

Formula Student Europe – Manifesto version 2026

Formula student is more than just a competition; it is a unique platform that shapes the next generation of engineers, innovators, and leaders. To ensure its continued success and positive impact, it is essential to establish a shared understanding of the values and fundamental principles that define Formula Student.

This manifesto serves as a guiding document, outlining the core beliefs that drive the Competition, emphasizing its educational purpose, accessibility, safety, and contribution to both Industry and society. By aligning on these principles, we can work together to maintain and evolve Formula Student as a meaningful and transformative experience for all participants.

1. Formula Student is the most complex engineering, management, and team challenge a university team can undertake.

Formula Student is about learning as much as possible as a young student. Applying theory in practice is just one aspect; the major challenge lies in making it happen within a team of 20, 50, or even 100 members. Building a fully functional car in under a year is a significant achievement. Team members learn to cooperate, understand financial and time constraints, prioritize tasks, and mitigate risks through real-life experience, not just in engineering, but in every area necessary to bring a product to life.

2. Formula Student makes a significant contribution to both industry and society.

Formula Student participants go on to become top performers in their respective fields. These students enter the workforce with a two- to five-year head start, thanks to their hands-on experience and deep understanding of what it takes to create something that truly works. In measurable terms, a Formula Student alumnus is estimated to generate 10–25% more value annually. With 10,000 students participating annually across Europe, the impact is immense.

3. Formula Student is not just about technology; it is about educating the next generation of engineers, regardless of industry.

Building a functional race car is merely the "bait" that draws students into the challenge, motivating them to willingly sacrifice their free time, late nights, and even one or two semesters to acquire invaluable skills. However, these skills are universal. Regardless of the type of drivetrain used, the journey teaches students to be adaptable and learn quickly. Formula Student should remain open to emerging and diverse technologies but should only impose restrictions if they are necessary for safety, fairness, or ethical considerations.

4. Participating in Formula Student should be as affordable as possible.

The entry barrier to Formula Student should be kept as low as possible to ensure that students from all social and financial backgrounds have the opportunity to compete and learn. Mandating expensive technologies can exclude less fortunate universities, regions, and countries, ultimately depriving young engineers of this valuable experience.

5. Formula Student should prioritize safety above all else.

Protecting participants must always be the top priority. Injuries and accidents should be prevented through careful planning and responsible decision-making. No unnecessary or uncalculated risks should be taken, whether on or off the track.

6. Formula Student is an investment in the future; by industry, government, universities, students, and volunteers.

The economic benefits of Formula Student enrich the entire community, industry, and economy. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the program, investment must come from all stakeholders equally, rather than relying solely on students and volunteers.

7. Formula Student should adapt to technological advancements and challenges.

The competition should remain open to new technologies and actively explore how they can be integrated into the framework. Staying at the forefront of innovation is essential to maintaining the program's relevance and impact.

8. Formula Student should not rely solely on the enthusiasm of the community for sustainability.

Industry and governmental agencies must recognize the significance of Formula Student and support its growth accordingly. Programs of this scale and importance deserve structured and ongoing funding to ensure they can continue evolving and providing value.

9. Formula Student participants represent the best of the next generation and should act accordingly.

Learning and having fun go hand in hand in Formula Student. Members are responsible young professionals who care for their community, treat one another with respect, and serve as role models for their peers and the industry. Their behaviour should always reflect these values.