



SHARKMAKERS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

Student Participation Agreement, Parent/Guardian Consent, Liability Waiver & Media Release

2026–2027 Season | December 2026 – April 2027

Operated by Connect-IT 360, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

This Agreement establishes the expectations, responsibilities, participation requirements, permissions and protections applicable to students participating in the SharkMakers High School Program operated by Connect-IT 360, Inc.

Because participants may be minors, both the Student Participant and the Student's Parent/Legal Guardian must review and accept this Agreement before participation.

For purposes of this Agreement, "Connect-IT 360," "SharkMakers," "we," and "us" refer to Connect-IT 360, Inc., as nonprofit operator of the SharkMakers educational program. "Student" or "Participant" refers to the student participating in the program. "Parent/Guardian" refers to the Student's parent or legal guardian.

1. ABOUT SHARKMAKERS

Connect-IT 360, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to bridging the gap between education and industry through experiential learning, innovation, entrepreneurship and workforce development.

SharkMakers is Connect-IT 360's flagship educational program. Through hands-on workshops, industry mentorship, customer discovery, product development, business strategy, pitching and real-world experiences, students learn to identify meaningful problems, develop solutions and build the skills, confidence and professional network needed to become the CEOs of their lives.

2. PROGRAM PARTICIPATION & COMMITMENT

Participation in SharkMakers requires consistent engagement, teamwork, professional communication and respect for deadlines.

- Participate actively and in good faith throughout the SharkMakers season.
- Attend required workshops, mentor sessions, team activities, Pitch Tank, mock pitches, final pitches, awards activities and other required program events.
- Complete program assignments and deliverables by communicated deadlines.
- Work collaboratively with teammates.
- Communicate promptly when an unavoidable conflict arises.
- Follow SharkMakers program rules, safety requirements, event-host requirements and reasonable instructions from authorized program representatives.
- Demonstrate commitment to completing the program through the end of the season.

3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT & CODE OF CONDUCT

SharkMakers is committed to providing a safe, respectful, accessible and professional environment. Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism, maturity, accountability and respect at all times.

- Communicate with professionalism, clarity and respect.
- Treat fellow students, teammates, mentors, speakers, judges, volunteers, staff, partners and event hosts with dignity and respect.
- Receive feedback constructively.
- Respect people of all abilities, backgrounds, identities, viewpoints and experiences.
- Use appropriate language, tone and behavior in person and through digital communication.
- Follow event rules, safety protocols and host-site requirements.



- Refrain from bullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, retaliation, discrimination, abusive behavior or inappropriate conduct.
- Properly credit sources, collaborators and the work of others.
- Honestly represent research, project progress, financial information and program results.
- Avoid conduct that could place another participant, volunteer, partner or the program at risk.
- Report serious safety or conduct concerns to SharkMakers leadership.

Zero-Tolerance Policy

Serious violations may result in immediate removal from an event or from the SharkMakers program. Depending on the circumstances, consequences may also include suspension of participation privileges, loss of finalist eligibility, loss of award or prize eligibility, and loss of ambassador or future program opportunities.

When appropriate, Connect-IT 360 may provide notice and an opportunity to correct an issue. Immediate removal may occur where safety, harassment, threats, integrity or serious misconduct is involved.

4. STUDENT OWNERSHIP, TEAM COLLABORATION & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Students retain ownership of the original ideas, concepts and work they create through participation in SharkMakers, subject to the rights and contributions of other team members and any separate written agreement entered into by the team.

Connect-IT 360 and SharkMakers do not claim ownership or equity in a Student's project solely because the Student participates in the program.

- Team-created work may involve shared ownership among participating team members.
- Team members are responsible for discussing and documenting roles, contributions, decision-making and ownership.
- Students may not knowingly submit work owned by another person or organization as their own.
- Students may not knowingly use copyrighted, patented, trademarked or otherwise protected materials without authorization.
- Mentorship, judging, feedback and program participation do not create ownership rights in a Student's project for mentors, judges, volunteers, SharkMakers or Connect-IT 360.
- Any future commercialization, investment, licensing, equity arrangement or transfer of ownership involving a Student project must be addressed through a separate written agreement involving the appropriate parties and, where applicable, the Parent/Guardian.

5. SHARKMAKERS CURRICULUM, MATERIALS & BRAND

Program curriculum, methodologies, templates, presentations, training materials, recordings, branding, logos, frameworks and other materials supplied through SharkMakers or Connect-IT 360 remain the property of their respective owners.

Program materials are provided for the Student's participation in SharkMakers and may not be:

- Sold or commercially exploited.
- Reproduced or distributed as another educational program.
- Published publicly without authorization.
- Used to teach or operate another program.
- Shared through unauthorized accounts or platforms.

Students must use SharkMakers communication channels, shared workspaces and technology responsibly.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY & PROJECT INFORMATION

During the program, Students may receive or encounter nonpublic information involving other teams, mentors, organizations, partners or program operations.

- Respect confidential information shared during the program.
- Respect another team's reasonable request that its project information remain private.
- Not disclose another team's documents, strategies, demonstrations or project information without permission.

Students and Parents/Guardians also understand that SharkMakers is an educational program involving workshops, mentor discussions, judging, demonstrations and public pitch events. Accordingly, SharkMakers cannot guarantee that information voluntarily disclosed in workshops, mentoring sessions, judging activities or public presentations will remain confidential.

Students should not disclose passwords, trade secrets or highly sensitive proprietary information unless appropriate protections are in place.

7. FUNDRAISING REQUIREMENT

Participation in the SharkMakers High School Program includes a \$750 program fundraising commitment.

- Is part of the SharkMakers curriculum and student experience.
- May be raised through approved fundraising activities or contributed directly.
- Must be completed by the deadline communicated by SharkMakers.
- Must be completed for a team to remain eligible for finalist selection.
- Must be completed for eligibility for the \$15,000 in program awards.
- Applies regardless of the team's final placement or competition outcome.

Fundraising contributions and program-related payments are non-refundable except where otherwise required by law or expressly stated in writing.

8. AWARDS, PRIZES & PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

Participation in SharkMakers does not guarantee an award, prize, internship, mentorship, introduction, publicity opportunity or other future opportunity.

- Awards and prizes may be subject to separate eligibility requirements, sponsor conditions, documentation or tax requirements.
- Teams are responsible for determining how a team award is distributed among members unless written award terms state otherwise.
- Connect-IT 360 may withhold or revise an award if eligibility information is inaccurate, required program obligations are not completed or program rules are violated.
- Internships, introductions, mentor relationships and other opportunities may be subject to independent selection criteria determined by participating organizations.

9. WINNING TEAM – SHARKMAKERS STUDENT AMBASSADOR REQUIREMENT

Students selected as the Winning Team agree to serve as SharkMakers Student Ambassadors following the competition.

Program Season

December 2026 – April 2027

Winning Team Ambassador Term

May 2027 – August 31, 2027

Ambassador responsibilities may include:

- Participation in SharkMakers promotional, community, school and partner events.
- Pitch sessions, showcases and industry events.
- Interviews and media opportunities.
- Conference or community appearances.
- Sharing the SharkMakers experience with future participants.

- Representing SharkMakers and Connect-IT 360 professionally.

Potential activities may include SharkMakers partner events, technology showcases, industry conferences, pitch opportunities and other appropriate community experiences.

Acceptance of an award may include specific ambassador responsibilities when those requirements are communicated as part of the applicable award terms. Failure to fulfill material award-related ambassador requirements may affect awards, recognition or associated opportunities when those conditions are expressly included in the award terms.

10. EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, TRANSPORTATION & HOST LOCATIONS

Program activities may take place virtually and at schools, businesses, universities, nonprofit organizations, community venues and partner locations.

- The Parent/Guardian is responsible for arranging appropriate transportation unless otherwise expressly communicated in writing.
- Students must follow the rules and safety requirements of each host organization.
- Students are responsible for their personal belongings.
- Program schedules, speakers, mentors, judges, formats, activities and locations may change when reasonably necessary.
- Connect-IT 360 will make reasonable efforts to communicate material schedule or location changes.

11. ASSUMPTION OF RISK & LIMITED RELEASE

The Student and Parent/Guardian understand that participation in in-person and virtual SharkMakers activities may involve ordinary risks associated with educational, business and community events, including travel, slips or falls, illness, interaction with equipment or technology and loss of personal property.

The Parent/Guardian voluntarily authorizes the Student to participate in these activities and acknowledges these ordinary risks.

To the fullest extent permitted by Florida law, the Parent/Guardian, on behalf of themselves and the Student, releases Connect-IT 360, Inc., SharkMakers, and their officers, directors, employees, contractors, agents, volunteers, program partners and host organizations from claims for personal injury or property loss arising from ordinary risks of voluntary participation, except to the extent caused by gross negligence, intentional misconduct or as otherwise prohibited by law.

This Agreement does not require the Student or Parent/Guardian to indemnify Connect-IT 360 or any released party.

12. MEDIA RELEASE

The Parent/Guardian grants Connect-IT 360 and SharkMakers permission to photograph, film, record and interview the Student during SharkMakers activities.

Permission includes use of the Student's:

- Name.
- Photograph and likeness.
- Voice.
- Team or venture name.
- Project or pitch.
- Program experience.
- Biographical or educational information.

Connect-IT 360 and SharkMakers may use this material in educational, promotional, fundraising, documentary, social media, website, press, public-service and nonprofit communications without additional compensation.

Permission includes reasonable editing and current or future use of media created during the Student's participation.

The media release does not transfer ownership of the Student's underlying project, business concept or intellectual property.

A Parent/Guardian with a specific safety or privacy concern should notify the Program Director in writing before the applicable event. Connect-IT 360 will make reasonable efforts to accommodate such concerns but cannot guarantee removal of materials already produced or distributed.

13. WITHDRAWAL OR REMOVAL

A Student may withdraw from SharkMakers by having the Student or Parent/Guardian notify the Program Director in writing.

Connect-IT 360 may suspend or remove a Student for reasons including:

- Failure to participate.
- Serious or repeated violation of the Code of Conduct.
- Unsafe or disruptive behavior.
- Harassment, threats or intimidation.
- Misuse of SharkMakers materials, platforms or communication channels.
- Misrepresentation or academic/professional dishonesty.
- Conduct that materially harms another participant, volunteer, partner or the program.
- Failure to satisfy material program requirements.

Withdrawal or removal does not eliminate obligations that reasonably survive participation, including confidentiality, restrictions governing program materials, previously relied-upon media permissions and applicable releases.

14. NO REFUNDS

Unless otherwise required by law or expressly stated in writing, program fees, fundraising contributions and program-related payments are non-refundable.

This applies in the event of:

- Voluntary withdrawal.
- Removal from the program.
- Failure to complete the program.
- Failure to qualify as a finalist.
- Changes to the Student's personal schedule.
- Reasonable changes to SharkMakers event dates, speakers, venues or program activities.

15. MISCELLANEOUS & GOVERNING LAW

This Agreement represents the understanding concerning the Student's participation in the SharkMakers High School Program and may be supplemented by written program rules, event requirements or award terms.

Any material amendment to this Agreement must be in writing.

Failure to enforce one provision or incident does not waive any other provision or future incident.

If any provision of this Agreement is determined to be unenforceable, the remaining provisions will continue in effect to the fullest extent permitted by law.

This Agreement is governed by Florida law.

Any legal action relating to this Agreement must be brought in a state or federal court having jurisdiction in Pinellas County, Florida.

16. STUDENT SIGNATURE & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As the Student Participant, I confirm that I have read and understand the expectations applicable to my participation in SharkMakers.

I agree to:

- Follow the SharkMakers Code of Conduct.
- Participate fully and responsibly.
- Treat teammates, mentors, volunteers, partners and participants professionally and respectfully.
- Complete required program work and responsibilities.
- Meet program deadlines and communicate when issues arise.
- Follow SharkMakers program policies and requirements.
- Represent myself, my team and SharkMakers professionally.

I understand that SharkMakers is a team-based program requiring commitment, accountability, professionalism and active participation.

Student Full Name	
Student Email	
School	
Grade	
Student Signature / Electronic Acceptance	
Date	

17. PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT, SIGNATURE & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I certify that I am at least 18 years of age and am the parent or legal guardian of the Student Participant identified above. I give my consent for the Student to participate in the SharkMakers High School Program.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand this Agreement, including:

- Program participation requirements.
- Student Code of Conduct.
- Team and intellectual-property provisions.
- \$750 fundraising commitment.
- Award and finalist eligibility requirements.
- Winning Team Ambassador responsibilities.
- Event and transportation responsibilities.
- Assumption of risk and limited release.
- Media permission.
- Withdrawal and removal provisions.
- No-refund provisions.

I agree to support the Student in meeting the commitments and responsibilities associated with participation in SharkMakers.

I understand that both the Student's acceptance and the Parent/Guardian's acceptance are required for participation.

Parent/Guardian Full Name	
Relationship to Student	
Parent/Guardian Email	
Parent/Guardian Phone	
Parent/Guardian Signature / Electronic Acceptance	
Date	