



# Competition Updates – Team Video Call

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[www.robonation.org](http://www.robonation.org)

## 1. Teams Represented

### ROBOBOAT TEAMS

- AGH Solar
- Florida State University / Gulf Coast State College
- Georgia Tech
- Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember
- Tecnologico de Monterrey
- Universitas Indonesia
- University of Iowa
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- University of Michigan
- University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez
- University of West Florida

### ROBOSUB TEAMS

- Ain Shams University
- Alexandria University
- Amador Valley High School
- Arizona State University
- California Institute of Technology
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Desert WAVE
- Duke University

### ROBOSUB TEAMS (CONT.)

- Ecole de Technologie Superieure
- Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
- Georgia Tech
- Gonzaga University
- Harvey Mudd College
- Istanbul Technical University
- Martin High School
- Montana State University
- National University of Singapore
- North Carolina State University
- San Diego City College
- San Diego State University
- Simplexity
- St. George's School
- Tecnologico de Monterrey
- The Ohio State University
- University of Alberta
- University of California, Riverside
- University of California, San Diego
- University of Colorado at Boulder
- University of Hawaii at Manoa
- University of Michigan
- University of Missouri
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- Vortex NTNU
- Washington State University



## 2. Agenda

### 2.1. Competition Update

Purpose: Provide quick update on competitions and where we are with the ongoing pandemic.

*What this call is not about: Not about any tasks or course-related questions.*

**As of now, we are planning on proceeding as planned with RoboBoat and RoboSub.**

- These team calls are our attempt to be as transparent with you.
- **ROBOBOAT**
  - Go/No Go RoboBoat Decision Date: April 24 (subject to change)
  - Updated Cancellation Policy:  
<https://roboboat.org/2019/10/22/competition-cancellation-policy/>
- **ROBOSUB**
  - Go/No Go RoboSub Decision Date: June 5 (subject to change)
  - Updated Cancellation Policy:  
<https://robosub.org/2019/10/22/competition-cancellation-policy/>

### 2.2. Continued Engagement

- **Upcoming webinars offered to the community** – continue offline learning
  - Technical (i.e. MathWorks speaking on MATLAB for acoustic localization, Blue Robotics helping teams better use their products or help troubleshoot their products, etc.)
  - Non-Technical (i.e. Recruiting, Resume-building, etc.)
- **Join Band App**
  - RoboBoat: If you are a registered team for 2020, contact RoboNation for a link.
  - RoboSub: If you are a registered team for 2020, contact RoboNation for a link.

### 2.3. Question and Answers

Note: Information in this section is subject to change without notification.

- **Questions**
  - ***If a competition gets cancelled, could we forfeit a refund and use the registration money from this year to count towards next year?***
    - ANSWER: Yes, absolutely. If a team is unable to compete one year, we can move your registration forward to the next year. More information will be provided when the cancellation announcements are made.
  - ***Will your decision on cancellation be based on an extrapolation to competition or the immediate state at the time of the Go/No Go date?***
    - ANSWER: There are several factors we have to consider. One large portion is that a lot of our volunteers come from the Navy Reserve Command. The Navy has stopped travel at this time, so once their travel is lifted, we will have a better insight on this portion. Additionally, RoboBoat is held at a public park, so if the park is closed that will also be a factor in this decision.
    - ANSWER: Keeping in mind, knowing that teams are not able to come together and work on their vehicles, we will work to make the best decision with all teams, staff, volunteers in mind.



- ***If the event is cancelled, could an allowance be made for students who had graduated to be able to participate next year since they've put in so much work?***
  - ANSWER: We would gladly consider these students as eligible to participate in the following year. We will find a way to notate these students in the roster collection. Registered teams must submit their rosters for the 2020 competition to allow us to make exemptions (for individuals) for next year.
  
- ***Is there a possibility of a postponement of the physical competition?***
  - ANSWER: It's something we have considered. Given our timeframe it doesn't look like it will work, considering the school year and the repercussions of the pandemic on your school years. We must also consider staff time and availability of facility for events.
  
- ***If there is still some risk of illness at the time that the decision will be made, would there be any chance that the competitions could be held while holding very strict guidelines? For example, limiting the number of team members per team attending rather than canceling the whole competition?***
  - ANSWER: That's a great question. From a liability standpoint, we've seen that even with limited team members it still doesn't solve the issue. If we cancel, we'd cancel outright rather than allowing certain times or limited team members.
  - ANSWER: We are bound by local town/county/state restrictions and guidance. As things progress, local governments are getting stricter and stricter. Depending on how this situation goes – the local government will play into what we can do.
  
- ***If either competition is canceled, would the tasks and competition theme carry on to the next year?***
  - ANSWER: That is the idea right now. We start out a few months out in advance to create tasks. We may tweak a few things, but essentially use the same effort for the next year, 2021.
  
- ***Will it be a binary decision of go/no-go; proceed with extreme caution or not allow it to happen unless we are 100% sure that there will be no risk?***
  - ANSWER: The answer is not that simple, unfortunately.
  
- ***Is there any chance that a national competition will ensue if the US is still preventing foreign travel?***
  - ANSWER: Unfortunately, no clear answer on this right now. Something we are considering, and more information will be released at a later point.
  
- ***If it comes down to a factor such as not enough volunteers, would there be any way to try and find volunteers to help instead of outright cancelling? I know many schools have dive teams which would probably be happy to help***
  - ANSWER: It's difficult to just "pluck" volunteers. It's difficult to find people who are willing to do the grunt work (plus the long hours and weekend work) that our navy volunteers support us with.



- ***Will the webinars be recorded?***
  - ANSWER: Yes, most webinars will be recorded. However, not all webinars are guaranteed to be recorded. Because we work with different vendors, not all are guaranteed to be approved to be recorded and published online.
  
- ***Will these webinars be restricted to participants in RoboNation? \*To listen.***
  - ANSWER: The participants for the webinar will be dependent on the speaker/sponsor and what they are speaking on.
  
- ***Can we receive our invitation letters a bit early? In case the competition proceeds as planned. The delay in our Visa papers will be significant if we just wait till the GO/NO GO decision to receive them***
  - ANSWER: Submissions will be open to submit your roster information for your invitation letters during the week of April 6. We should be able to provide this as soon as we have the required information from the teams.
  
- ***I'd love to see a webinar on simulation tools. There are a lot of options out there each with their own learning curves.***
  - ANSWER: If you have any other suggestions, feel free to share them on the forum or on the Band App!
  
- ***Could a Slack group be made for RoboNation teams?***
  - ANSWER: The Band App is meant to be similar to how we would use Slack. Band will be the main communications portal, so we do not need to have multiple chat sites for the competition teams.
  
- ***How far in advance are webinar announcements expected to be made on Band?***
  - ANSWER: The week of! Depending on availability (or spontaneity!) of the speakers. Our intention is to release it as early as possible but will be around 3-5 days prior to the webinar. It will never be shared as short of notice as the day of.
  
- ***Was an invitation to join the Band group already sent out to team leads?***
  - ANSWER: Yes! This is available in your registration confirmation email. If you need the link to be resent to your team, please contact Julianna Smith at [jsmith@robonation.org](mailto:jsmith@robonation.org).
  
- ***We've also hosted a virtual game night to keep the team engaged and provide some sense of community.***
  - ANSWER: We will be working with teams to possibly host a game night in the coming weeks! If you have any ideas, contact Hitesh or Julianna on the Band App!
  
- ***Would we contact you Hitesh if someone in our team would like to host a webinar?***
  - ANSWER: Yes, contact Hitesh Patel at [hpatel@robonation.org](mailto:hpatel@robonation.org) or in the Band App, if you or someone on your team is interested in hosting a webinar.



- ***We worry that the go/no go date is really late for teams that have to buy airplane tickets. Usually at this time of the year we would have had already bought them. Is there any way you can help us with this issue?***
  - ANSWER: One of the things that we consider normal for airlines is not normal anymore. The normal airfare algorithms will be thrown out. Normally we would say that there is a problem with waiting. For those who are out of the United States, you will require airline tickets to acquire a VISA. It's difficult at this time whether airline tickets will be higher closer to competition. We don't think the fees will be atrocious because airlines will be desperate for customers.
  - ANSWER: We don't recommend buying tickets unless you have a confirmed message from your airline, confirming they will provide you with a refund.
  
- ***Any idea when the next tech call will be?***
  - ANSWER: Depends on speaker's availability. We will notify teams within a week, 3-5 days prior to the webinar!
  
- ***Are there due dates yet for things like the roster, technical paper, pre-qualification video, etc.?***
  - ANSWER: Yes! The deadlines will be 3-4 weeks prior to the competition. All submission information will be released the week of April 6<sup>th</sup>.
  
- ***Could you make a poll for teams to propose webinar topics they could give or would like to see?***
  - ANSWER: Great idea! You should share webinar topic ideas on the Band App to see what other teams think about your suggestion. We can also add some polls on there to gauge what teams want to hear about.
  
- ***What are the requirements for a team that wishes to present a webinar?***
  - ANSWER: Send a request of what topic you are interested in speaking on with a brief description of what this webinar would be about to Hitesh Patel at [hpatel@robonation.org](mailto:hpatel@robonation.org) or on the Band App.
  
- ***Will the webinars be done through something like Zoom, with a link provided through the Band app? Or will all viewers need to actually view the Webinar through the Band app as well?***
  - ANSWER: The webinars will be held on Zoom.
  
- ***Our team plans to resume next year with the same team structure and same vehicle, we're probably not going to recruit next year if cancellation occurs. would the competition approve?***
  - ANSWER: Yes, this would be acceptable to compete in the following competition.
  
- ***So, is April 24th the last date to submit all required submissions for RoboBoat?***
  - ANSWER: No, the submission dates will be 3-4 weeks prior to competition. Submission deadlines will be released when the submission details are released the week of April 6<sup>th</sup>.