

## 2026 Trust by Design Fintech Challenge OFFICIAL RULES

**NO PURCHASE OR FEE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR CLAIM A PRIZE. A PURCHASE WILL NOT INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING A PRIZE.**

***BY ACCEPTING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS IN THESE OFFICIAL RULES ON BEHALF OF A FINTECH (AS DEFINED BELOW), YOU REPRESENT AND WARRANT THAT: (A) YOU HAVE FULL LEGAL AUTHORITY TO BIND THE RESPECTIVE FINTECH TO THESE OFFICIAL RULES; (B) YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THESE OFFICIAL RULES; AND (C) YOU AGREE, ON BEHALF OF THE RESPECTIVE FINTECH, TO THESE OFFICIAL RULES.***

***THESE OFFICIAL RULES CONTAIN AN ARBITRATION AGREEMENT, WHICH WILL, WITH LIMITED EXCEPTION, REQUIRE YOU TO SUBMIT CLAIMS YOU HAVE AGAINST THE SPONSOR (AS DEFINED BELOW) TO BINDING AND FINAL ARBITRATION. UNDER THE ARBITRATION AGREEMENT, (A) YOU WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED TO PURSUE CLAIMS AGAINST THE SPONSOR ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, NOT AS A PLAINTIFF OR CLASS MEMBER IN ANY CLASS OR REPRESENTATIVE ACTION OR PROCEEDING, AND (B) YOU WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED TO SEEK RELIEF (INCLUDING MONETARY, INJUNCTIVE AND DECLARATORY RELIEF) ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.***

The 2026 Trust by Design Fintech Challenge (the “**Competition**”) begins at 12:00 a.m. EDT on April 20, 2026 (the “**Competition Start Date**”) and ends at 11:59 p.m. EDT on July 17, 2026 (the “**Competition End Date**”) (such period referred to herein as the “**Competition Period**”). The Competition is sponsored by Accion International (the “**Sponsor**”) and administered by Accion Impact Management LLC, through its Accion Ventures investment strategy, with implementation support from GRID Impact LLC (together, “**Administrators**”).

**1. OVERVIEW:** The Competition is open to all early-stage digital financial service providers and enabling technology providers (each company, a “**Fintech**”) focused on financial inclusion who desire to be considered for selection as a winner of the Trust by Design Fintech Challenge, a challenge sourcing fintech innovations that build trust and drive scale with women customers. There will be two (2) stages to the Competition, as outlined below, with ultimately four (4) Competition Winners (as defined below) selected from the eligible Entrants (as defined below) in accordance with the judging criteria and processes set forth below. Each Competition Winner will receive a cash prize, one (1) complimentary ticket to attend the Fintech for Inclusion Global Summit 2026 (to be held in London, United Kingdom on September 2, 2026), and economy-class airfare and hotel accommodations in connection therewith, each of which are described in more detail below. Competition Winners may also be offered non-monetary opportunities for global visibility and recognition as a trust-centered fintech innovator through curated events, sector publications and inclusion in Competition-related knowledge products (e.g., case studies, blog posts, playbooks and toolkits). For more information about the 2026 Trust by Design Fintech Challenge, please visit <https://www.accion.org/trust-by-design-fintech-challenge/>. The Competition is not open to individuals, such as employees or representatives registering for the Competition on behalf of a Fintech (an “**Applicant**”). All Applicants will receive the Trust by Design

Playbook — a practical guide about using gender-disaggregated data to reduce harm and strengthen women customer trust in digital finance, upon publication.

**2. HOW TO ENTER:** The Competition will include two (2) stages of evaluation as set forth herein.

**Stage 1:** An Applicant may enter a Fintech (an “**Entrant**”) in the Competition by completing and submitting the questions and fields denoted as “required” in the application made available through <https://www.accion.org/trust-by-design-fintech-challenge/> prior to the Competition End Date (a “**Submission**”) by May 22, 2026; provided, that, such deadline will be extended to June 5, 2026 if fewer than seventy-five (75) Submissions have been made by May 22, 2026 (such period commencing on the Competition Start Date and continuing through the applicable end date for Stage 1 Submissions, the “**Stage 1 Period**”). Limit to one (1) entry per Entrant. In the event that more than one Applicant submits an application on behalf of a Fintech, then the application that is first received by the Sponsor shall constitute the sole entry on behalf of the applicable Fintech. All eligible Submissions received during the Stage 1 Period will be reviewed by representatives of the Administrators in accordance with the judging criteria described in Section 6. Based on this review, the greater of (i) twenty (20) eligible Entrants and (ii) twenty percent (20%) of eligible Entrants will be selected to advance to Stage 2 and notified on or about June 1, 2026 (each, a “**Stage 2 Entrant**”).

**Stage 2:** Stage 2 Entrants will be required to participate in an interview with representatives of the Administrators to be conducted via video conference, during which the Administrators may ask questions and request clarification on additional information regarding the Submission. Such interview must take place between the end of the Stage 1 Period and the Competition End Date, at a time and date mutually agreed upon. Stage 2 Entrants must comply with all instructions provided by Sponsor in the notification of their advancement to Stage 2, including with respect to scheduling and participating in the interview, in order to remain eligible. Failure to do so may result in disqualification. Stage 2 Entrants will be evaluated by the Panel in accordance with the judging criteria described in Section 6, taking into account both the original Submission and a summary of the additional information provided during Stage 2.

Participation in the Competition is voluntary and does not require you to purchase anything from, or pay a fee to, the Sponsor. No illegible, incomplete, forged or altered Submissions will be accepted. All Submissions become the property of the Sponsor and will not be returned. All Submissions are subject to the Sponsor’s privacy policy located at <https://www.accion.org/privacy-policy/>.

**3. PRIZES:** The eligible Entrant receiving the highest score in accordance with Section 6 (the “**Grand Prize Winner**”) will receive a cash prize of \$50,000 USD and the three (3) eligible Entrants receiving the next highest scores in accordance with Section 6 (each, a “**Finalist Winner**” and together with the Grand Prize Winner, the “**Competition Winners**”), will receive a cash prize of \$10,000 USD. In addition, each Competition Winner will receive a complimentary ticket to attend the Fintech for Inclusion Global Summit 2026 in London, United Kingdom on September 2, 2026 (approximate retail value (“**ARV**”) of \$455 USD), plus economy-class airfare (ARV: \$1,500 USD) and hotel accommodation (ARV: \$1,545 USD) for one (1) representative (the “**Trip Prize**”). Each Competition Winner will also be featured in the Trust by Design Fintech Playbook (ARV: \$0). Total ARV: \$94,000 USD. Competition Winners may also be offered additional non-monetary opportunities for global

visibility and recognition as a trust-centered fintech innovator through curated events, sector publications and inclusion in Competition-related knowledge products (e.g., case studies, blog posts, playbooks and toolkits).

The odds of winning the prize depend on the number of eligible Submissions received during the Stage 1 Period. The Sponsor reserves the right to substitute prizes of equal or greater value. No other substitution or transfer of prizes permitted. The Sponsor is responsible only for prize delivery and is not responsible for prize utility, quality or otherwise. All additional expenses, including transportation to and from the airport or incidental travel costs not expressly stated in the package description above, including but not limited to, meals, personal charges at lodging, airport parking, security fees, taxes, gratuities or other expenses or incidentals are the responsibility solely of Competition Winners. Competition Winners must possess all necessary documentation required for air travel (e.g., valid photo identification). If in the judgment of the Sponsor, air travel is not required due to Competition Winner's proximity to the trip destination, ground transportation will be substituted for roundtrip air travel at the Sponsor's sole and absolute discretion. Sponsor is not responsible if event, air travel or hotel booking is changed, canceled, or postponed or if travel to the Trip Prize location is made unavailable by circumstances beyond Sponsor's control. Selection of airline, seating and lodging is selected by Sponsor in its sole discretion. Competition Winners are solely responsible for following any terms, conditions, or restrictions of any and all transportation companies, hotels and events and activities hosts.

In order to receive a prize, the Entrant and Applicant may be required to provide proof of identification or eligibility and any information that Sponsor may reasonably request in order to deliver the cash prize by check, bank wire or other method determined by Sponsor in its sole discretion. All applicable taxes, fees, duties or charges if any, on the prize, including income and/or sales taxes, are the sole responsibility of the respective Competition Winner. Any difference between the stated estimated value of a prize and its actual value will not be awarded. Competition Winners may be issued a 1099 U.S. Tax Form for the retail value of such prize and be required to submit the requisite IRS tax form for U.S.-source income (e.g., Form W-8BEN-E (Certificate of Status of Beneficial Owner for United States Tax Withholding and Reporting (Entities)), or any other required forms.

**4. ELIGIBILITY: THE CONTEST IS VOID WHERE PROHIBITED OR RESTRICTED BY LAW** and is subject to applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, and the following eligibility criteria.

*Entrant Eligibility.* The Competition is only open to Fintechs that (a) are (i) incorporated or formed in a jurisdiction other than any jurisdiction comprehensively sanctioned by the United States Office of Foreign Asset Control (“OFAC”) at the time the Submission is submitted (the list of sanctions programs administered by OFAC is available at <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/programs/pages/programs.aspx>) and (ii) not otherwise subject to OFAC sanctions, (b) have a business model that emphasizes the use of technology to enable solutions that are intended to improve financial services for unserved or underserved segments and (c) are in current and ongoing good standing under all applicable laws, rules and regulations starting on the Competition Start Date and continuing through verification of the Competition Winners. Eligible Entrants may include banks and digital banks, microfinance institutions (MFIs), fintech lenders and neobanks, mobile money providers and mobile network operators (MNOs), payment service providers (PSPs) and digital wallets, insurtech or digital insurance providers. Eligible Entrants typically are post-revenue and operating in-

market, serve women customers with evidence of strong engagement, collect and use gender-disaggregated data, demonstrate measurable outcomes related to harm reduction, safety, or trust, have digitally enabled core functionality, and/or operate in or credibly target emerging markets. For purposes of the Competition:

- “in-market” means the product or solution is already deployed in a real market environment and used by customers or financial institutions, with early evidence of traction and performance. Solutions should be live in at least one market and demonstrate real-world use; not concepts, prototypes, or research-stage pilots.
- “credibly target emerging markets” means an organization that has a clear operational strategy, partnerships, licensing pathway, or active pilot deployments that demonstrate realistic plans to serve customers in emerging market contexts.

The following organizations are not permitted to participate in the Competition and will not be deemed an “eligible Entrant”: (i) organizations that practice discrimination by race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, age or national origin; (ii) organizations that serve only their own memberships (such as those types of fraternal organizations, pageants, labor organizations or religious groups that do not provide services to persons who are not members (or relatives) of the particular group); and (iii) organizations affiliated with political parties, political candidates and/or political lobbyists. The Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to exclude any organization that it determines is inappropriate for any reason, or with or without cause, at any time.

Determination that a Fintech is, or is not, an eligible Entrant does not constitute or imply the Sponsor’s endorsement, recommendation or favoring of any Entrant.

*Applicant Eligibility.* The Applicant must be and hereby represents and warrants that: (a) the Applicant is a representative of the Entrant; (b) the Entrant is eligible to participate in the Competition; (c) the Applicant has legal authority to bind the Entrant to these Official Rules; (d) the Applicant hereby agrees to these Official Rules on behalf of himself or herself and their respective Entrant (and will, if requested by the Sponsor, confirm the same in writing) and agree to be bound by the decisions of the Sponsor; (e) the Applicant is at least 18 or the age of majority (or older) in their jurisdiction of residence, whichever is greater, at the time of completing the Submission; and (f) the Applicant is a legal resident of a jurisdiction other than any jurisdiction sanctioned by OFAC at the time the Submission is submitted (the list of sanctions programs administered by OFAC is available at <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/programs/pages/programs.aspx>) and the Applicant is not on OFAC’s Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List available at <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/SDN-List/Pages/default.aspx>. If the Applicant does not agree and/or does not have the legal authority to agree to these Official Rules, neither the Applicant nor the respective Fintech may enter the Competition. Employees, volunteers, independent contractors, officers and directors of the Sponsor and any judges or anyone else directly involved in the development, funding, or execution of the Competition, and each of their affiliates and subsidiaries, advertising, promotion and fulfillment agencies or legal advisors and such parties’ immediate family members and persons living in the same household are not eligible to participate in the Competition.

*Submission Eligibility.* A Submission that is submitted in connection with the Competition will only be eligible if such Submission: (a) is in English; (b) does not disparage the Sponsor or any other person or party affiliated with the Competition; (c) is submitted during the Competition Period; (d) contains only

the original content of the Applicant or the Entrant; (e) does not contain content that is unlawful, hateful or obscene; and (f) does not exhibit any of the following disqualifying characteristics, as determined by the Sponsor in its sole discretion: (i) gender integrity failures, including “gender-washing” (women as segment only; gender language without concrete product, policy, or operation changes for women; no credible pathway to women’s outcomes; cannot articulate what will improve for women or how harm reduction will be achieved); (ii) responsibility and harm risks, including privacy/consent unclear or unsafe; weak consumer approach; excessive data collection with no safeguards; data extraction without user benefit; collecting sensitive data without a clear, proportional purpose and protections; no harm mitigation (evidence of harm events or high-risk model without a credible prevention/mitigation/escalation plan); (iii) poor evidence and measurement, including cannot report gender-disaggregated data and no credible plan to collect/use it; claims without evidence (e.g., impact assertions with no data, no proxy metrics, no validation approach); or (iv) lack of implementation credibility, including concept-only with no operational pathway (no deployment plan, no partners, no traction signal); delivery model lacks accountability (e.g., agent/channel approach without oversight, controls, or complaint handling); capacity constraints (clear signs the applicant cannot realistically execute, competing priorities, no ownership, weak resourcing). The Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify Submissions which the Sponsor determines at any time in its sole judgment fail to meet any of these criteria or fail to comply with the terms and conditions in these Official Rules.

**5. USE OF SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER CONTENT:** Under no circumstances will the Sponsor be required to treat any Submission or content as confidential. By submitting to the Sponsor your Submission and providing any other content, including any information or other materials provided during the Stage 2 interview (collectively the “**Contributed Information**”), you automatically represent and warrant that you have the right to grant, and do hereby grant, to the Sponsor the paid-up, royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, sublicensable, non-exclusive right and license to (a) create aggregated data from your Contributed Information (“**Aggregated Data**”), (b) use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute, perform and display the Contributed Information (in whole or in part) worldwide and/or to incorporate all or any portion of such Contributed Information in other works in any form, media or technology now known or later developed for the full term of any patent, trademark, trade secret, copyright or other proprietary rights of any party that may exist in such Contributed Information; and (c) use the Contributed Information, including without limitation, the right and license to make, use, sell, offer for sale, and import any products and/or services which practice or embody, or are configured for use in practicing, all or any portion of the Contributed Information and the right to practice any methods related to such products or services in connection with use of the Contributed Information. Sponsor owns all right, title and interest in and to the Aggregated Data and can use the Aggregated Data for any purposes. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if an Entrant is not selected as a Competition Winner and objects to Sponsor’s public distribution and use of certain Contributed Information for promotional purposes, such Entrant may submit a written request to the Sponsor at [trustbydesign-ext@accion.org](mailto:trustbydesign-ext@accion.org), specifying the particular Contributed Information and use to which the Entrant objects. Upon receipt of such request, Sponsor will use commercially reasonable efforts to cease such use of the identified Contributed Information on a prospective basis. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, if an Entrant is selected as a Competition Winner, such Entrant acknowledges and agrees that the Sponsor may use such Entrant’s Contributed Information, including identifying details (such as name, logo, business description, and other relevant information), for promotional, educational, and research purposes, including in case studies,

publications, and other materials, without further notice or compensation, and such Competition Winner will not have the right to opt out of such uses.

## 6. SELECTION OF THE COMPETITION WINNERS:

**(a) Stage 1 – Initial Application Review:** Representatives of the Administrators will review all eligible Submissions received during the Stage 1 Period and select the greater of: (i) twenty (20) eligible Entrants and (ii) twenty percent (20%) of eligible Entrants with the highest-scoring Submissions from among all eligible Submissions received by the Stage 1 End Date to advance to Stage 2 based on the following criteria:

- **Traction & Market Validation:** each Submission will be assessed for whether the Entrant provides concrete evidence of product-market fit with a digitally enabled solution. This includes data on active female user growth, high retention rates, or transaction volumes that prove the solution is not just a concept, but a functioning tool with the potential to scale across the digital horizon. [30%]
- **Harm Reduction & Trust Signal:** each Submission will be assessed for whether the Entrant’s solution integrates an innovative approach to harm reduction or consumer protection and has been tested in a real market setting (pilot acceptable) and demonstrates at least one traction signal (e.g., active usage, repeat usage/retention, satisfaction, transaction activity, or comparable indicators).[25%]
- **Use of Gender-Disaggregated Data (GDD):** each Submission will be assessed for whether and how effectively the Entrant’s solution can track (or credibly commit to tracking) gender-disaggregated data relevant to the solution, and can explain how it is used to identify gaps, harms, or improvement opportunities. [20%]
- **Strength of Evidence:** can describe a realistic approach to regulatory and compliance requirements in its operating/target markets (e.g., licensing model, partners, KYC/AML considerations, consumer protection obligations). [15%]
- **Clarity & Coherence of Product or Solution:** each Submission will be assessed for whether the Entrant’s solution presents a logically structured and coherent vision for how the solution functions. The Entrant clearly articulates the technical delivery and the social impact, ensuring the model is transparent and replicable. [10%]

In the event of a tie between two or more Entrants for Stage 1, the Entrant with the Submission that received the highest score for Harm Reduction & Trust Signal, as determined by the Administrator representatives in their sole discretion, will be deemed the Stage 2 Winner among the tied Entrants. The selected Stage 2 Winners will be notified via the email address provided in connection with their respective Submissions.

**(b) Stage 2 – Finalist Evaluation:** At the end of the Competition Period, a panel of qualified judges selected by Sponsor (the “Panel”) in its sole discretion will select the four (4) Competition Winners from Stage 2 Entrants with the highest-scoring Submissions based on the following criteria:

- **Innovation in Trust Building:** This criterion assesses the degree to which the Entrant’s solution introduces a genuinely innovative, customer-facing approach to

building trust. Strong Submissions clearly articulate what was built and demonstrate how the solution identifies specific harms or trust barriers affecting women customers and responds with a meaningfully different, transformative approach. Priority is given to solutions that go beyond compliance or incremental improvement, address root causes of distrust and low usage, and redesign how trust is built through products, features, or engagement strategies grounded in harm-reduction principles. [(30%)]

- **Impact:** This criterion evaluates the demonstrated outcomes of the Entrant’s solution for women customers, particularly in relation to trust, usage, financial health gains, or reduced harms. Strong Submissions provide measurable evidence of what the solution has achieved, supported by baseline data and a credible methodology. Both quantitative and qualitative data are considered. This criterion focuses on outcomes achieved or credibly emerging from implementation, not on delivery capacity or scale alone. [(30%)]
- **Intentionality:** This criterion assesses how intentionally and rigorously the Entrant’s solution was designed and built. Strong Submissions demonstrate the use of gender-responsive design, user research, or co-design processes that reflect a clear, evidence-based understanding of women’s needs, behaviors, and barriers, rather than assumptions. This includes a clear line from insight to design decision, as well as evidence of responsible data use, consent, and robust privacy practices. [(20%)]
- **Execution Readiness:** This criterion evaluates the Entrant’s level of execution readiness, as demonstrated through tangible outputs and operational capacity. Strong Submissions provide concrete evidence that the solution is functioning in practice - such as live features, users reached, adoption, partnerships, or embedded delivery - rather than remaining conceptual. This category focuses on evidence of execution and delivery readiness, not on outcomes or impact, which are assessed separately. [(20%)]

The highest-scoring Submission from the Competition Winners will be the Grand Prize Winner. The three (3) next highest-scoring Submissions will be the Finalist Winners.

In the event of a tie between two or more Stage 2 Entrants, the Stage 2 Entrant with the Submission that received the highest score for Innovation in Trust Building, as determined by the Panel in their sole discretion, will be deemed the Competition Winner among the tied Stage 2 Entrants.

The selected Competition Winners will be notified via the email address provided in connection with their respective Submissions, within one (1) month of the Competition End Date. By completing and submitting a Submission, each Entrant acknowledges that if selected as a Competition Winner such Entrant shall automatically be deemed to have accepted the prize(s). If such Entrant (or such Entrant’s Submission) is ineligible, an alternate Competition Winner may be selected. Each Competition Winner agrees to the Sponsor’s use of the Entrant’s name, address, trademarks, service marks, logos, likeness and/or prize information for promotional, educational and research purposes in any medium without additional compensation to the extent permitted by law. Where lawful, a Competition Winner may be required to sign and return an Affidavit of Eligibility, Release of Liability and Publicity Release.

7. **CONDITIONS:** The Sponsor, the Administrators, and each of their respective agents, directors, officers, shareholders, employees, insurers, parents, subsidiaries, divisions, affiliates, predecessors, successors, representatives, advertising, promotion and fulfillment agencies and legal advisors (the

“**Released Entities**”), are not responsible for, shall not be liable for, and hereby disclaim all liability arising from or relating to: (a) late, lost, delayed, damaged, misdirected, misaddressed, incomplete or unintelligible Submissions; (b) telephone, electronic, hardware or software program, network, Internet, computer or other malfunctions, failures or difficulties of any kind, whether human or technical; (c) failed, incomplete, garbled or delayed computer or email transmissions; (d) any condition caused by events beyond the control of the applicable Released Entity; (e) any injuries, losses or damages of any kind arising in connection with or as a result of any prize, or any portion thereof that may have been awarded, or acceptance, possession or use of any prize, or any portion thereof that may have been awarded, or from participation in the Competition; or (f) any printing or typographical errors in any materials associated with the Competition. The Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to suspend, modify or cancel the Competition, including awarding all or any portion of the prizes, should any unauthorized human intervention, *force majeure* event, or other causes beyond the Sponsor’s control corrupt or affect the administration, security, safety, fairness or proper conduct of the Competition. As used herein, an event of *force majeure* shall be deemed to include, without limitation, an act of God; pandemic; war, riot or civil commotion; terrorism; fire; casualties; utility failure, boycott; labor dispute, strike or stoppage (including a strike by the members of any union); an act of any national, sub-national or local authorities; or any other similar or dissimilar act beyond Sponsor’s reasonable control. In the event that proper administration of the Competition is prevented by such causes as contemplated above, Sponsor shall be relieved of their executory obligations with regard to awarding the prizes or any portion thereof. By participating in the Competition, Applicants and Entrants agree to release, discharge and hold harmless the Released Entities, and all others associated with the development and execution of the Competition, from any and all losses, damages, rights, claims and actions of any kind arising out of or relating to the Competition, participation in the Competition, any prize, or any portion thereof that may have been awarded, and/or acceptance, possession, use or misuse of any prize, or any portion thereof that may have been awarded, including but not limited to statutory and common law claims for misappropriation or a Entrant’s right of publicity. The Competition shall be governed by New York law. This English language version of these Official Rules will be the official version of these Official Rules, even if these Official Rules are translated into any other language.

## **8. ARBITRATION AGREEMENT: PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY AS IT AFFECTS YOUR RIGHTS.**

(a) *Agreement to Arbitrate.* This Section 8 is referred to in these Official Rules as the “**Arbitration Agreement.**” You agree that any and all disputes or claims that have arisen or may arise between you (and/or the Entrant) and the Sponsor, whether arising out of or relating to these Official Rules (including any alleged breach thereof), the Competition, your participation in the Competition, the prizes, acceptance, possession use or misuse of the prizes, any advertising or any aspect of the relationship or transactions between you and the Sponsor, shall be resolved exclusively through final and binding arbitration, rather than a court, in accordance with the terms of this Arbitration Agreement, except that you may assert individual claims in small claims court, if your claims qualify. Further, this Arbitration Agreement does not preclude you from bringing issues to the attention of federal, state or local agencies, and such agencies can, if the law allows, seek relief against the Sponsor on your behalf. You agree that, by participating in the Competition and entering into these Official Rules, you and the Sponsor are each waiving the right to a trial by jury or to participate in a class action. Your rights will be determined by a neutral arbitrator, not a judge or jury. The Federal Arbitration Act governs the interpretation and enforcement of this Arbitration Agreement.

***(b) Prohibition of Class and Representative Actions and Non-Individualized Relief. YOU AND THE SPONSOR AGREE THAT EACH OF US MAY BRING CLAIMS AGAINST THE OTHER ONLY ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS AND NOT AS A PLAINTIFF OR CLASS MEMBER IN ANY PURPORTED CLASS OR REPRESENTATIVE ACTION OR PROCEEDING. UNLESS BOTH YOU AND THE SPONSOR AGREE OTHERWISE, THE ARBITRATOR MAY NOT CONSOLIDATE OR JOIN MORE THAN ONE PERSON'S OR PARTY'S CLAIMS AND MAY NOT OTHERWISE PRESIDE OVER ANY FORM OF A CONSOLIDATED, REPRESENTATIVE OR CLASS PROCEEDING. ALSO, THE ARBITRATOR MAY AWARD RELIEF (INCLUDING MONETARY, INJUNCTIVE AND DECLARATORY RELIEF) ONLY IN FAVOR OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTY SEEKING RELIEF AND ONLY TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE RELIEF NECESSITATED BY THAT PARTY'S INDIVIDUAL CLAIM(S).***

*(c) Pre-Arbitration Dispute Resolution.* The Sponsor is always interested in resolving disputes amicably and efficiently, and most Applicant and/or Entrant concerns can be resolved quickly and to such party's satisfaction by emailing the Sponsor's support team at [trustbydesign-ext@accion.org](mailto:trustbydesign-ext@accion.org). If such efforts prove unsuccessful, a party who intends to seek arbitration must first send to the other, by certified mail, a written Notice of Dispute ("Notice"). The Notice must be sent to the Sponsor, Accion International, Attn: Trust by Design Fintech Challenge, 1101 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005 U.S.A. ("Notice Address") with a copy by email to [legal@accion.org](mailto:legal@accion.org). The Notice must (i) describe the nature and basis of the claim or dispute and (ii) set forth the specific relief sought. If the Sponsor and you do not resolve the claim within sixty (60) calendar days after the Notice is received, you or the Sponsor may commence an arbitration proceeding. During the arbitration, the amount of any settlement offer made by the Sponsor or you shall not be disclosed to the arbitrator until after the arbitrator determines the amount, if any, to which you or the Sponsor is entitled.

*(d) Arbitration Procedures.* Arbitration will be conducted by a neutral arbitrator in accordance with the American Arbitration Association's ("AAA") rules and procedures, including the AAA's Supplementary Procedures for Consumer-Related Disputes (collectively, the "AAA Rules"), as modified by this Arbitration Agreement. For information on the AAA, please visit its website, <http://www.adr.org>. Information about the AAA Rules and fees for consumer disputes can be found at the AAA's consumer arbitration page, [http://www.adr.org/consumer\\_arbitration](http://www.adr.org/consumer_arbitration). If there is any inconsistency between any term of the AAA Rules and any term of this Arbitration Agreement, the applicable terms of this Arbitration Agreement will control unless the arbitrator determines that the application of the inconsistent Arbitration Agreement terms would not result in a fundamentally fair arbitration. The arbitrator must also follow the provisions of these Official Rules as a court would. All issues are for the arbitrator to decide, including, but not limited to, issues relating to the scope, enforceability and arbitrability of this Arbitration Agreement. Although arbitration proceedings are usually simpler and more streamlined than trials and other judicial proceedings, the arbitrator can award the same damages and relief on an individual basis that a court can award to an individual under these Official Rules and applicable law. Decisions by the arbitrator are enforceable in court and may be overturned by a court only for very limited reasons.

Unless the Sponsor and you agree otherwise, any arbitration hearings will take place in a reasonably convenient location for both parties with due consideration of their ability to travel and other pertinent circumstances. If the parties are unable to agree on a location, the determination shall be made by AAA. If your claim is for 10,000 USD or less, the Sponsor agrees that you may choose whether the

arbitration will be conducted solely on the basis of documents submitted to the arbitrator, through a telephonic hearing, or by an in-person hearing as established by the AAA Rules. If your claim exceeds 10,000 USD, the right to a hearing will be determined by the AAA Rules. Regardless of the manner in which the arbitration is conducted, the arbitrator shall issue a reasoned written decision sufficient to explain the essential findings and conclusions on which the award is based.

(e) *Costs of Arbitration*. Payment of all filing, administration and arbitrator fees (collectively, the “**Arbitration Fees**”) will be governed by the AAA Rules, unless otherwise provided in this Arbitration Agreement. Any payment of attorneys’ fees will be governed by the AAA Rules.

(f) *Confidentiality*. All aspects of the arbitration proceeding, and any ruling, decision or award by the arbitrator, will be strictly confidential for the benefit of all parties.

(g) *Severability*. If a court or the arbitrator decides that any term or provision of this Arbitration Agreement other than Section 8(b) above is invalid or unenforceable, the parties agree to replace such term or provision with a term or provision that is valid and enforceable and that comes closest to expressing the intention of the invalid or unenforceable term or provision, and this Arbitration Agreement shall be enforceable as so modified. If a court or the arbitrator decides that any of the provisions of Section 8(b) is invalid or unenforceable, then the entirety of this Arbitration Agreement shall be null and void. The remainder of these Official Rules will continue to apply.

**9. WINNERS LIST**: To obtain the Fintech name, city and state of the selected Competition Winners after the Competition End Date visit <https://www.accion.org/trust-by-design-fintech-challenge/>.

**10. SPONSOR**:

Accion International  
1101 15th Street NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20005 U.S.A.

**11. NOTICE**: The Sponsor reserves the right to prosecute and seek damages against any individual who attempts to deliberately undermine the proper operation of the Competition in violation of these Official Rules and/or criminal and/or civil law.

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