

## Daikin and incMTY Launch the Airtech Challenge 2025

For the fourth consecutive year, DAIKIN, the leading innovator and global leader in high-quality advanced air conditioning and heating solutions for residential, commercial, and industrial applications, together with incMTY, the most influential and important innovation, investment, and entrepreneurship hub in LATAM, present the most important open innovation challenge in the HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) industry in Latin America: **The Airtech Challenge**.

### Our Objective

We aim to attract startups operating in Latin America at pre-seed, seed, Series A, or early Series B investment stages.

At Airtech Challenge, we are committed to finding innovative and disruptive startups focused on revolutionizing the HVAC industry with their value proposition and changing the status quo of air systems.

### Verticals

#### 01. Fintech applied to HVAC

This vertical explores how digital financial solutions can be integrated into the HVAC sector to optimize business models, enable broader access to technology, and encourage the adoption of sustainable solutions through mechanisms such as financing, subscriptions, or pay-per-use models.

Technologies like embedded payments, green financing, blockchain for smart contracts, and alternative credit scoring are gaining momentum in Latin America, with Brazil leading the regional fintech movement. For the HVAC industry, this represents a way to democratize access to climate control solutions through “as-a-service” models, smart leasing, or inclusive financing schemes. For Daikin, this vertical opens opportunities to scale its value proposition to new market segments and strengthen its relationship with end users through innovative financial models.

#### Trends:

- Financial inclusion in underserved markets
- Adoption of embedded payments and credit scoring
- Sustainable financing for energy-efficient solutions

#### Strategic areas:

- Facilitates pay-per-use and subscription models
- Encourages adoption of energy-efficient equipment
- Reduces barriers to entry for residential and SME clients
- Embedded lending or credit scoring platforms for HVAC customers
- Green financing startups offering B2B/B2C credit

- Digital leasing platforms for equipment financing
- Fintechs offering utility-based payment integration
- Insurtechs bundling equipment protection or warranty solutions

**Technologies:**

- Embedded finance APIs (integrated payment and credit services)
- Blockchain (for secure, traceable transactions or smart contracts)
- AI-based credit scoring (alternative data to assess creditworthiness)
- Open banking (data sharing for financing and risk evaluation)
- Mobile wallets & digital payments
- BNPL (Buy Now, Pay Later) and micro-leasing platforms
- Smart contract platforms for pay-per-use models

**Example of startups:**

1. Fintechs specializing in B2B credit or smart leasing
2. Green financing or pay-per-use platforms
3. Insurtechs offering equipment-related insurance products
4. Startups building embedded payment infrastructure
5. Alternative credit solutions for SMEs or residential customers

## 02. Intelligent service / CX/UX

This vertical focuses on enhancing user experience and smart service delivery through digital technologies. It seeks solutions that improve interaction with HVAC products before, during, and after the sale – from better customer service to predictive and remote maintenance.

Conversational AI, behavioral analytics, personalized mobile apps, and omnichannel platforms are transforming customer experience across Latin America, particularly in Brazil and Mexico. In HVAC, these technologies enable more intuitive user interaction, stronger customer loyalty, and more efficient after-sales service. For Daikin, this is a chance to differentiate through user-centric experiences, optimize service networks, and build stronger long-term customer relationships.

**Trends:**

- Hyper-personalization and AI-driven interactions
- Predictive maintenance and proactive service
- Frictionless digital onboarding and post-sale support

**Strategic areas:**

- Enhances customer satisfaction and brand loyalty
- Optimizes technician dispatch and service networks
- Reduces downtime and maintenance costs
- AI-driven virtual assistants or chatbot platforms
- Predictive maintenance tools with IoT integration
- CX/UX design platforms for user-facing HVAC apps
- Augmented reality tools for remote troubleshooting
- Field service management apps for technician coordination

### Technologies:

- AI and Machine Learning (chatbots, personalization, predictive service)
- IoT (Internet of Things) for real-time system monitoring
- Augmented Reality (AR) for guided repair and remote support
- Computer Vision (remote diagnostics or service validation)
- Mobile-first platforms and no-code/low-code CX tools
- Voice recognition/NLP for smart interfaces
- Field service automation technologies

### Example of startups:

1. CX/UX platforms focused on user analytics
2. Maintenance management or remote monitoring apps
3. AI-based customer support tools
4. Digital onboarding or post-sale experience startups
5. Augmented reality solutions for technical support

## Steps to Participate

1. Register your startup using the official form and provide all required information.
2. Receive confirmation of your submission via email.
3. The organizing team will internally evaluate applications based on:
  - a. Maturity stage
  - b. Relevance to proposed verticals
  - c. Collaboration potential with Daikin for proof of concept
4. Internal pitch of the top startups that meet the criteria mentioned above.
5. Final pitch with top 3 startups.

To participate, applicants must clearly explain the stage their startup is in, the problem they have identified, how they are solving it, and the business model behind their solution. **It is also important to clearly explain how the solution is connected to the HVAC industry.**

Initiatives may be at the following stages:

- **Pre-seed stage startups:**  
Teams with startups that have a clear value proposition and are in the process of technical or market validation, seeking a partner to help them move to the next level.
- **Seed stage startups:**  
Initiatives with early sales and proven operational models that are looking to grow in the short term and seek to partner with a leading corporation to scale exponentially within the HVAC industry.
- **Series A stage startups:**  
Companies with a validated business model and strong early growth, looking to scale

operations, expand their team, and improve their technology through a strategic partnership. They aim to carry out proof-of-concept testing and start commercial collaborations to unlock the full potential of their proposed technology.

- **Series B stage startups:**

Companies in an accelerated growth phase with sustainable revenue and an established customer base, focused on market expansion, internationalization, and operational optimization. They aim to solidify their position as industry leaders while initiating proof-of-concept testing to trigger commercial collaborations.

Initiatives must be established in a Latin American country and operate their solution within the same region. Additionally, they must be original ideas and not adaptations of technologies from other regions; therefore, models such as exclusive commercialization or franchises are automatically excluded from this call.

## Who Can Apply to the Airtech Challenge 2025?

People who meet the following criteria can register their initiatives for the **Airtech Challenge 2025**:

- They must be citizens of a Latin American country or individuals who do not have citizenship from any Latin American country but whose initiative is operating within the Latin American region.
- They must be of legal age in their country of residence or at least 18 years old (either of these two cases).
- In case they are finalists, they must have the legal ability to travel to Mexico and Japan in 2025 and 2026. (This is a mandatory requirement.)
- Proficiency in English, as interactions with Daikin will be in English.
- They must be available, and if reaching the final, present their pitch in person in English in Monterrey, Mexico, in September 2025. (It is the responsibility of the participants to ensure they have the required and valid documents to travel to Mexico, and Japan if selected as the 1st place winner, such as a visa and passport if required)

Applicants must have the necessary equipment and internet access. If selected, they must be available to complete the activities of the selection and strengthening process in a timely manner, as well as attend the final award ceremony if they are finalists. They must also participate in the acceleration process in Monterrey, Mexico.

## Participation Stages

This call will be open from May 5, 2025, to July 31, 2025. To apply, participants must complete the application form at the following link: [www.incmty.com/airtech](http://www.incmty.com/airtech)

Throughout the challenge, participants must go through several elimination stages, progressively narrowing down the pool until reaching the Grand Finale:

- **Registration Stage (May 5 to July 31, 2025):** Startups must select the region they belong to (Mexico & Central America, South America, or Brazil) and complete their registration clearly and accurately. Any startup that fails to properly register or submits duplicate entries in multiple regions will be automatically disqualified.
- **Pre-selection Stage (August 1 to 15, 2025):** Once the call is closed, the evaluation committee will review all submitted registrations and videos. These will be assessed according to internal criteria established by the organizing institutions of the challenge. The results of this pre-selection will be sent via email to the team leader registered. Likewise, initiatives moving on to the next stage will be contacted to confirm their continued participation.
- **Virtual Regional Selection Stage (August 18 to 29, 2025):** After pre-selection, the selected initiatives will move on to the virtual regional selection stage. Finalist startups from the three designated regions will participate. From this stage, three finalists will be chosen to present their pitch in English.
- **Final Stage and Finalist Selection – FINAL PITCH (September 23, 24, and 25, 2025):** The final pitch will take place during the AHR Expo in Monterrey, Mexico. During the event, startups will have 8 minutes to present their innovation to Daikin's panel of judges. Afterward, they will have 3 minutes to answer the judges' questions. At the end of the event, the winning initiative will be announced, determining the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places of the **Airtech Challenge**.

*\* It is the responsibility of each team registered in the challenge to stay informed through official communications and channels regarding the dates, times, and format (in-person or virtual) of each stage of the competition. Notifications will be sent to the email address of the registered team leader and the second team member.*

## Awards

### 1° Business Trip to Japan + Daikin connection

- Strengthen the relationship with the TIC, in collaboration with open innovation labs, through continued engagement with the winning startup of the Airtech Challenge.
- AHR Expo participation & spotlight RRSS & Community events (DIMO)
- \$20k in POC

## 2°Daikin Strategic Connections

- Promote collaboration dynamics between Daikin and high-potential startups, taking into account their stage of maturity and the material conditions required for effective implementation.
- AHR Expo participation & spotlight RRSS & Community events (DIMO)
- \$10k in POC

## 3°Daikin Strategic Connections

- Promote collaboration dynamics between Daikin and high-potential startups, taking into account their stage of maturity and the material conditions required for effective implementation.
- AHR Expo participation & spotlight RRSS & Community events (DIMO)
- \$5k in POC

## Terms and Conditions of the incMTY Airtech Challenge

The challenge is an initiative led by Daikin Industries and incMTY.

The Terms and Conditions that each participant agrees to are outlined below:

1. Registered participants who, for any reason, are unable to continue in the competition must notify their withdrawal so that the necessary measures can be taken.
2. By submitting their participation, participants accept the terms and conditions of the challenge.
3. Any claims regarding the results obtained by the teams and their classification, as well as any other matters related to the competition, will be resolved definitively and without appeal by the Evaluation Committee.
4. The organizing institutions reserve the right to remove any team if any irregularity is detected, either before or during the competition.
5. For the project registration process, the registration form must be fully completed with accurate and truthful information.
6. The information provided for each project will be used exclusively for the purposes of the program (evaluation and follow-up process). No individual outside the program will have access to this information.
7. The ownership and authorship of the projects remain the exclusive property of the creators (project founders). The program does not request participation, ownership, or any other benefits from the projects.
8. Throughout the program, DAIKIN staff and collaborators may act as mentors for the projects in areas such as business, marketing, and commercialization, under an open innovation and shared knowledge model. However, if during such mentorship a mentor from DAIKIN makes

an identifiable and novel or inventive technical contribution that could potentially lead to industrial property rights (e.g., inventions, industrial designs, utility models), and Daikin is interested in protecting such contributions, the parties will mutually agree with the participant, in a fair manner and prior to continuing with the project, on the terms of such co-ownership. These terms will be documented in a legal agreement, including ownership percentages, economic rights, and rights of use. It is understood that the participant must always retain a percentage of ownership, financial participation, and usage rights. Daikin agrees that if it fails to carry out this process in a timely and transparent manner with the participant's knowledge, it may not later claim any title or interest in any intellectual property rights resulting from its personnel's or collaborators' involvement.

9. Participants may not register projects that are related to activities prohibited by this call, including but not limited to: sex, pornography, criminal activities, gambling, betting, adult entertainment, casinos, or any type of transaction that violates national Mexican laws or regulations.
10. The data of each participant and information about their startup will be treated as confidential. No other participant will have access to this information.
11. The organizing committee reserves the right to modify the guidelines as often as necessary to clarify, improve, or expand the terms and conditions, and will communicate any changes to the public through the appropriate channels.
12. For any questions or topics related to this call, participants may contact: **luis.azuara@tec.mx**
13. **Image Use Permission:** By participating, individuals grant permission for the use of their image for promotional purposes related to the **Airtech Challenge**.

## Disqualification Criteria

Projects will be subject to disqualification if team members and/or the project are involved in any of the following situations:

- Team members are direct or indirect active collaborators of any of the institutions promoting the challenge and are also serving as judges.
- Individuals holding an active position in a political party.
- Active public servants.
- Individuals with political aspirations and/or direct or indirect involvement with political parties.
- Participants who submit evidence (e.g., video pitch) that does not correspond to the registered project and/or that includes technology belonging to another project.
- Projects directed and executed by government institutions.
- Participants engaged in commercial activities through the licensing, sale, or representation of a technology that was not developed by any member of the participating team.
- Projects will be disqualified if their registration forms are incomplete, contain false information, are submitted after the deadline, or if the same project is registered multiple times.
- A single individual may not register more than once. People listed in multiple projects and/or startups will be disqualified from all projects in which their name appears.

- Projects participating in other calls or competitions held during the incMTY 2025 festival will not be allowed.
- If a project is registered in more than two calls organized by incMTY, the participant must clarify in which one they wish to proceed; otherwise, they will be disqualified from all calls in which they have registered.
- Projects linked to any prohibited activities listed in this call will be disqualified.

## Glossary of Terms Used in This Document

**Internal Evaluation:** The process of verifying the information provided in the registration form, including assessing the relevance and accuracy of the data submitted by each startup applying to the **Airtech Challenge 2025**. This evaluation focuses on alignment with the proposed verticals and the potential for collaboration with Daikin.

**Startup Selection:** Evaluation conducted by a committee of experts and Daikin's innovation team through a virtual pitch session in English. Startups are assessed based on their level of innovation, stage of maturity, value proposition in relation to the market, and the strength of the founding team.

## Participating Regions

### Definition of Subregions and Countries:

- **Mexico and Central America includes at least the following countries:**
  - *Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador*
- **Brazil**
- **South America includes at least the following countries:**
  - *Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay, Peru, Ecuador*