



INNOVATION PROJECT GUIDE

VERSION 1.0 · SEASON 2026-2027

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 01 The challenge | 05 Build, test, improve |
| 02 Where to look | 06 Show the difference |
| 03 Find a real problem | 07 The Innovation Film |
| 04 Design your solution | 08 Judging & final checklist |



Read it end to end with your team. Every part ends with something to decide, research or build.

01 · THE CHALLENGE · YOUR MISSION

Find a real problem connected to football and develop an innovative solution using technology.

 One problem worth solving. One team. One season.

01 • THE CHALLENGE

ANY TECHNOLOGY IS OPEN TO YOU

AI	Robotics	Apps	Web	IoT	Electronics	Sensors	Data	Wearables
Computer vision	AR / VR	3D printing	Automation	Something else entirely				

START WITH THE PROBLEM. NOT THE TECHNOLOGY.

No technology is required. Only a problem worth solving.

02 · WHERE TO LOOK

INSIDE THE GAME

PART 1 OF 2



PLAYERS

Performance · Training · Health ·
Safety



COACHES

Analysis · Decisions ·
Communication



FANS

Experience · Engagement · Safety



REFEREES

Accuracy · Decisions · Fair play



STADIUMS

Operations · Security · Energy ·
Crowds



EQUIPMENT

Balls · Goals · Kit · Training gear

AROUND THE GAME

PART 2 OF 2



ACCESSIBILITY

Disability access · Inclusion · Equal access



CLUBS

Academies · Development · Talent ID



MEDIA

Broadcast · Content · Commentary



COMMUNITY

Grassroots · Schools · Participation



SUSTAINABILITY

Waste · Water · Energy · Transport



DATA

Statistics · Prediction · Insights —
and more

Look beyond the match. Football is an entire world.

03 • FIND A REAL PROBLEM

ANSWER FOUR QUESTIONS FIRST

Who?

Who experiences this problem?

What?

What exactly happens?

Where?

When and where does it appear?

Why?

Why does it matter?

03 · YOUR PROBLEM STATEMENT — ONE SENTENCE

[USER] experiences **[PROBLEM]** because **[REASON]**.

Don't start with “**We want to build an AI app.**”

Start with “**We discovered that...**”

03 • GO FIND OUT

SIX MOVES THAT BEAT GUESSING



TALK

Speak with people who live the problem.



OBSERVE

Watch what happens in real situations.



VISIT

Go to a club, academy, stadium or training session.



ASK

Interview players, coaches, fans, referees, experts.



RESEARCH

Look for existing solutions and technologies.



TEST ASSUMPTIONS

What you first believed may not be the real problem.

Interviews, surveys, observations, field visits, experiments, articles, videos, expert discussions — use whatever helps you understand the problem better.

04 • DESIGN YOUR SOLUTION

YOUR SOLUTION MIGHT BE

An app

A website

A robot

An AI system

A smart device

A wearable

An IoT solution

A data tool

**Something we have never
seen**

04 • DESIGN YOUR SOLUTION

FOUR CHECKS BEFORE YOU BUILD

USE TECHNOLOGY WITH
PURPOSE.

01 **Does it solve the problem?**

02 **Who will use it?**

03 **Why is this technology the right choice?**

04 **What makes it useful or different?**

05 • BUILD. TEST. IMPROVE.

THE RIFA INNOVATION CYCLE



YOUR PROTOTYPE CAN BE

A working device	An app prototype	A website	A robot
A physical model	An AI demonstration	A digital simulation	A mock-up or circuit

It does not need to be perfect. It needs to prove, test and improve your idea.

05 · BUILD. TEST. IMPROVE.

TEST WITH REAL PEOPLE

SHOW

Put it in front of potential users.

WATCH

Say nothing. Watch how they use it.

ASK

What works, what does not, what is missing.

IMPROVE

Change the prototype, then test again.

IMPROVING IS INNOVATION.

06 · SHOW THE DIFFERENCE

THREE QUESTIONS ABOUT IMPACT



WHO BENEFITS?

Players · Fans · Coaches ·
People with disabilities · Clubs ·
Communities



WHAT GETS BETTER?

Safer · Faster · Easier · More
accessible · More accurate ·
More sustainable



WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

How users reacted · What
testing changed · Which part of
the problem you solved

And think forward: if your solution kept developing — where could it be used, and what would you improve next?

07 • THE INNOVATION FILM

4-6

MINUTES

One film. The story of your innovation — the research, the build, the testing, the difference. No expensive cameras required.

YOUR STORY. YOUR STYLE.

A documentary

A mini show

A news report

An interview

A field visit

A short film

A demonstration

An experiment

A creative combination

MAKE US WANT TO KEEP WATCHING.

THE FIVE THINGS JUDGES MUST UNDERSTAND

SHOW. DON'T JUST TELL.

01

THE PROBLEM

What you discovered, who experiences it, why it matters.

02

WHAT YOU FOUND

How you researched, who you spoke to, what you learned.

03

YOUR SOLUTION

What you created, how it solves the problem, why this technology.

04

BUILDING & TESTING

The prototype at work, what you tested, what changed after feedback.

05

THE DIFFERENCE

Who benefits, what improves, where the idea goes next.

Focus on: a strong story · clear explanation · real evidence · visual demonstration · team energy

08 · HOW YOU WILL BE JUDGED — 100 POINTS

THE PROJECT

PART 1 OF 2

PROBLEM & RESEARCH

20

Problem definition — 10

A clear, specific problem · A meaningful link to football · Who experiences it · Why it matters.

Research & understanding — 10

Research beyond assumptions · Contact with real users, experts or places · Useful findings · Research that changed the project.

INNOVATION & SOLUTION DESIGN

25

Solution quality — 15

Directly addresses the problem · Clear value for users · Logical problem-solution link · Understandable and purposeful.

Innovation — 10

Creative thinking · A new approach or smart combination · Several possibilities explored · Beyond the obvious first idea.

TECHNOLOGY & PROTOTYPE

20

Use of technology — 10

Chosen for a clear reason · Appropriate for the problem · Understood by the team · A tool, not added complexity.

Prototype — 10

Makes the idea tangible · Built by the team · Demonstrates the core concept · Effort suited to the team's age.

Top projects: a deep understanding of a real problem, a creative solution, and technology used intelligently.

08 · HOW YOU WILL BE JUDGED — 100 POINTS

IMPACT & THE FILM

PART 2 OF 2

TESTING, IMPROVEMENT & IMPACT

20

Testing & iteration — 10

Evidence of testing · Feedback from users, experts or experiments · Clear learning · Improvements made because of it.

Impact & potential — 10

Who benefits · How something improves · Realistic future potential · Awareness of limits and next steps.

INNOVATION FILM & COMMUNICATION

15

Story & clarity — 10

A clear journey from problem to solution · Easy to understand · Strong visuals and evidence · Good use of 4–6 minutes.

Creativity & team communication — 5

Engaging style · Authentic team participation · Creative storytelling · A film that makes the project memorable.

SCORING SUMMARY

Problem & research 20

Innovation & solution design 25

Technology & prototype 20

Testing, improvement & impact 20

Innovation film & communication 15

TOTAL 100

Top projects test, learn and improve — and make the judges remember the innovation.

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT

13 YESES

- We identified a real problem connected to football.
- We clearly know who experiences the problem.
- We researched and explored the problem.
- We created a technology-powered solution.
- We can explain why we chose this technology.
- Our Innovation Film tells the complete story.
- Our team is ready to share its innovation with RIFA.
- We created a prototype or clear demonstration.
- We tested our idea.
- We gathered feedback or evidence.
- We improved our solution based on what we learned.
- We can explain the impact of our solution.
- Our video is between 4 and 6 minutes.

CHANGE THE GAME.

SEASON 2026–2027

