Design Decode ’26

Redesign. Rethink. Refine.

Conducted by: UI/UX Design Division, Cyber Labs, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad

Duration: 120 minutes

Format: Individual / Team Contest

Team size: 1–2 participants

Flow of the Event

1. Registration: Participants register individually or in teams of 1–2 through the designated registration platform. Each participant/team is assigned a registration ID for submission and result tracking.

2. Opening Ceremony: The organizing team introduces the event, explains the challenge format, timeline, rules, AI usage policy, submission requirements, and judging process.

3. Interface Reveal & Problem Brief: All participants receive the same intentionally mediocre digital interface along with a short brief describing its intended users, purpose, and essential functionality.

4. Redesign Phase – 120 Minutes: Participants redesign the interface using Figma. The redesign should address information hierarchy, navigation, layout, typography, colour usage, accessibility, user flow, consistency, and overall visual appeal.

5. Submission: Participants submit the final redesigned screen(s), shareable Figma file/link, exported PNG/PDF, and a short UX write-up identifying the major problems and principal solutions.

6. Judging: Judges evaluate all submissions using the fixed 100-mark rubric. Judges record marks independently before the organizing team consolidates the scores.

7. Result Announcement: Final standings are announced after score consolidation, followed by the closing of the event.

Importance of the Event

Design Decode ’26 offers an accessible entry point into UI/UX design and design competition culture. Instead of asking participants to begin from a blank canvas, the event gives everyone the same deliberately weak interface and asks them to diagnose and improve it. This emphasizes hands-on learning, problem-solving, creative freedom within constraints, and practical Figma skills while maintaining a common baseline for fair comparison.

Rules

- Participants may compete individually or in teams of 2 members. Team composition must be finalized before the challenge begins.
- Participants must carry a charged laptop and ensure access to their Figma account before the event.
- The redesign must be completed within the allotted 120-minute competition period.
- The core purpose and essential functionality of the original interface must be retained.
- Designs must be created during the competition period. Direct copying of another participant's interface or submission is prohibited.
- External icons and legally usable design resources are allowed, provided that the final design is substantially created by the participant/team.
- AI tools may be used for ideation, general research, or reference. The final UI design, layout decisions, component construction, and submission must be the participant's own work.
- Participants must not use AI or automation to generate a complete submission and present it as independently designed work.

- All required deliverables must be submitted before the announced deadline. Late or incomplete submissions may be rejected where the omission prevents fair evaluation.
- Participants must not share complete solutions or copied design files with other participants during the competition.
- Plagiarism, direct copying, deliberate sabotage, or manipulation of another participant's work may result in disqualification.
- Judges' decisions on design evaluation are final. Any procedural dispute should be raised with the organizing team immediately.

Deliverables

- Final redesigned UI – PNG/PDF and/or Figma frames.
- Shareable Figma file/link with the necessary viewing/access permissions.
- A text document containing short UX write-up identifying the key problems in the original interface and explaining the major solutions.
- (Optional yet preferable to add in the text document) Design rationale covering important decisions relating to flow, hierarchy, accessibility, typography, colour, and usability.

Evaluation & Marking

UX & Usability — 30 marks: User flow and navigation – 10; information hierarchy and clarity – 8; accessibility and ease of use – 6; interaction logic and consistency – 6.

Visual Design — 30 marks: Layout and spacing – 8; typography – 7; colour and contrast – 7; visual consistency, components, and polish – 8.

Creativity & Innovation — 25 marks: Originality of solution – 10; innovative improvements – 8; effective use of design patterns/components – 7.

Problem Understanding — 15 marks: Identification of core UX problems – 8; quality of reasoning and alignment between problem and solution – 7.

Total — 100 marks: Final score out of 100.

Important judging principle: Visual polish alone should not compensate for poor usability. Judges should evaluate the redesigned experience as a complete product interface, with particular attention to whether the proposed solutions actually address the identified problems.