

Reimagine the Court of Tomorrow

Reimagine how people move, play, gather, and experience tennis. If you can dream it, you can design it. Create your vision of a future tennis court in any visual format. No templates. No creative constraints. Any style.

COMPETITION BRIEF

As one of the most popular sports in the world, with over 100 million players globally and 27.3 million players in the United States, tennis continues to surge in growth, and the classic tennis court archetype is due for a decisive reimagining. Through the prioritization of design expression, durability, sustainability, expandability, and innovation, we now invite students to adapt the DNA of the classic tennis court and retool it for the future.

The tennis court is one of the world's great cultural sporting landscapes. Through this lens, we invite students to reimagine the future of play. While retaining the spirit of the sport, we ask entrants to imagine bold new approaches and material innovations in court design that express unique cultural traditions, respond to changing climatic conditions, have the capacity to extend daily and seasonal play, and can be tailored to US culture, climate, codes, and costs.

COMPETITION SPONSOR

The student design competition aims to provide students with an opportunity to develop a high-quality portfolio piece for the United States Tennis Association (USTA). The USTA is the national governing body for tennis in the United States. Our mission is to grow tennis to inspire healthier people and communities everywhere. We strive to make tennis accessible and enjoyable for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

EVALUATION

To guarantee the most objective competition results, submissions will be evaluated by a panel of judges selected by the USTA and consisting of tennis and design professionals in addition to professionals from other backgrounds relevant to the competition topic.

The jury may choose to reward projects that show a high degree of creativity, even if issues of constructability are unclear. Participants are advised to research both court construction and material innovation.

Scope & Criteria

COMPETITION CRITERIA

The USTA seeks not just concepts, but replicable prototypes with the potential to set a new benchmark for play. The smarter, the more adaptable, and the more expandable, the better.

To demonstrate adaptability, participants are encouraged to illustrate how their proposal could be situated in different regions or climates. Submissions should be contextually responsive and universally applicable, reflecting the diversity of American sites and regional cultural traditions.

While there is no fixed proposal location within the US, each team should identify a theoretical location so the design responsiveness can be evaluated. Each design should identify one of the following three climate types for the proposal:

1. **Warm Climates:** Hot, arid or humid conditions, high cooling need.
2. **Universal Climates:** Temperate or mixed conditions, requiring balanced seasonal strategies.
3. **Cold Climates:** Long winters, high heating demand, potential snow/ice management.

COMPETITION SCOPE

To keep the challenge grounded in reality, the competition uses simple reference points.

- Proposals should be designed for a battery of four regulation tennis courts, located on one (1) acre of land in a public park setting. Utilize the standard court dimensions outlined in the American Sports Builders Association *Tennis Court Construction and Maintenance Manual* (<https://sportsbuilders.org>).
- Surface materials should be either hard courts (concrete or asphalt) or soft courts (clay), with an emphasis on visual quality, care, playability, durability, and sustainability.
- Include a variety of site elements to enrich the physical environment. These elements include site lighting, shading, seating, stormwater management features, spectator areas, hitting walls, wind protection, sun protection, ecologically focused plant materials, sustainable court materials, including netting, surfacing, innovative striping materials, etc.

ORIGINAL WORK

Each submission must be the original work of the participants, created without the use of generative artificial intelligence. Participants are responsible for ensuring their entries do not violate the legal or creative rights of others—including copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, design, patent, or other intellectual property. (Review the [“The Future Court” Tennis Court Design Competition Official Rules](#) for additional details and requirements.)

Competition Details

COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

- The competition is open to all university students (ages 18+) who are registered for Spring 2026 coursework. No professional submissions.
- Students may enter the competition as individuals or teams of up to four (4) people.

COMPETITION DEADLINE

- The competition opens on **April 2, 2026** and the deadline to submit an entry to the competition is **July 1, 2026**.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Participants can upload up to three (3) 24×36" Arch D landscape-oriented presentation boards (must not exceed 10 MB per jpg) with sketches, renderings, plans, sections, elevations, diagrams, and/or other presentation tools to explain their proposal.
- No video files will be accepted.
- All information provided in writing must be in English.
- Presentation boards must not indicate any information related to an individual's/team's identity.
- Participants who do not comply with the requirements will be disqualified without explanation.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- All submissions must be uploaded via the [upload panel](#).
- Access information and instructions on how to upload the presentation boards will be issued to participants via email immediately after successful registration.

PRIZES

- 1st Place - \$7,500
- 2nd Place - \$5,000
- 3rd Place - \$2,500

Note: The top three teams will receive ground passes to the 2026 US Open at the National Tennis Center in New York City in late August.

QUESTIONS

Full rules, deadlines, submission steps, and answers to frequently asked questions are available online at [USTA.com/Facilities](https://www.usta.com/Facilities). For specific questions regarding the competition, please email facilities@usta.com.