Datathon 2026

Official Handbook

@Datathon 2026

Email: umdac@um.edu.my

Table of Contents

1. Overview **3**
2. Competition Structure **3**
2.1. Schedule 3
2.2. Workshop 3
2.3. Preliminary Round 4
2.4. Final Round 4
2.5. Submissions 6
3. Dataset Usage Restrictions **6**
4. Certificates and Prizes **7**
5. Ideas & Intellectual Property **7**
6. General Terms and Condition **7**
Frequently Asked Questions **10**

1. Overview

Datathon 2026 is an annual data analytics competition organised by Universiti Malaya Data Analytics Club (UMDAC) to introduce challenges from real-world business problems and their respective analytical way to extract business insights from data. Unlike conventional programming competitions, this event rewards meaningful insights and practical business value, not technical complexity alone.

The Objective of Datathon 2026 are:

1. Encourage students to solve real-world business challenges with the application of data analytics & data science knowledge through collaboration, communication & teamwork
2. Train participants' analytical thinking, critical thinking & problem-solving skills
3. Promote innovation by encouraging participants to generate practical, data-driven business recommendations.
4. Bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge & industry expectations

Participants are expected to :

- Analyse the dataset & Understand the problem domain
- Communicate findings & Propose practical recommendations.

Datathon 2026 will run throughout November 2026 in a hybrid format, containing **Online Workshops & Preliminary Round** and a **Physical Final Round** at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology (FSKTM), University of Malaya. Throughout the competition, participants will

- Attend workshops by experienced speakers

- Receive guidance from mentors
- Engage with industry sponsors and judge

2. Competition Structure

2.1. Schedule

2.1.1. Datathon 2026 is made up of two rounds, the online Preliminary Round and the physical Final Round.

Date	Activity	Mode
27th October (Tuesday) - 9th November (Monday)	Registration	Online
10th November (Tuesday) - 12th November (Thursday)	Workshop	Online
13rd November (Friday)	Opening Ceremony, Competition Briefing, Sponsor Session, Problem Statement & Dataset Release. **Preliminary Round begins at 11.40 AM.**	Online
16th November (Monday)	Preliminary Round Ends/Judging Period Starts	Online
23rd November (Monday)	Finalist Announcement	Online
24th November (Tuesday)	Finalist Briefing	Online
28th November (Saturday)	Final Round & Closing Ceremony	Physical

**** Online sessions are held on Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp and Discord.**

2.2. Workshop

2.2.1. **Two online workshops** will be held during Preliminary Round from 1**0th of November** until **12th of November**, with topics related to Data Science and Analytics, with a hands-on session for each workshop

2.2.2. Joining links will be shared through the official Datathon 2026 channels.

2.2.3. The attendance to the workshop is not compulsory but highly encouraged as the participants can learn more about the Datathon in general aside from the workshop materials.

2.3. Preliminary Round

2.3.1. The Dataset and Problem Statement will only be revealed during the Opening Ceremony on 6th November 2026.

2.3.2. The Preliminary Round runs online from **13th November 2026** until the submission deadline on **16th November 2026**

2.3.3. Submission components

A. Presentation Slides

i. Maximum 10 pages in PDF format.

ii. Suggested to cover the following:

a. Understanding of the business problem and objectives.

b. Overview of the dataset and relevant data preparation.

c. Brief overview of the analytical methods used.

d. Initial analytical findings and key insights supported by data.

e. Brief, evidence-based business recommendations, where appropriate.

f. Conclusion summarising the key findings

B. **Dashboard**

i. Maximum 5 pages in PDF format.

ii. Suggested to present relevant visualisations of the dataset, including:
    a. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and relevant metrics.
    b. Trends, comparisons, or patterns relevant to the business problem.
    c. Visualisations supporting the team's initial findings.
    d. Appropriate labels, titles, and annotations to facilitate interpretation.

2.3.4. Detailed justification and validation of analytical methodologies, as well as a business implementation plan, are not required at this stage and are expected to be developed further by finalists during the Final Round.

2.3.5. The Finalist teams will be announced on **23rd November 2026 (Monday).**

2.3.6. Only the teams that are able to attend the physical **Final Round** on **28 November** will be considered for finalist selection.

2.4. Final Round

2.4.1. Only **30 finalists** will be selected to advance to the **Final Round.**

2.4.2. An **Online Finalist Briefing** will be held on **24th November 2026 (Tuesday).**

2.4.3. The Final Round would be a physical pitching session in **Dewan Kuliah 1 (DK1) and Bilik Kuliah 1 (BK1)**, **Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, University Malaya** on **28 November 2026 (Saturday)**. Further details shall be relayed after the preliminary round.

2.4.4. Participants who qualify for the finals are responsible for covering their own travel expenses to **Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, University Malaya**

2.4.5. The **submission deadline** is on **27th November 11.59 PM.**

2.4.6. Submission components:

A. Presentation Slides

i. Maximum 15 pages in PDF format.

ii. Must demonstrate further development beyond the Preliminary Round submission and suggested to cover the following:

a. Refined understanding of the business problem and objectives.

b. Further analytical investigation and deeper insights derived from the dataset.

c. Justification of analytical methodologies and validation of findings, where applicable.

d. Discussion of relevant assumptions, data limitations, and analytical limitations.

e. Refined business recommendations supported by analytical findings.

f. Business implementation plan outlining proposed actions, implementation considerations, and relevant stakeholders.

g. Expected business impact and relevant performance indicators (KPIs), including assumptions underlying projected outcomes where applicable.

h. Conclusion summarising the proposed solution and its business value.

B. **Dashboard**

i. Maximum 5 pages in PDF format.

ii. Must demonstrate refinement beyond the Preliminary Round submission, where appropriate, through:

a. Improved analytical depth and additional relevant insights.
b. Enhanced visualisation clarity and dashboard usability.
c. More effective presentation of relevant KPIs and comparisons.
d. Additional filtering, drill-downs, or interactive features where appropriate.
e. Clearer communication of findings that support the team's business recommendations.

2.4.7. Participants are encouraged to refine their solutions, findings, and visualisations before the final submission to improve their quality, reliability, and practical relevance.

2.4.8. On the Pitching Day (**28th November 2026**), the selected teams are given **15 minutes to pitch their product**.

2.5. Submissions

2.5.1. All submissions and work products must be exclusively created by registered team members during the official Datathon period. The use of pre-existing code, models, or analysis must be clearly cited and must comply with their respective licences. External public resources such as documentation, Stack Overflow, or public APIs may be consulted, but direct code copying should be minimal and properly attributed.

2.5.2. If any instances of plagiarism are discovered in the submitted answer, the relevant participant will be disqualified from Datathon 2026.

2.5.3. No late submissions will be accepted, nor will incomplete, incorrect, erroneous, fraudulent, counterfeit, or manipulated submissions be considered.

3. Dataset Usage Restrictions

Rules on use of dataset and on external datasets.

3.1. Participants must only use data provided by the organisers and/or approved public datasets specified inside these guidelines. Any external datasets must be:

- Publicly accessible and properly cited.
- Free from copyright restrictions or used with appropriate licence.
- Disclosed in the team's documentation and final submission.

3.2. The following data usage practices are strictly prohibited:

- Use of private or proprietary datasets without explicit permission.
- Scraping or collecting data in violation of terms of service.
- Using datasets containing sensitive identifiable personal information.
- Sharing competition datasets with non-participants.

- Using the provided datasets for purposes outside of Datathon

3.3. The dataset will be released at the Opening Ceremony on **13rd November 2026.**

4. Certificates and Prizes

4.1. Following the participation in Datathon 2026, an e-certificate of participation will be awarded to all participants.

4.2. The above-mentioned e-certificate will be sent out to participants by Datathon 2026 Organiser by email

4.3. Award of cash prizes will be credited to a specified bank account provided the Team Leader of the winners.

4.4. Datathon 2026 accepts no responsibility for the loss of prize if the wrong bank account and details are provided by participants. Participants shall take full responsibility for confirming the correct bank account and details given

4.5. The prize is offered with no liability on the part of Datathon 2026 organiser as to how the award will be divided among the team members.

Placing	Cash Prize
1st Place	RM 6000
2nd Place	RM 4000
3rd Place	RM 2000

Winners will be announced at the Closing Ceremony on **28 November 2026.**

5. Ideas & Intellectual Property

5.1. All participants will retain full rights over their ideas for the prototype, slides produced for pitching purposes.

5.2. The Datathon 2026 organiser will not have the power to disenfranchise any ideas that are presented by the participants on their submission of the pitching slides and the app developed (if any).

5.3. Ownership of the dashboard (if any) and ideas of the submitted pitching slides and solutions developed (if any) will remain as participants' in all circumstances.

5.4. The pitching slides submitted will be used only for the purpose of Datathon 2026.

6. General Terms and Condition

6.1. The organiser of Datathon 2026 maintains the right to modify these terms and conditions at any moment and without notice.

6.2. If any participant violates the terms and conditions of Datathon 2026, the organiser reserves the right to take any action towards the participant.

6.3. These terms and conditions are governed by Malaysian law, and participants consent to the exclusive jurisdiction of Malaysian courts.

6.4. All relevant federal, state, and local rules and regulations apply to this event. Where restricted, this offer is void.

6.5. The Datathon 2026 organiser reserves the right to contact any of the Participants at any time for more information or to explore possible collaborations opportunities.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Datathon 2026

umdac@um.edu.my

Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL FAQ

1. **Who is eligible to participate in Datathon 2026?**

   Datathon 2026 is open to undergraduate students from both public and private higher education institutions across Malaysia. Students from any university, course, or year of study can join.

2. **What are the team size and composition requirements?**

   Each team must consist of 1 to 3 members. Team members can be from different universities and academic years. However, team members cannot be replaced once the registration form is submitted.

3. **What is the overall schedule and key dates for the event?**

   - **Registration Period: Oct 27, 2026 – Nov 09, 2026**
   - **Online Workshops: Nov 10, 2026 – Nov 12, 2026**
   - **Opening Ceremony & Preliminary Round Start: Nov 13, 2026 at 11:40 AM**
   - **Preliminary Round Submission Deadline: Nov 16, 2026**
   - **Finalist Announcement: Nov 23, 2026**
   - **Final Round Submission Deadline: Nov 27, 2026, 11:59 PM**
   - **Physical Final Round & Closing Ceremony: Nov 28, 2026**

4. **In what format will Datathon 2026 be conducted?**

   The event is held in a hybrid format. Online sessions (Workshops, Opening Ceremony, and Preliminary Round) will take place via Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, and Discord. The Final Round pitching session and Closing Ceremony will take place physically at Dewan Kuliah 1 (DK1) and Bilik Kuliah 1 (BK1), Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology (FSKTM), Universiti Malaya.

5. **Is workshop attendance compulsory?**

Attendance at the online workshops (Nov 10–12, 2026) is not compulsory, but it is highly encouraged so participants can gain hands-on analytics knowledge and competition insights.

6. **What are the submission requirements for the Preliminary Round?**

Teams must submit two files by **Nov 16, 2026**:

- **Presentation Slides:** Maximum 10 pages in PDF format covering problem understanding, dataset overview, analytical findings, and initial recommendations.
- **Dashboard:** Maximum 5 pages in PDF format presenting visualisations, KPIs, trends, and pattern interpretations.

7. **What are the submission deliverables and pitching format for the Final Round?**

The 30 selected finalist teams must submit by Nov 27, 2026 at 11:59 PM:

- **Presentation Slides:** Maximum 15 pages in PDF format covering refined findings, methodology justifications, limitations, implementation plans, and expected business impacts.
- **Dashboard:** Maximum 5 pages in PDF format demonstrating enhanced analytical depth, visual clarity, and interactive features.

On pitching day (**Nov 28, 2026**), teams will receive a 15-minute slot to pitch their solution to the judges.

8. **What are the rules regarding dataset usage and external data?**

The official dataset will be released at the Opening Ceremony on Nov 13, 2026. External datasets are allowed only if they are publicly accessible, properly cited, free from copyright restrictions, and disclosed in the documentation. Using private datasets, unauthorized data scraping, sharing dataset files with non-participants, or using datasets outside Datathon 2026 is strictly prohibited.

9. What prizes and certificates will be awarded?

An e-certificate of participation will be emailed to all participants. Cash prizes will be awarded as follows:

- **1st Place: RM 6,000**
- **2nd Place: RM 4,000**
- **3rd Place: RM 2,000**

10. Who can participants contact for inquiries?

For questions or support, reach out to the UMDAC Datathon team via email at umdac@um.edu.my or contact:

- 📞 Farhad Zidane - **+60 10-215 3949**
- 📞 Lim Jia Qian - **+60 18-915 3888**

CONTEST FAQ

1. **How can participants find teammates if they do not have a full team?**
   Participants can use the official Team Finder Google Sheet linked in the registration form and handbook to browse individuals looking for teammates or list their own contact information to form a team.

2. **Who retains the Intellectual Property (IP) rights to submitted work?**
   Participants retain full ownership and rights over their ideas, prototype, pitch slides, and dashboard solutions. The organizers will use submitted materials strictly for competition evaluation.

3. **What are the rules regarding code usage, open-source tools, and plagiarism?**
   All submitted work must be created exclusively by registered team members during the competition period. Pre-existing code or public APIs may be used only if clearly cited and compliant with their respective licenses. Direct plagiarism or direct code copying without proper attribution will result in disqualification.

4. **Are travel and accommodation expenses covered for the physical Final Round?**
   No. Finalist teams participating in the physical pitching session on Nov 28, 2026, at Universiti Malaya are responsible for covering their own travel and accommodation expenses.

5. **Will food and beverages be provided during the physical Final Round?**
   Yes. Meals and refreshments (including breakfast and lunch) will be provided for all 30 finalist teams, judges, VIPs, and committee members during the physical event on Nov 28, 2026.

Email: umdac@um.edu.my

6. **Is there a dress code or attire requirement for the event?**
While there is no strict mandatory dress code, participants are strongly encouraged to dress in formal or business casual attire, especially for the 15-minute pitching session and physical Closing Ceremony.

7. **Are final round pitching presentations open to spectators or private?**
Pitching sessions are private (closed-door) between each individual finalist team and the judging panel. To preserve confidentiality and fair competition, spectators and fellow participants are not permitted to observe other teams' presentation slots.

8. **What documents must be uploaded during team registration?**
Each team member must upload:
   - **Student Verification Proof:** Preferably a valid student ID card to verify active undergraduate status.
   - **Resume:** Submitted to be shared with industry sponsors for networking and event-related opportunities.

9. **How will official competition updates and mentor communication be delivered?**
Once registration is confirmed, the Team Leader receives a confirmation email containing a link to the official Discord Server. Joining the Discord server is mandatory for all participants. Further updates, workshop links, and mentor sessions will be conducted via Discord, Microsoft Teams, and WhatsApp.

10. **Can a team replace or modify team members after registration?**
No. Team members cannot be replaced or modified once the registration form has been submitted.

11. **Are late submissions accepted for the Preliminary or Final Round?**
No. Late, incomplete, erroneous, or fraudulent submissions will not be considered under any circumstances.

12. **What networking or career opportunities are available during the event?**
Participants interact with sponsors through keynote sessions and dedicated sponsor slots. Resumes of participants are shared with sponsors, and the winning teams will participate in exclusive private sessions with sponsors following the Closing Ceremony.

13. **Where specifically is the physical Final Round hosted?**
The physical pitching session will take place at Dewan Kuliah 1 (DK1) and Bilik Kuliah 1 (BK1), Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology (FSKTM), Universiti Malaya.

Who should participants contact if they have question(s) that are not addressed in the FAQ list?

Participants should reach out to the management of UMDAC Datathon.

Email: umdac@um.edu.my

Contact Information:

📞 Farhad Zidane - **+60 10-215 3949**

📞 Lim Jia Qian - **+60 18-915 3888**