

The Design and Outcomes of the National Data4Good Competition: A Pathway to Student Career Readiness



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ABSTRACT

The **4th Annual National Data4Good Case Competition** is now underway—bringing together students nationwide to apply data, AI, and analytics for meaningful social impact. This year’s challenge offers not only **major cash prizes**, but also the chance to earn **industry-recognized certifications and digital badges** that strengthen career readiness. With a compelling, real-world case and a vibrant national community of future data leaders, now is the perfect time to **get your students registered and making a difference through data!**

INTRODUCTION

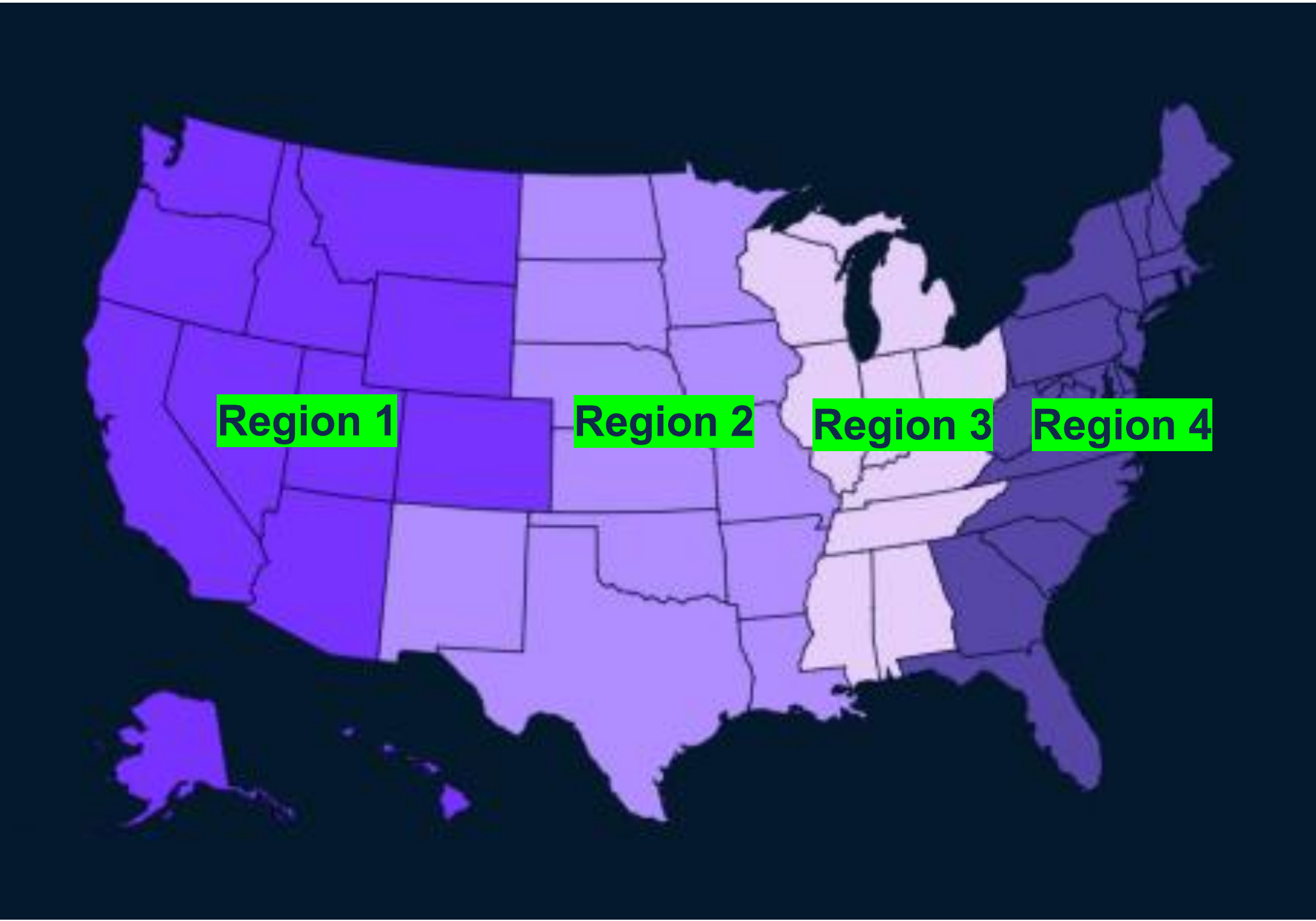
The National Data4Good Case Competition was founded in 2022 by Professor Matthew Lanham to empower students to apply data analytics, AI, and problem-solving skills toward meaningful social impact. Designed as a holistic, experiential learning opportunity, the competition equips students with technical training, industry frameworks, and structured mentorship while challenging them to address real issues faced by nonprofit and social-good organizations. Each year, teams of undergraduate and graduate students from across the nation complete bootcamp-style training, earn points through progressive deliverables, and compete for regional and national recognition.

BEGINNING WITH THE END IN MIND

- ✓ All participants will have tangible outcomes to showcase their knowledge, skills, and abilities
- ✓ It is more than a case competition
- ✓ Professional training and engagement from our professional (e.g., INFORMS) and tech communities (e.g., Microsoft, SAS)
- ✓ Opportunities for certifications and badges
- ✓ Aligns with data analytics programs missions and needs
- ✓ “Good” case problems they might not otherwise consider in their courses or programs

DESIGN

- ✓ Regional Champions matter!



- ✓ It’s a points-based competition
- ✓ Teams of 3-4 students by degree level (BS or MS)
- ✓ FREE registration



The Seven Domains of Analytics Covered in the INFORMS Analytics Framework



HISTORICAL OUTCOMES

Year	# Schools Represented	# Students	# Teams	# MS Certified	Prize Money (\$)	Case Challenge
2022	35	~500	171	608	\$25,000	Children’s Book Captioning
2023	72	1031	290	693	\$45,000	Healthcare
2024	36	931	172	652	\$40,000	Grief Assistance
2025	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$16,000	AI prompts with Context

- **96%** considered themselves to be moderately to extremely **knowledgeable of AI** after this competition
- **86%** considered themselves to be moderately to extremely knowledgeable of **Microsoft Azure AI services** after this competition
- **92%** believed this competition **helped fill a knowledge, skill, or ability gap** that they could showcase to employers
- **87%** said they would “probably” or “definitely” **discuss this competition work in a future interview** to highlight their analytics skills
- **89%** believed this competition **was worth the time and money** invested

TIMELINE

Historically have started right after Labor Day weekend. Based on feedback from faculty and the INFORMS MAPD group we started later in mid-October for 2025. We also will extend into the beginning of Spring semester 2026.

Regional Championship Events: Each Event Counts for Points

Launch Date	Event	Deadline	Link	Individual points (max)	Team points (max)	Percent
10/17/2025	Competition Kickoff! (Webinar)	11/14/2025	Join	250	750	4.67%
Can begin anytime	Team Registration Window	10/31/2025	Register	N/A	N/A	N/A
10/31/2025	The INFORMS Analytics Framework (IAF): The Proven Guide to Developing Analytics Solutions (Webinar)	11/31/25	Join	250	750	4.67%
11/10/2025	Mastering AI-900: Microsoft Azure AI Fundamentals Training (3 hours Webinar)	12/10/2025	Join	250	750	4.67%
11/14/2025	Unlocking SAS Academic Resources (Webinar)	12/14/2025	Join	250	750	4.67%
10/31/2025	Business Problem Framing Free Course (code to take course for free will be shared on 10/31/2025)	12/24/2025	Complete	250	750	4.67%
12/5/2025	Using “The Hero’s Journey” in data and AI (Webinar)	12/20/2025	Join	250	750	4.67%
Can begin anytime	Complete AI-900: Microsoft Azure AI Fundamentals Certification Score	12/8/2025	Register to take exam	1000	3000	18.69%
Can begin anytime	Complete SAS Badge (pick one among two available tracks)	12/31/25	Complete	850	2550	15.89%
Can begin anytime	Case Challenge Submissions	1/11/2026	Solve Case	2000	6000	37.38%
Total				5350	16050	100.00%

National Championship: Regional Champs Present in Person at JHU



Date	Event
1/13/2026	Regional champions announced - top scoring undergrad/grad teams by region (8 total teams) invited to The Johns Hopkins Carey Business School
1/31/2026	Final presentations at The Johns Hopkins Carey Business School

SPONSORS



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/data4good-analytics>