to document and reference whatever tools the team may choose to use. A variety of style guides are beginning to incorporate policies for the citation and referencing of AI tools. Use inline citations and list all AI tools used in the reference section of your 25-page solution.

Whether or not a team chooses to use AI tools, **the main solution report is still limited to 25 pages**. If a team chooses to utilize AI, following the end of your report, add a new section titled **Report on Use of AI**. This new section has no page limit and will not be counted as part of the 25-page solution. [Click here to download the COMAP AI contest policy with examples.](#)

During the Contest - Preparing a Solution Document

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During the Contest - Advisor Activities

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After the Contest - Submitting a Solution Document - NEW for 2026

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NOTE: By submitting a MCM/ICM contest entry document, team members agree that:

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After the Contest - Advisor Actions

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VII. MCM/ICM Results and Recognition

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VIII. MCM/ICM Awards and Prizes



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The 2026 International COMAP Scholarship Award will be awarded to the six (6) top MCM/ICM teams from any of the participating countries/regions; \$9000 being split among the team members and \$1000 to the school represented with a maximum of \$3000 paid per team member. #

After the results are issued, each successfully participating team advisor and student will receive a PDF certificate of participation. You may login to the contest web site using the **Advisor Login** link to view and print your team's certificates. [Click here to download MCM/ICM certificates.](#)

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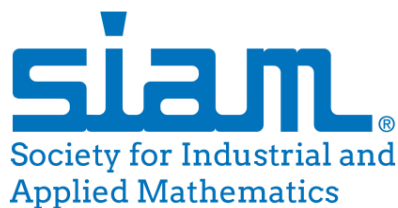
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The Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) is the largest society in the world for professionals in the field of operations research (OR), management science (MS), and analytics. INFORMS has long recognized the importance of involving undergraduate students and faculty in an unscripted process of mathematical modeling whose problems contain many of the modern elements seen by its membership. The MCM/ICM exemplifies these characteristics. Consequently, INFORMS has been an active supporter of the MCM/ICM since its inception.

INFORMS carefully selects and designates a single team from each of the six problems - A, B, C, D, E, F - as an INFORMS winning team whose modeling and analyses best exemplify the style and content reflected in its membership's professional practice. Each student receives a letter of congratulations from the current INFORMS President and a complimentary one-year INFORMS student membership. Each associated faculty advisor receives a letter of congratulations and appreciation from the current INFORMS President, along with complimentary one-year access to the full suite of award-winning INFORMS journals.



The Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) will designate six teams, one each for problems A, B, C, D, E, and F from the MCM/ICM as an SIAM winner.



The Mathematical Association of America (MAA) will designate up to six teams, at

most one each for problems A, B, C, D, E, and F from the MCM/ICM as an MAA

of anyone else's solution is also prohibited. Contest rules prohibit seeking assistance outside of team members or obtaining help from human sources in person or via any medium. COMAP continually monitors the Internet during the contest period.

Unsuccessful Participant - The team's report did not adequately respond to the requirements of the contest problem or a team (or team member) was found to have visited Internet sites discussing the contest problem during the contest period.

Unsuccessful Participant - Web: A team member (or members) visited websites or social media where contest problems were being openly discussed. Contest rules prohibit seeking assistance outside of team members or obtaining help from human sources in person or via any medium. COMAP is continually monitoring the Internet during the contest period to include websites and social media where contest solutions are being openly discussed.

Unsuccessful Participant - Incomplete: The solution paper was found to be significantly incomplete and did not show any serious effort in adequately responding to the contest problem or its requirements.

Successful Participant - The team made a concerted effort to respond to the contest problem and submit a solution report. The report, however, had incomplete responses to all or some requirements, and/or showed some deficiencies or weakness in the modeling processes, analysis, conclusions, and/or communication.

Honorable Mention - The team's solution report indicated an above average effort in addressing all problem requirements, and contained elements that were judged to show sound and supported processes in modeling and problem solving, analysis, conclusions, and communication of results.

Meritorious - The team's solution report was excellent in many aspects of modeling and problem solving, analysis, conclusions, and communication. The report addressed all requirements in a clear, well-supported, well-organized, and well-presented manner.

Finalist - The designation Finalist recognizes teams whose solution reports are exemplary and therefore reached the final round of judging. These papers present complete and logical analysis in an organized and clear presentation above and beyond simply addressing the requirements. These papers are easy to read, easy to follow, logical, and comprehensive. Finalist papers are among the best of all team submissions.

Outstanding Winner - The designation Outstanding recognizes teams whose solution reports are determined, in the final round of judging, to be the "best of the best." These teams' reports are at the highest level relative to the contest submissions in terms of exemplary student work in modeling and problem solving, analysis, and

communication. COMAP may publish and use all or part of these submissions as examples of outstanding student work.

X. Internship and Scholarship Partners



COMAP is pleased to announce a new partnership with **Anzu Partners**. Anzu Partners is a venture capital and private equity firm that invests in breakthrough industrial technologies and life sciences. Anzu is excited to welcome members of **MCM/ICM** Outstanding and Finalist teams residing in the U.S. for consideration in their Summer Analyst Program. These Summer Analysts will be responsible for both investment team and portfolio support. This is a unique opportunity to gain exposure into venture capital while putting your technical degree to use.

Key activities in investment include:

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Key activities in portfolio support include:

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The position reports to an Anzu Investment Team member, as part of a small, cross-functional team with strong personal and professional development opportunities.

After the **MCM/ICM** contest results are announced **COMAP** will contact those US teams that meet the requirements with information on how to apply for the paid summer internships. Being selected and notified does not guarantee participation in the program.

[Click here to learn more about Anzu Partners](#)

EIT

Ellison Scholars

COMAP is excited to work in collaboration with **Ellison Scholars**, which is part of the **Ellison Institute of Technology (EIT)**. The institute's mission, in partnership with the **University of Oxford**, is to help solve some of humanity's most challenging and important problems. This partnership brings exciting opportunities for students involved in COMAP's mathematical modeling contests, offering a chance to not only showcase their skills but also to join a global mission aimed at tackling some of humanity's most pressing challenges.

[Click here to learn more about Ellison Scholars](#)



COMAP is pleased to announce a new partnership with **Two Sigma**. Two Sigma is an investment manager that uses a variety of technological methods, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, and distributed computing, for its trading strategies. Two Sigma is excited to welcome members of **MCM/ICM** Outstanding and Finalist teams for consideration in its internship program. After the MCM/ICM contest results are announced, COMAP will contact those teams that meet the requirements with information on how to apply for a Two Sigma internship. Being selected and notified does not guarantee participation in the program.

[Click here to learn more about Two Sigma](#)