WORKED EXAMPLE · SCORED

An entry, marked

This is a complete entry to the Birdspiracy AI Competition, scored against the published criteria with every point accounted for. It is here so you can see where marks are actually won and lost — not as a standard you are expected to match.

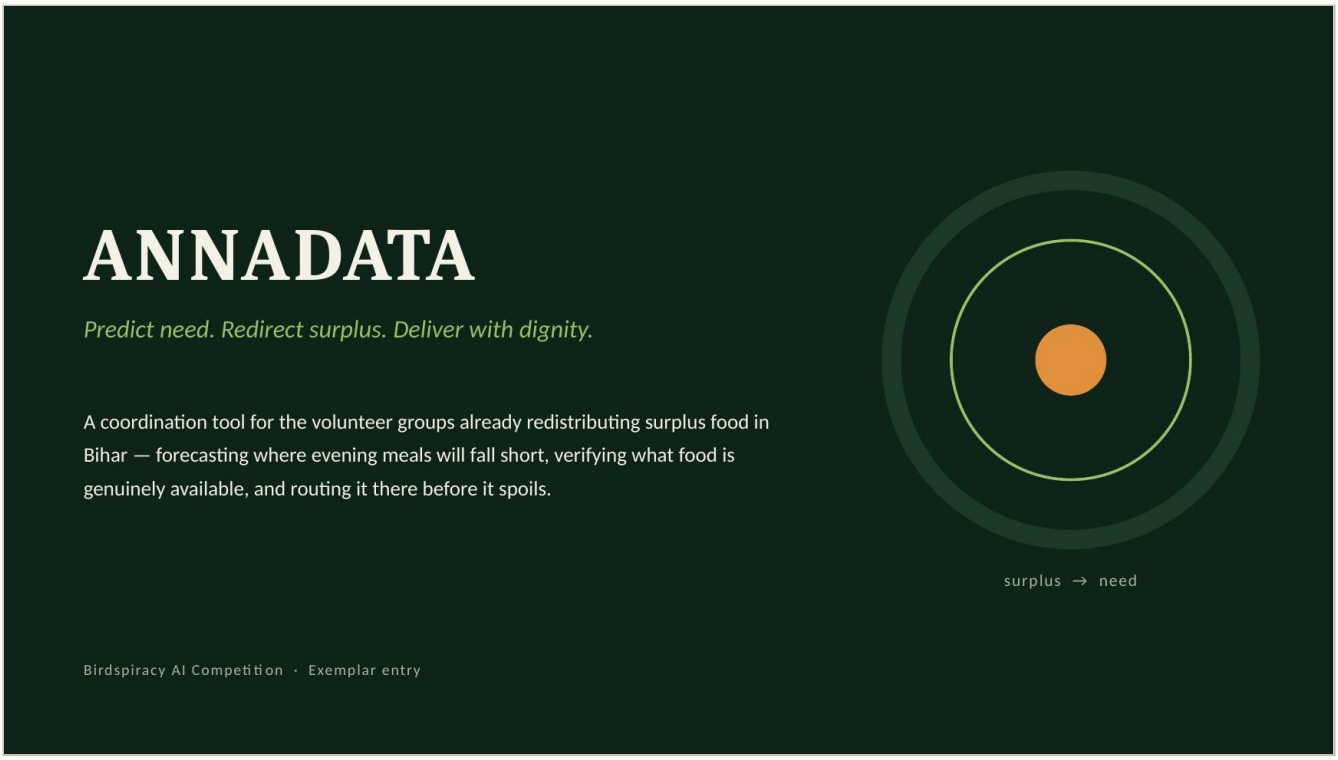
The problem	9 / 10
Solution & AI impact	18 / 20
Presentation	9 / 10
Final score	**36 / 40**

Read this first

- This entry was written by an adult with time and research tools. A strong entry from a school team will not look like this, and does not need to. The structure and the honesty are what to copy — not the polish.
- Nothing here scores full marks. Four points are lost, and every one of them comes from the same mistake: **stating something more confidently than the evidence supports**. That is the most common way good entries lose marks.
- The deck uses 5 content slides. Four is the minimum and six the maximum. The title slide and the sources slide are both required and neither counts toward that.

Scored against the published judging criteria. birdspiracy.com

Title slide



EARNED MARKS	The one-line description says what the thing actually is — a coordination tool for volunteer groups — rather than a slogan. A judge knows what they are about to read.
WHY	Team name, school and class belong here. This example omits them because it is a demonstration.
LOST MARKS	Nothing lost here. A title slide is not scored; it just has to exist and orient the reader.

The problem

Surplus food and unmet need sit within a few kilometres of each other, and nobody knows it in time.

Who this is about. Volunteer redistribution groups operating in Patna district. They collect surplus from wedding halls, hostel canteens and restaurants, and take it to settlements the same evening. Most run on WhatsApp and a phone tree.

What goes wrong. Surplus is offered late and expires within hours. Volunteers guess where to take it, so the same accessible settlements are served repeatedly while others are missed. Nothing records what was delivered where, so nobody learns from last week.

Why it persists. Every group is small, unfunded, and coordinating by hand. The scheduling problem is genuinely hard, and no one group sees enough of the district to solve it.

78 million tonnes

of household food wasted in India in 2022 — second only to China. UNEP, 2024

Bihar is improving, and still highest but one

Stunting in under-fives, Bihar. NFHS-4, 5 and 6.

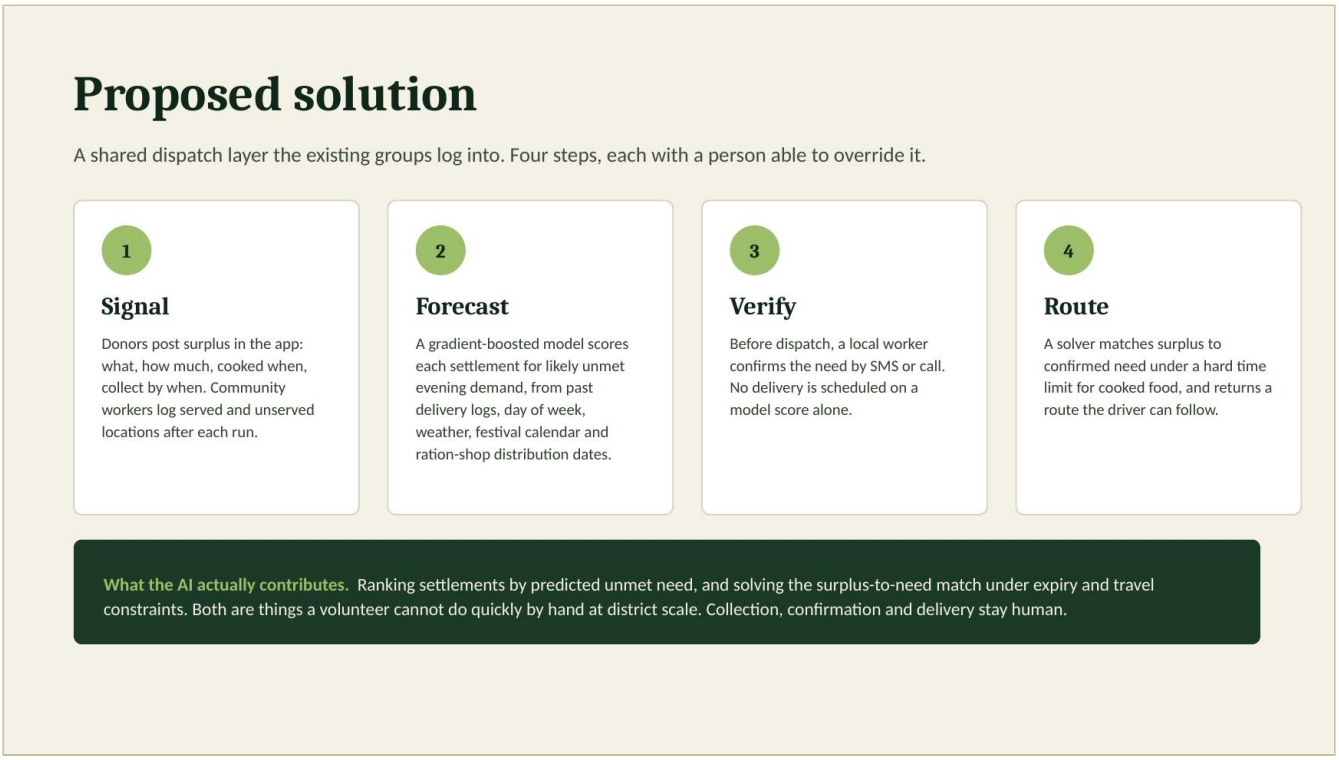
EARNED MARKS — The population is narrow and specific: volunteer redistribution groups in one district. Not "hunger in India". Almost every entry that scores in the middle band fails exactly here.

EARNED MARKS — Three labelled parts — who this is about, what goes wrong, why it persists. The third is the one most entries skip, and it is what separates a described problem from an examined one.

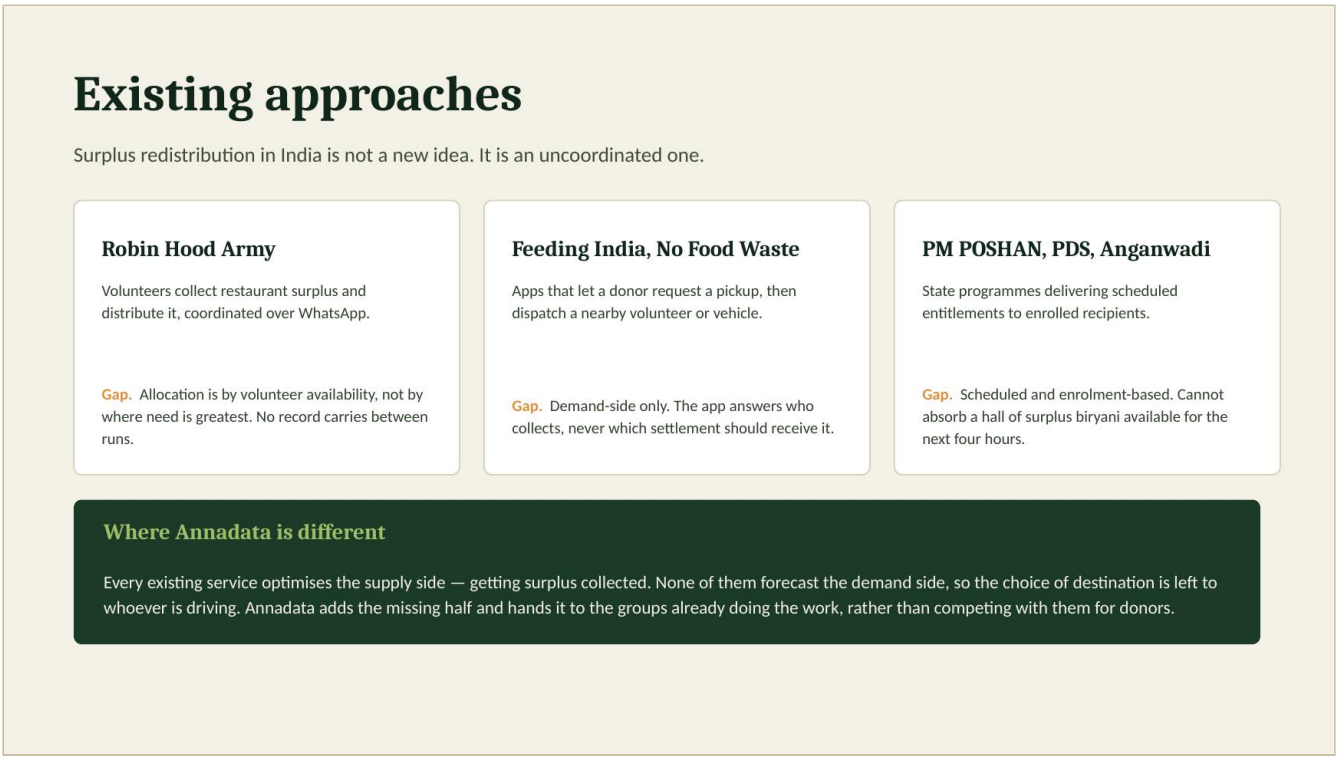
EARNED MARKS — Both figures are attributed with an organisation and a year, and both are traceable on the sources slide.

EARNED MARKS — The chart shows a decline rather than a single alarming number. Admitting the problem is improving is more credible than implying it is not, and a judge notices.

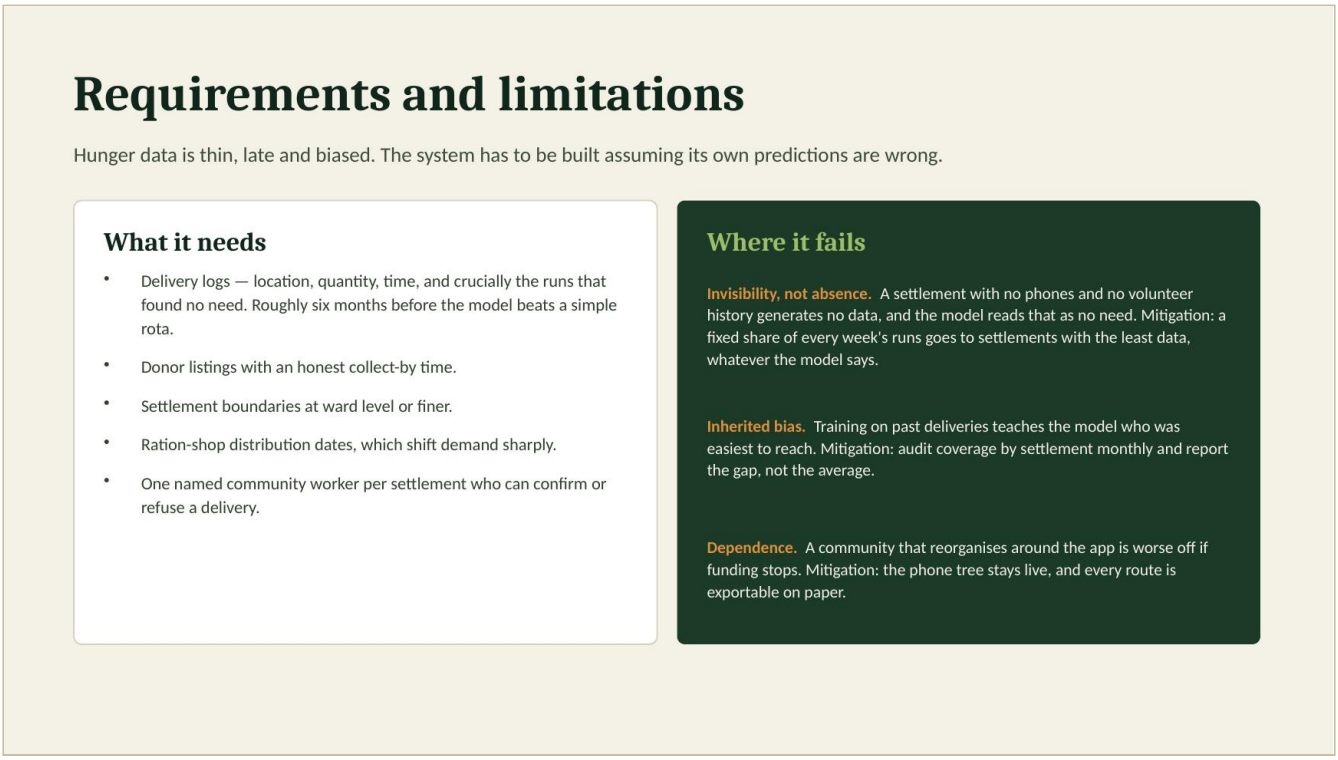
LOST MARKS — **One mark lost.** The 78 million tonnes figure is national *household* food waste, but the problem described is institutional surplus from wedding halls and canteens. Those are different streams. It proves surplus exists at scale; it does not size the surplus this system would actually move.



EARNED MARKS	The mechanism is specific: what goes in, what the model does, what comes out, who acts on it. A reader can restate the system after one pass.
EARNED MARKS	The model type and its inputs are named. "A gradient-boosted model scoring settlements from delivery logs, weather and ration-shop dates" is a claim that can be argued with. "An AI system that helps" is not.
EARNED MARKS	Step 3 is a human verification step placed between prediction and dispatch. Building in a limit on the AI's authority is stronger than claiming the AI is accurate.
EARNED MARKS	The band at the bottom states plainly what the AI contributes and what stays human. This is the single most useful sentence in the deck.



EARNED MARKS	Four real organisations and schemes named, each with what it does and precisely what it does not do. This is how originality gets *evidenced* rather than asserted.
EARNED MARKS	The gap is stated in the same terms across all three columns — supply side covered, demand side not — so the argument accumulates instead of repeating.
EARNED MARKS	The closing band says the idea works *with* existing groups rather than replacing them. Judges are wary of proposals that assume everyone currently doing the work is doing it wrong.
WHY	Leaving this section out is the most common reason a genuinely good idea lands in the middle band. Judges cannot tell an idea is new unless you show what it is being compared against.

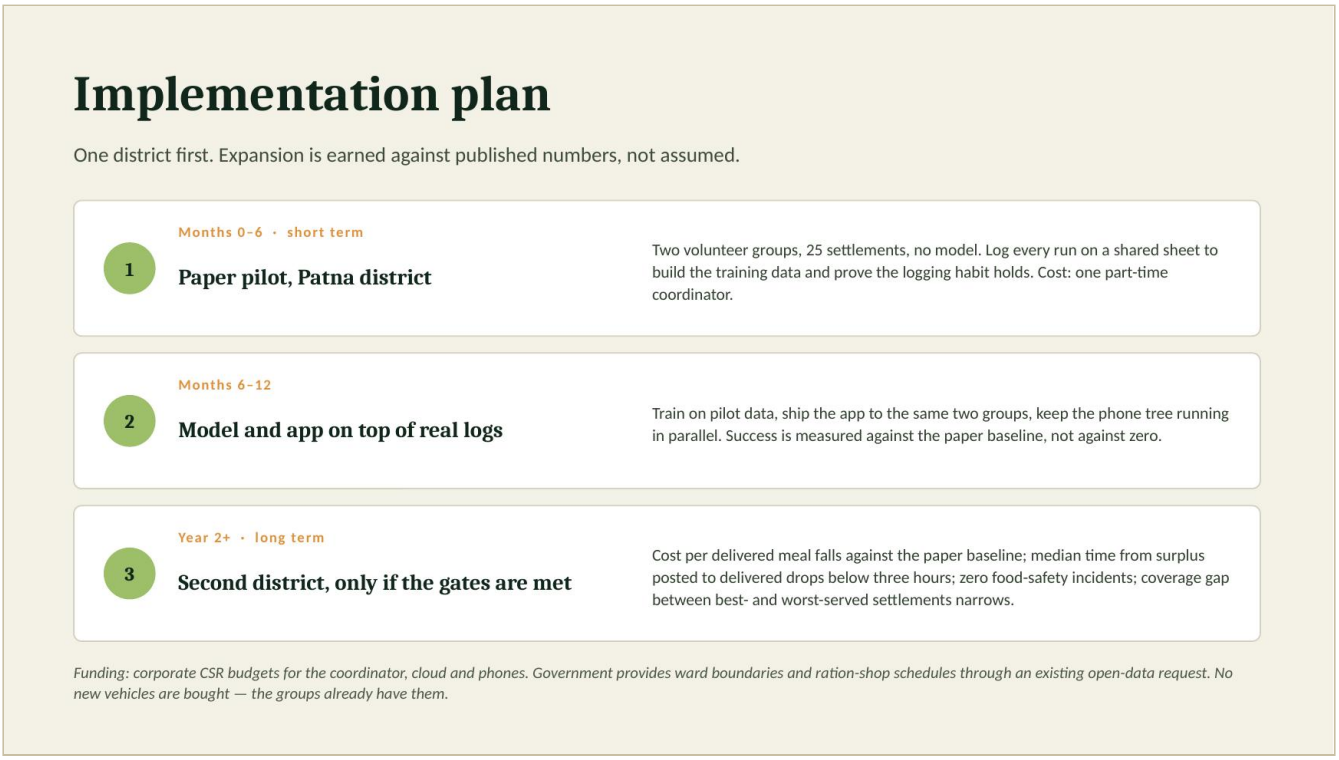


EARNED MARKS — Every failure mode is paired with a mitigation that costs something. "A fixed share of every week's runs goes to settlements with the least data, whatever the model says" is a real trade-off, not a reassurance.

EARNED MARKS — The first failure — a settlement with no digital footprint reading as no need — is the sharpest observation in the deck. It identifies a way the system would quietly harm the people it is meant to help.

EARNED MARKS — The left column names what does not exist yet and would have to be collected first. Honest about the gap between the idea and the conditions it needs.

LOST MARKS — **One mark lost.** "Roughly six months before the model beats a simple rota" is a guess presented with the confidence of an estimate. Naming it as an assumption to be tested would have cost nothing and read as more rigorous.



EARNED MARKS

Phase 1 contains no AI at all. Six months of paper logging, because the data to train on does not exist yet. This is the strongest single choice in the deck — it shows someone who thought about the plan rather than assuming it.

EARNED MARKS

Expansion is gated on four named, measurable conditions. "Only expand if cost per delivered meal falls" is a commitment; "we will scale nationally" is a wish.

EARNED MARKS

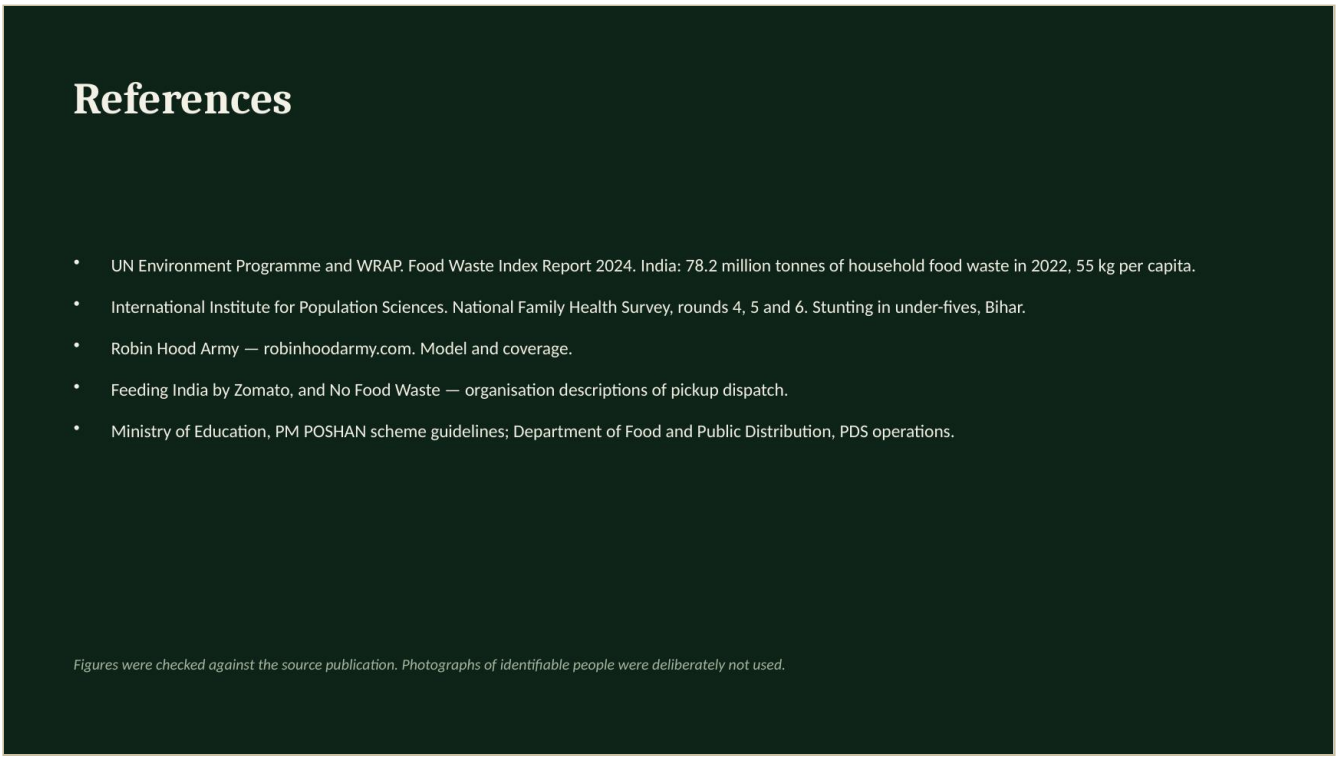
Funding is specific — CSR budgets for the coordinator, government data through an existing request, and no new vehicles because the groups already have them.

LOST MARKS

One mark lost. The four-hour expiry window for cooked food is asserted without a source. Food-safety guidance on this exists; citing it would have settled the question instead of inviting the judge to wonder.

Sources slide

SOURCES SLIDE · REQUIRED · DOES NOT COUNT



EARNED MARKS	Organisation, publication and year for every figure. Not a bare link.
EARNED MARKS	The closing line states that no photographs of identifiable people were used. If you use images of people, you need their permission — say where each image came from.
LOST MARKS	**One mark lost, on Presentation.** The deck carries speaker notes explaining design decisions to a judge rather than supporting a presenter. In a real entry that reads slightly off.
WHY	Without this slide the entry could not have scored above 5 for Presentation, and both statistics on the problem slide would have counted as unsupported. It costs nothing — it is outside the 4 to 6 limit.

Where the four marks went

All four losses are the same mistake wearing different clothes.

−1	**A national figure standing in for a local one.** The waste statistic measured a different stream from the one the system moves.
−1	**An estimate presented as a finding.** Six months of data collection was a reasonable guess, written as though it had been established.
−1	**An unsourced constraint.** The four-hour food-safety window is checkable, and was not checked.
−1	**Speaker notes written for the wrong reader.** A small thing, but it shows in presentation.

What to take from this

- **Narrow the problem until it is uncomfortable.** One group of people, one place, one failure. Breadth reads as vagueness.
- **Say what the AI does, in working detail.** If a reader cannot say what goes in and what comes out, the score sits in the middle band no matter how good the idea is.
- **Name what already exists.** You cannot be judged original against nothing.
- **Admit one thing that costs you something.** A limitation you engage with honestly is worth more than a page of advantages.
- **Cite it, or soften it.** Every mark lost here came from a sentence that was more confident than its evidence. Either find the source or write “we estimate”.

Full judging criteria, the presentation template, and the competition packet are all at birdspiracy.com. Questions: birdspiracy.competition@gmail.com