



# Regeneron Westchester Science & Engineering Fair ([WESEF.ORG](http://WESEF.ORG))

## March 15th, 2025



### Rules and Participation Handbook

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### Important Dates to Know

Oct 1 - 31st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher/ School Registration Window - Please use this time to start a school account for WESEF 2025. You may add multiple teachers for each school account. New accounts must be made each year</li> </ul>
Nov 1st - Dec 4th, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online student registration - must be completed with the Science Research teacher</li> <li>Project Registration is <b>\$90</b> per student and must be postmarked by this date</li> </ul>
Dec 11th, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Student Paperwork Due - ALL FORMS</li> <li>Students are responsible for uploading their own forms and paperwork ONLINE in order to qualify for Regeneron WESEF 2025. Students must use the zFairs platform to determine which forms will be needed for your project and upload signed PDF files for all required forms</li> <li>Student paperwork <u>must</u> include Forms 1, 1A, 1B as well as the WESEF Abstract, Research Paper, Research Plan and any additional forms that pertain to the project. Please double-check that you have uploaded the correct documents with all required signatures</li> </ul>
Dec 18th, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>REQUIRED:</b> Teachers review student paperwork, ensuring that all required forms are complete, correct and uploaded in the correct locations. No forms will be accepted after this date.</li> </ul>
Dec 20th, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final school-issued check payment postmark date (only for purchase orders submitted by December 4th)</li> </ul>
March 14, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandatory Poster Set-Up at Somers HS &amp; MS, after school</li> </ul>
Mar 15, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WESEF In-person full-day event at Somers High School. Judging during the day</li> </ul>
Mar 20, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regeneron WESEF Awards Ceremony held at Somers High School</li> </ul>
May 10-16, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regeneron ISEF will be held in Columbus, Ohio</li> </ul>

# Introduction

The Regeneron Westchester Science & Engineering Fair (WESEF) provides students from all area high schools in Westchester, Putnam and Sullivan counties the opportunity to showcase their multi-year, STEM research projects in a competitive venue. The students are judged by local experts in the fields of life science, physical science, environmental studies, psychology and engineering.

Last year, over 700 students participated and over 75 percent of the presenters won an award. The grand prize is a trip to the International Science & Engineering Fair (ISEF). ISEF brings together over 1,600 student researchers from over 60 countries to compete for over \$9 million in cash and prizes.

The opportunities that WESEF and their corporate donors have provided have helped to shape the future of thousands of our local area's high school students in addition to helping to support and build STEM education programs throughout the Hudson Valley region.



## Participating schools from previous years

- |                        |                         |                    |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Ardsley HS             | Blind Brook HS          | Briarcliff HS      |
| Bronxville HS          | Byram Hills HS          | Carmel HS          |
| Croton-Harmon HS       | Dobbs Ferry HS          | Eastchester HS     |
| Edgemont HS            | Fox Lane HS             | Hackley HS         |
| Harrison HS            | Hastings HS             | Hendrick Hudson HS |
| Horace Greeley HS      | Iona Prep HS            | Irvington HS       |
| John Jay HS            | Lakeland HS             | Lincoln HS         |
| Mahopac HS             | Mamaroneck HS           | Masters School     |
| New Rochelle HS        | North Salem HS          | Ossining HS        |
| Peekskill HS           | Pelham HS               | Pleasantville HS   |
| Portchester HS         | Putnam Valley HS        | Rye High School    |
| Rye Country Day School | Rye Neck HS             | Scarsdale HS       |
| Sleepy Hollow HS       | Somers HS               | Ursuline HS        |
| Valhalla HS            | Walter Panas HS         | Westlake HS        |
| White Plains HS        | Yonkers Partners in Ed. | Yorktown HS        |

Any student from grades 9 - 12 in public, private, homeschool, or religious school in Westchester, Putnam, and Sullivan counties of New York State may enter WESEF.

# Registration Process for WESEF

## I. Online School/Teacher Registration - October 1st - 31st, 2024

- Teachers must register first and then work directly with each student to register them individually. Students cannot register on their own. All teachers must make a new zFairs account, no information from last year's fair is carried over.

## II. Online Student Registration & Postmark Date for Payment - Nov 1st, - Dec 4th, 2024 at 11:59pm

- Students may not register without the supervision of the teacher. We realize it is time consuming but it helps to avoid several mistakes down the road including incorrect category placement and even possible disqualification. No additional students can be added after this date. **Link for teacher/student registration:** [www.wesef.zfairs.org](http://www.wesef.zfairs.org)
- We recommend that you keep a digital or printed copy of your student list for your own records.
- December 4th** is also the deadline for **postmark of purchase orders or full payment** for student registration fees. Registration fees this year are **\$90 per student** (not per project). It is essential that you only register students that you are very confident will be ready for WESEF. **Registration Fee is non-refundable.**

## III. Forms, Abstract & Research Paper Submission - December 11th 2024

Deadline for **online submission** of all student paperwork which includes the research paper, abstract, and all forms (see below for more info.)

- Research plan must be in **Future Tense**
- Research plan **MUST** distinguish between role of mentor and role of student - this is very important
- Teacher is the "Adult Sponsor"; Mentor is the "Supervising Scientist" - all signatures required
- Dates on ALL forms must be BEFORE the "Actual Start Date" on form 1A (**except 1C & 5B**)
- ONLY** use the Official WESEF Abstract Form found at [www.wesef.org](http://www.wesef.org) NOT the ISEF abstract
- Be **SURE** that the category chosen on the official WESEF abstract form **matches** the category that the student was registered for.

## IV. Teacher Paperwork Review - Completed by December 18th, 2024

- Teachers are required to review student paperwork that has been uploaded. Teacher review must be complete by **Dec 18th, 2024**. It is important that the teacher double check student responses and form uploads. Failure to do so may make the student ineligible for certain awards.
- Teachers must email [wesefsrc@gmail.com](mailto:wesefsrc@gmail.com) to confirm that review of student paperwork has been completed on or before 12/18/24.**

## WESEF Payment:

- ❑ It is essential that you register only students that you are very confident will be ready for WESEF.
  - ❑ **Fees are non-refundable regardless if a student/team drops or is disqualified (because of student or teacher error).**
  - ❑ Cost will be **\$90 per student.**
  - ❑ Checks/POs/invoice MUST BE postmarked by **Dec 4th, 2024**
    - ❑ **Make all checks/purchase orders payable to “WESEF”**
  - ❑ Please plan ahead if your school/district will pay with a purchase order. There is usually a major delay between a request for payment (PO) and when the check is written. Purchase orders must and school checks that are ready must be postmarked by December 4th.
  - ❑ Teachers/schools who have students who pay individually can do the following:
    - ❑ Have students pay individually on zFairs **OR**
    - ❑ Collect all individual checks and create one lump sum check mailed by the teacher, with school name printed on the check (we will NOT accept individual student checks).
  - ❑ **DO NOT SEND CASH!**
  - ❑ **Final payment for purchase orders in the form of a school-issued check must be postmarked NO LATER than December 20, 2024.**
  - ❑ **Bounced checks will incur an additional fee (according to bank prices TBD).**
  - ❑ Include a completed copy of the invoice with PO/school check/payment. A copy of the WESEF W-9 form with our Tax ID and an invoice can be found on the website ([www.wesef.org](http://www.wesef.org)) under the “For Teachers” tab
- ❑ Checks are to be made out to “WESEF” and mailed to:

**Check made out to: WESEF**

Mail to:

Stephanie Peborde Burke  
WESEF Treasurer  
PO BOX 1373  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

**Dr. Stephanie Peborde Burke**  
**WESEF Treasurer**  
**PO Box 1373**  
**Yorktown Heights, NY 10598**

## Project Categories

Many projects could easily fit into more than one WESEF category. We highly recommend that you review the entire listing of the categories on the [ISEF site](#) before carefully choosing the category that most accurately describes your project.

WESEF Categories	
<p><b>Animal Science (AS):</b> Includes all aspects of animals and animal life, animal life cycles, and animal interactions with one another or with their environment.</p>	<p><b>Behavioral Science (BE):</b> The science or study of the thought processes and behavior of humans and other animals in their interactions with the environment studied through observational and experimental methods.</p>
<p><b>Biochemistry (BI):</b> The study of the chemical basis of processes occurring in living organisms, including the processes by which these substances enter into, or are formed in, the organisms and react with each other and the environment.</p>	<p><b>Cellular &amp; Molecular Biology (CB):</b> This is an interdisciplinary field that studies the structure, function, intracellular pathways, and formation of cells. Studies involve understanding life and cellular processes specifically at the molecular level.</p>
<p><b>Chemistry (CH):</b> Studies exploring the science of the composition, structure, properties, and reactions of matter not involving biochemical systems.</p>	<p><b>Computational Biology &amp; Bioinformatics (CBIF):</b> Studies that primarily focus on the discipline and techniques of computer science and mathematics as they relate to biological systems.</p>
<p><b>Computer Science (CO):</b> The study or development of software, information processes, or methodologies to demonstrate, analyze, or control a process/solution.</p>	<p><b>Earth &amp; Planetary Science (ES):</b> Studies of Earth and other planetary systems and their evolution.</p>
<p><b>Engineering (ENG):</b> Studies that focus on the science and engineering that involve movement or structure. The movement can be by the apparatus or the movement can affect the apparatus. Additionally, projects that involve the application of engineering principles and design concepts.</p>	<p><b>Environmental Science (ENV):</b> Studies of the environment and its effect on organisms/systems, including investigations of biological processes such as growth and lifespan.</p>
<p><b>Mathematics (MA):</b> The study of the measurement, properties, and relationships of quantities and sets, using numbers and symbols. The deductive study of numbers, geometry, and various abstract constructs, or structures.</p>	<p><b>Medicine &amp; Health (ME):</b> This category focuses on studies specifically designed to address issues of human health and disease.</p>
<p><b>Microbiology (MI):</b> The study of microorganisms, including bacteria, viruses, fungi, prokaryotes, and simple eukaryotes as well as antimicrobial and antibiotic substances.</p>	<p><b>Neuroscience (NS):</b> Projects related to neurology and cognitive neuroscience.</p>
<p><b>Physics &amp; Astronomy (PHAST):</b> Physics is the science of matter and energy and of interactions between the two. Astronomy is the study of anything in the universe beyond the Earth.</p>	<p><b>Plant Science (PS):</b> Studies of plants and how they live, including structure, physiology, development, and classification. Includes plant cultivation, development, ecology, genetics and plant breeding, pathology, physiology, systematics and evolution.</p>

# Rules for Participating in WESEF

## Ethics Statement

Scientific fraud and misconduct are not condoned at any level of research or competition. This includes plagiarism, forgery, use or presentation of other researcher's work as one's own and fabrication of data. Fraudulent projects will fail to qualify for competition in affiliated fairs and the ISEF. WESEF reserves the right to disqualify and/or revoke recognition of a project subsequently found to have been fraudulent.

## Eligibility

1. Any student in grades 9-12 or equivalent, enrolled in a public, private, parochial, or home school in the region covered by WESEF (Westchester, Putnam & Sullivan Counties) is eligible to participate in WESEF.
2. If there is a Science Research program in a school, then only students in that program may participate in WESEF.
3. Students may not have reached 21 years of age, on or before May 1st of the event year.
4. Students are not permitted to simultaneously enter another regional ISEF-affiliated science fair (including the NYS Science Fair) without prior written consent of the WESEF board.
5. Team projects may have a maximum of three team members. A mixed team with members from different geographic regions may compete at WESEF (one team member must be from Westchester- Putnam region or in teams of three, two must be from our region), but not at multiple fairs. Out of region students must pay an additional \$100 registration fee. Each team is encouraged to appoint a team leader to coordinate the work and act as spokesperson. However, each member of the team should be able to serve as spokesperson, be fully involved with the project, and must be familiar with all aspects of the project. The final work should reflect the coordinated efforts of all team members and will be evaluated using similar rules and judging criteria as individual projects.
6. Projects that are demonstrations, 'library' research or informational projects, 'explanation' models or kit building are not appropriate for the ISEF.
7. A research project may be a part of a larger study performed by professional scientists, but the project presented by the student must be only their own portion of the complete study.

## General Requirements

1. All students competing in WESEF must adhere to all of the rules as set forth in this document.
2. All projects must adhere to the **Ethics Statement** above.
3. It is the responsibility of the student researcher(s) and the Adult Sponsor to evaluate the study to determine if the research will require forms and/or review and approval prior to experimentation, especially projects that include human participants, vertebrate animals, or potentially hazardous biological agents.
4. Projects must adhere to local, state and U.S. Federal laws, regulations and permitting conditions. In addition, projects conducted outside the U.S. must also adhere to the laws of the country and jurisdiction in which the project was performed.
5. The use of non-animal research methods and the use of alternatives to animal research are strongly encouraged and must be explored before conducting a vertebrate animal project.
6. Introduction or disposal of non-native and/or invasive species (e.g. insects, plants, invertebrates, vertebrates), pathogens, toxic chemicals or foreign substances into the environment is prohibited. It is recommended that students reference their local, state or national regulations and quarantine lists.
7. WESEF projects must adhere to ISEF display and safety requirements.

# Project Display

## Maximum Size of Project

**Depth** (front to back):  
30 inches or 76 cm

**Width** (side to side):  
48 inches or 122 cm

**Height** (floor to top):  
108 inches or 274 cm

**PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS PART OF YOUR WESEF DISPLAY:**

- Mentor Names or Photographs
- Institution Names, Logos, or Photographs
- School Names, Logos, or Photographs
- Images showing graphic content

Please be aware when ordering posters that the mechanism that supports the poster should conform to the maximum size limitations stated above.

- All project materials and support mechanisms must fit within the project dimensions.
- At WESEF, fair-provided tables will not exceed a height of 36 inches (91 centimeters).
- If a table is used it becomes part of the project and must not exceed the allowed dimensions.

## Display Content for Projects Conducted at a Research Institution

The display must reflect only the work conducted by the finalist. Minimal reference to mentor's or other researcher's work must only reflect background information or be used to clarify differences between finalist's and others' work.

## Photograph/Image Display Requirements

Display of photographs of people other than that of the student researcher must have a photo release signed by the subject, and if under 18 years of age, also by the guardian of the subject.

Sample consent text: "I consent to the use of visual images (photos, videos, etc.) involving my participation/my child's participation in this research." (These forms must be available upon request, but shall not be displayed.)





# Roles & Responsibilities of Students & Adults

## The Student Researcher(s)

The student researcher is responsible for all aspects of the research project including enlisting the aid of any required supervisory adults (Adult Sponsor, Qualified Scientist, etc.), obtaining necessary approvals (SRC, IRB, etc.), following the Rules & Guidelines of the ISEF, and performing the experimentation, engineering, data analysis, etc.

Scientific fraud and misconduct are not condoned at any level of research or competition. This includes plagiarism, forgery, use or presentation of other researcher's work as one's own, and fabrication of data. Fraudulent projects will fail to qualify for competition. WESEF reserves the right to revoke recognition of a project subsequently found to have been fraudulent.

## The Adult Sponsor

An Adult Sponsor may be a teacher (preferred), parent, professor, and/or other professional scientist in whose lab the student is working. This individual must have a solid background in science and should have close contact with the student during the course of the project. The Adult Sponsor is responsible for ensuring the student's research is eligible for entry in the ISEF.

## Qualified Scientist

A Qualified Scientist should have earned a doctoral/professional degree in a scientific discipline that relates to the student's area of research. Alternatively, the SRC may consider an individual with extensive experience and expertise in the student's area of research as a Qualified Scientist. The Qualified Scientist must be thoroughly familiar with local, state, and federal regulations that govern the student's area of research.

## Designated Supervisor

The Designated Supervisor is an adult who is directly responsible for overseeing student experimentation. The Designated Supervisor need not have an advanced degree, but must be thoroughly familiar with the student's project, and must be trained in the student's area of research.

The Adult Sponsor may act as the Designated Supervisor.

## Scientific Review Committee (SRC)

The WESEF Scientific Review Committee (SRC) is a group of qualified individuals that is responsible for evaluation of student research, certifications, research plans and exhibits for compliance with the rules, applicable laws and regulations at each level of science fair competition. Most proposed research projects involving vertebrate animals and/or potentially hazardous biological agents must be reviewed and approved BEFORE experimentation. Local or regional SRC prior review is not required for human studies previously reviewed and approved by a properly constituted IRB.

ALL projects, including those previously reviewed and approved by an IRB must be reviewed and approved by the SRC after experimentation and before competition in an Affiliated Fair. Projects which were conducted at a Regulated Research Institution (not home, high school or field) and which were reviewed and approved by the proper institutional board before experimentation, must also be approved by the Affiliated Fair SRC.

## Institutional Review Board (IRB)

An Institutional Review Board (IRB), is a committee that must evaluate the potential physical and/or psychological risk of research involving humans. All proposed human research must be reviewed and approved by an IRB before experimentation begins. This includes review of any surveys or questionnaires to be used in a project.

Federal regulations require local community involvement. Therefore, it is advisable that an IRB be established at the school level to evaluate human research projects. An IRB must consist of a minimum of three members including the following: an educator, a school administrator (preferably principal or vice principal), and a medical or mental health professional.

To avoid conflict of interest, no Adult Sponsor, parent or other relative of the student, the Qualified Scientist, or Designated Supervisor who oversees the project may serve on the IRB reviewing that project

# Message from the WESEF Scientific Review Committee

WESEF has the right to disqualify any project that fails to correct paperwork problems in a timely manner such as those outlined below.

To help guide you with the appropriate forms, before you start your research, we strongly suggest you use the the Rules Wizard available at: <https://ruleswizard.societyforscience.org/>



## Top Seven WESEF Paperwork Problems to Avoid:

1. Research plan lacks sufficient details and fails to provide thorough information to support the documentation provided. A properly written research plan must include:
  - the proposed and actual start & end dates on Form 1A
  - a detailed research plan - projects which cannot be assessed because the research plan is not sufficient will fail to qualify.
  - all work site information completed
  - must identify **student and mentor roles**
2. Missing Form 3 - Risk Assessment
  - Must be completed for projects that involve chemicals, equipment, or other potential hazards
  - Often missing, and often incomplete without description of safety precautions taken
3. Project duration not within a single calendar year
4. Missing IRB or incomplete with missing signatures on Human Subjects Form 4
5. Tissue analysis and bioinformatic projects are incorrectly identified as vertebrate animal projects
6. Failure to include a **HIPAA letter** from a mentor for all studies involving de-identified human data. This letter should be on the institution letterhead from the mentor. It should describe the data set and indicate that the data set was de-identified, prior to student use.
7. Research project lacks original student generated data.

Questions? Email the WESEF SRC at [wesefsrc@gmail.com](mailto:wesefsrc@gmail.com)

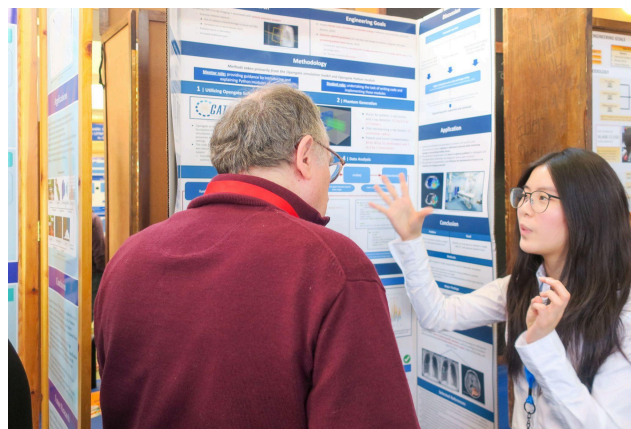
## Common Reasons a Project Would “Fail to Qualify” at WESEF/ ISEF:

1. **Human, vertebrate animal, or PHBA studies that did not have pre-approval**
  - Need IRB pre-approval for human participant studies
  - Need SRC or IACUC pre-approval for vertebrate animal studies
  - Need SRC or IBC pre-approval for PHBA studies
2. **Prohibited Vertebrate Animal Studies**
  - Studies done at home/school/field that should have been done at a regulated research institution
  - Studies that caused more than momentary pain, suffering, or stress -- or designed to kill
  - Induced toxicity studies
  - Predator/vertebrate prey experiments
  - Studies where student performed euthanasia on a vertebrate animal
  - Studies with an animal death in any group or subgroup due to the experimental procedures
  - Studies where animals have a weight loss greater than or equal to 15%
  - Studies where there was an inappropriate restriction of water or food
  - Studies treated as embryonic studies that were actually vertebrate studies
3. **Prohibited Studies using Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents (PHBA's)**
  - Microorganisms were cultured at home
  - BSL-2 studies (including opening plates or containers of unknown microorganisms) done in a BSL-1 lab
  - Studies using human and other primate established cell lines without SRC pre-review and approval
4. **Prohibited Human Participant Studies**
  - Studies where the IRB required written documentation of consents which were not obtained
  - Studies where the student used surveys/questionnaires without IRB pre-review and approval
5. **Eligibility Problems**
  - Project does not show independent data collection
  - Student worked with a partner or team but competed as an individual, or vice versa
  - Project was more than 1 year in length or was too old
  - More than three students on a team
  - Student was from outside of our affiliate region, must attend a different ISEF affiliated fair
  - Student missed deadlines for registration, paperwork, or entry fee
  - Failed to set-up poster display on Friday before WESEF
6. **Scientific Misconduct**
  - Plagiarism
  - Student presented mentor's research as his/her own
  - Falsification of data
  - Student did not generate original data beyond library research/ literature review
7. **Research Plan**
  - Lacks details of research
  - Rationale section is missing
  - Forms submitted do not reflect research plan submitted

# Judging at WESEF

## The Judging Process

- WESEF 2025 will be held in-person at Somers High School and Middle School
- Projects will have ~5 official judge interviews. The students should be prepared to give a **seven minute summary** of their research. Judges are then permitted 5 minutes for Q&A.
- There will be official judging periods of approximately 10 minutes in length. Judges will then have a 5 minute window to score rubrics and 5 minutes to move to the next assigned poster.
- In some cases, Special Awards Judges will also meet with and interview students
- Under no circumstances should a Judge review a student project for which there may be a conflict of interest. Judges are asked to recuse themselves from any projects where they do not feel they can fairly assess a student project.



## Advice for Judges

- Examine the quality of the student's work, and how well the student understands his or her project and area of study. The physical display is secondary to the student's knowledge of the subject. Look for evidence of laboratory, field or theoretical work, not just library research or gadgeteering.
- Judges should keep in mind that competing in a science fair is not only a competition, but an educational and motivating experience for the students. The high point of the fair experience for most of the students is their judging interviews.
- As a general rule, judges represent professional authority to Finalists. For this reason, judges should use an encouraging tone when asking questions, offering suggestions or giving constructive criticism. Judges should not criticize, treat lightly, or display boredom toward projects they personally consider unimportant. Always give credit to the Finalist for completing a challenging task and/or for their success in previous competitions.
- Compare projects only with those competing at this Fair and not with projects seen in other competitions or scholastic events.
- Please be discreet when discussing scores or making critical comments, as students, mentors, or teachers might overhear. Results are confidential until announced at the awards ceremony



## Awards & Honors

At the 2024 Regeneron- Westchester Science & Engineering Awards Ceremony, over \$100,000 in awards and prizes were given out to students for their scientific accomplishments. Approximately 75% of all participants received an award at the WESEF Awards Ceremony, thanks to the generous support from our local and ISEF affiliated donors.

### Grand Awards:

**Determined by Score:** Each student will present their project to 5 judges that will score the project independently. Scores are added to produce a final score which allows us to distribute awards and select Finalists.

**ISEF:** The top 20 scoring projects are selected to represent our region at the Regeneron International Science & Engineering Fair. This honor includes participation in the 2025 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair where the student will compete against the best research students from all over the world.



**Genius Olympiad:** Up to 10 student projects (excluding senior projects) may qualify through Regeneron WESEF to attend the Genius Olympiad held annually in June at Rochester Institute of Technology. This international fair draws students from over 70 countries. More info about this event can be found at <https://www.geniusolympiad.org>.

Anyone that wins a spot to the Genius Olympiad, through Regeneron WESEF, will have to pay the registration fee, provide their own transportation and chaperone (parent/guardian) for the full duration of the trip in June 2025.

Students that qualify independently for Genius Olympiad, by direct paper submission will also have to pay the registration fee, organize their own transportation and chaperone (parent/guardian) for the duration of the trip.



## Category Awards:

Category awards are given to students in each of the categories represented at WESEF. Approximately 35% of students receive a category award with multiple winners at 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place. Category winners receive a monetary award and a medal. Monetary awards will be mailed to teachers by early May.

## Special Awards:

Special awards are sponsored by local organizations as well as by national organizations through our affiliation with ISEF. Special awards are chosen based on a combination of both established criteria for each award and student score. Answering the questions presented to each student during online registration for WESEF helps us to narrow down the potential winners for each of these awards. In 2024, approximately 180 special awards were given at WESEF from local organizations such as Regeneron, Teatown, Westchester Academy of Medicine, and many more!

## Awards Ceremony:

The awards ceremony will be held March 20, 2025 in the Somers High School Gymnasium. Students who are unable to attend the awards ceremony should have a fellow student or teacher pick up their award for them.

**\*\* WESEF will follow the COVID health and safety protocol guidelines in effect at that time.**

Award winners will be given specific instructions on how to claim their award. Please carefully read the instructions provided at the awards ceremony as each award has different requirements. While some awards require no additional action, it is up to the student to follow through on the directions to receive their awards. Certificates and monetary awards will be mailed to teachers by early May. Any questions regarding awards can be directed to Melissa Shandroff at [shandroffm@hohschools.org](mailto:shandroffm@hohschools.org).

Local awards will **require a thank you note** from the student to our sponsors. We are grateful to be able to provide numerous monetary awards, which would not be possible without the generous donations of our sponsors.

Students will be asked to fill out a Google Form by the end of March or early April with their thank you note and abstract. Teachers will be sent an email the week after WESEF with a link to the Google Form. Each individual winner and each team should submit one thank you note via the Google Form.

Students who do not send a thank you note will **not** receive their monetary awards. Teachers will be notified a week prior to the due date with names of students who have not sent in their thank you notes. **Award money checks must be deposited by June 30th or will be considered null and void.**

# WESEF Executive Board

Many special thanks are due to the members of the WESEF Executive Board, a panel of nine teacher volunteers who work tirelessly throughout the school year to pull this epic event together to support student interest and involvement in the sciences in our region.

**President:**  
Michael Blueglass  
[wesefpresident@gmail.com](mailto:wesefpresident@gmail.com)

**Vice President & SRC Co-Chair:**  
Angelo Piccirillo  
[apiccirillo@ossiningufsd.org](mailto:apiccirillo@ossiningufsd.org)

**Vice President & Co-Treasurer:**  
Janet Longo Abinanti  
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**Judge Coordinator:**  
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**Director of Logistics:**  
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**Webmaster:**  
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Michele Zielinski  
[mzielinski@tufsd.org](mailto:mzielinski@tufsd.org)

**Host Committee Chair:**  
Dr. William Maelia  
[wmaelia@somersschools.org](mailto:wmaelia@somersschools.org)

**Secretary:**  
Jeff Wuebber  
[jwuebber@nredlearn.org](mailto:jwuebber@nredlearn.org)

*Finally, we wish to express our appreciation to the many student and teacher volunteers for their assistance leading up to and during the fair!*



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Why does the research plan have to be in the future tense?**

The research plan indicates all the aspects of the research to be conducted and determines the necessary documentation that the student will need to conduct the research. It is critical that it establishes what the student's actual role in the research and other individuals that will contribute to the research.

## **What is the difference between the fair (WESEF) SRC and an institution's SRC?**

The WESEF SRC uses the guidelines established by the ISEF SRC to determine if the project qualifies for WESEF. Meanwhile, an institution's SRC typically refers to the "body" that oversees projects conducted at that particular research institution. Procedures approved by institution SRC can still conflict with ISEF SRC rules—for example those involving pain tolerance or the death of animals. Thus, it is very important to make mentors aware of ISEF/WESEF rules and regulations when planning research.

## **Can WESEF SRC approve a project before it starts? After it ends?**

The WESEF SRC can approve a project with proper documentation in place before the project begins as long as procedures are not modified during the time research is carried out. All projects must be approved by WESEF SRC after it is conducted and this must occur prior to WESEF presentation.

## **Can WESEF SRC disqualify a project that has been approved by an institution's SRC?**

Yes, since it is possible that a project that can be approved by an institution with rules differing from those made by ISEF which is focused on high school researchers and thus has stricter rules.

## **Can any school form their own IRB committee?**

Yes, as long as they follow the rules and regulations provided by ISEF.

## **Can a student who submitted to STS fail to qualify for WESEF?**

Yes, STS does not have a scientific review committee (SRC) that reviews each project. Furthermore, there are notable differences in the qualifications of each competition.

## **When should a project be classified as a continuation project?**

A continuation project is one in which the project goes beyond one calendar year.

## **Does ISEF limit the time or length of a project?**

Yes, all projects must be within a calendar year which runs from January 2023 to May 2024.

## **If I finish 1st in my category, does that mean that I won a trip to ISEF?**

No, only the top 15-20 highest scoring projects overall qualify for ISEF.

## **Once I have registered, can I change categories?**

Yes, you will have one more chance to change your category prior to the fair.

## **If I decide to drop-out of WESEF, can my fee be refunded?**

Unfortunately entry fees are not refundable under any circumstances.

## **Are WESEF Rules the same as ISEF Rules?**

WESEF rules are guided by ISEF rules, however they can differ based on our local needs. For instance, abstracts at WESEF cannot be displayed to avoid potential judge bias, which is not a concern at the international level.



# Sponsors

<p><b>Title Sponsor</b> (Contribution of \$50,000 or more)</p>			
<p><b>Diamond Level</b> (Contributions of \$10,000 to \$49,999)</p>			<p>Boehringer Ingelheim <b>Cares</b> Foundation</p>
<p><b>Platinum Level</b> (Contributions of \$5,000 to \$9,999)</p>			
<p><b>Gold Level</b> (Contributions of \$2,000 to \$4,999)</p>		 	 <b>A.S.R.T.</b> <small>Advancing STEM Research Teaching</small>
<p><b>Silver Level</b> (Contributions of \$500 to \$1,999)</p>	 <i>Keith Holmes</i>	<p>Westchester Psychological Association</p> 	 <i>Robert Weireter</i>
<p><b>Patron Level</b> (Contributions of \$200 to \$499)</p>		 omnicopromotions.com	<i>Megan Zupan Photography</i> 
<p><b>Friends Level</b> (Contributions up to \$199)</p>			

# How YOU can help support WESEF

## Recruiting Judges

Each year, the success of our fair depends on the participation of our generous judge volunteers; we typically require approximately 450 judges to view the exciting and cutting edge student projects - your help as a judge would be greatly appreciated!

### Judging criteria include one of the following:

- Currently enrolled in a graduate program (M.S., M.A., M.Ed, D.O., Ed.D., D.D.S., D.V.M., Ph.D, M.D, etc.) **OR**
- Bachelor's degree + 2 years of job-related experience **OR**
- Current professional holding an advanced degree and working in any of the scientific fields represented at WESEF. This includes school psychologists, social workers, registered nurses, EPA, DEA professionals, etc.
- NOT eligible to judge: Current K-12 teachers

Our pool of judges typically includes: research scientists working in education and industry, current graduate students, retirees, psychologists and social workers, engineers, nurses, EPA and DEA professionals.

If you would like to volunteer as a judge, please contact **Dr. Michele Sugantino**, our Judge Coordinator at [wesefjudges1@gmail.com](mailto:wesefjudges1@gmail.com).

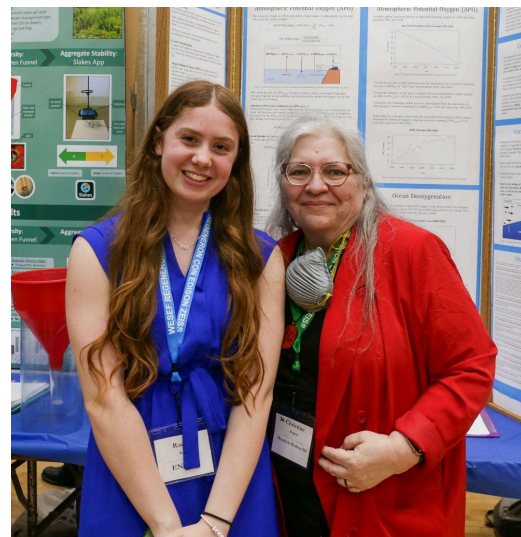
## Teacher Volunteers

Teachers from each participating school are required to attend WESEF and we ask for your assistance with various tasks on set-up day or the day of the fair.

Additional opportunities exist to support WESEF during the school year including sub-committees and other tasks. Please contact any of our WESEF Board Members for more information.

## Make a Tax Deductible Donation

WESEF is a 503c, non-profit organization - the opportunities we make available to our region's bright young scientists are only possible through the support of generous donors which include local industries, businesses, and individuals. Please contact our Fair Director, [Mr. Michael Blueglass](#), about ways you can make a tax-deductible donation to support WESEF.



## Checklist for Adult Sponsor (1)

This completed form is required for ALL projects.

To be completed by the adult sponsor in collaboration with the student researcher(s):

Student's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have reviewed the ISEF Rules and Guidelines, including the science fair ethics statement.
- I have reviewed the student's completed Student Checklist (1A) and Research Plan/Project Summary.
- I have worked with the student and we have discussed the possible risks involved in the project.
- The project involves one or more of the following and requires prior approval by an SRC, IRB, IACUC or IBC:
- Humans
  - Vertebrate Animals
  - Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents
  - Microorganisms
  - rDNA
  - Tissues
5.  Items to be completed for **ALL PROJECTS**
- Adult Sponsor Checklist (1)
  - Student Checklist (1A)
  - Regulated Research Institutional/Industrial Setting Form (1C) (when applicable; after completed experiment)
  - Continuation/Research Progression Form (7) (when applicable)
  - Research Plan/Project Summary
  - Approval Form (1B)

**Additional forms required if the project includes the use of one or more of the following** (check all that apply):

- Humans**, including student designed inventions/prototypes. (Requires prior approval by an Institutional Review Board (IRB); see full text of the rules.)
- Human Participants Form (4) or appropriate Institutional IRB documentation
  - Sample of Informed Consent Form (when applicable and/or required by the IRB)
  - Qualified Scientist Form (2) (when applicable and/or required by the IRB)
- Vertebrate Animals** (Requires prior approval, see full text of the rules.)
- Vertebrate Animal Form (5A)-for projects conducted in a school/home/field research site (SRC prior approval required)
  - Vertebrate Animal Form (5B)-for projects conducted at a Regulated Research Institution. (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval required prior experimentation.)
  - Qualified Scientist Form (2) (Required for all vertebrate animal projects at a regulated research site or when applicable)
- Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents** (Requires prior approval by SRC, IACUC or IBC, see full text of the rules.)
- Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents Risk Assessment Form (6A)
  - Human and Vertebrate Animal Tissue Form (6B)-to be completed in addition to Form 6A when project involves the use of fresh or frozen tissue, primary cell cultures, blood, blood products and body fluids.
  - Qualified Scientist Form (2) (when applicable)
  - The following are exempt from prior review but require a Risk Assessment Form 3: projects involving protists, archae and similar microorganisms, for projects using manure for composting, fuel production or other non-culturing experiments, projects using color change coliform water test kits, microbial fuel cells, and projects involving decomposing vertebrate organisms.
- Hazardous Chemicals, Activities and Devices** (No SRC prior approval required, see full text of the rules.)
- Risk Assessment Form (3)
  - Qualified Scientist Form (2) (required for projects involving DEA-controlled substances or when applicable)
- Other**
- Risk Assessment Form (3)
- I attest to the information provided and that I have read and agree to abide by the science fair rules and regulations.**

Adult Sponsor's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Review (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Checklist (1A)

This form is required for ALL projects.

1. a. Student/Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_ c. Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_

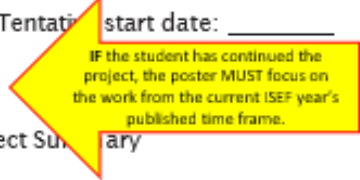
2. Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 

3. School: \_\_\_\_\_ School Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if multiple schools, list of the team leader or list all schools).

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 

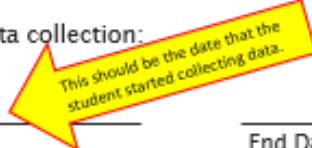
4. Adult Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does this project need SRC/IRB/IACUC or other pre-approval?  Yes  No Tentative start date: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Is this a continuation/progression from a previous year?  Yes  No 

If Yes: a. Attach the previous year's  Abstract **and**  Research Plan/Project Summary

b. Explain how this project is new and different from previous years on  
 Continuation/Research Progression Form (7)

7. This year's experimentation/data collection: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_   
Actual Start Date: (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Where will you conduct your experimentation? (check all that apply)  
 Research Institution  School  Field  Home  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Source of Data:  
 Collected self/mentor  Other Describe/url: \_\_\_\_\_ 

10. List the name and address of all non-home and non-school work site(s), whether you worked there virtually or on-site:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Complete a Research Plan/Project Summary following the Research Plan/Project Summary instructions and attach to this form.**

**12. An abstract is required for all projects after experimentation.**

## Research Plan/Project Summary Instructions

A complete Research Plan/Project Summary is required for ALL projects and must accompany Student Checklist (1A).

- All projects must have a Research Plan/Project Summary
  - a. The Research Plan is to be written prior to experimentation following the instructions below to detail the rationale, research question(s), methodology, and risk assessment of the proposed research.
  - b. If changes are made during the research, such changes can be added to the original research plan as an addendum, recognizing that some changes may require returning to the IRB or SRC for appropriate review and approvals. If no additional approvals are required, this addendum serves as a project summary to explain research that was conducted.
  - c. If no changes are made from the original research plan, no project summary is required.
    - Some studies, such as an engineering design or mathematics projects, will be less detailed in the initial project plan and will change through the course of research. If such changes occur, a project summary that explains what was done is required and can be appended to the original research plan.
    - The Research Plan/Project Summary should include the following:
      - a. **RATIONALE:** Include a brief synopsis of the background that supports your research problem and explain why this research is important and if applicable, explain any societal impact of your research.
      - b. **RESEARCH QUESTION(S), HYPOTHESIS(ES), ENGINEERING GOAL(S), EXPECTED OUTCOMES:** How is this based on the rationale described above?
      - c. Describe the following in detail:
        - **List of materials:**
        - **Procedures:** Detail all procedures and experimental design including methods for data collection, and when applicable, the source of data used. Describe only your project. Do not include work done by mentor or others.
        - **Risk and Safety:** Identify any potential risks and safety precautions needed.
        - **Data Analysis:** Describe the procedures you will use to analyze the data/results.
      - d. **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** List major references (e.g. science journal articles, books, internet sites) from your literature review. If you plan to use vertebrate animals, one of these references must be an animal care reference.

Items 1-4 below are subject-specific guidelines for additional items applicable.

### 1. Human participants research:

- a. **Participants:** Describe age range, gender, racial/ethnic composition, pregnant women, prisoners, mentally disabled or economically disadvantaged.
- b. **Recruitment:** Where will you find your participants? How will you recruit them?
- c. **Methods:** What will participants be asked to do? Will you use deception? If so, how? Did it require permissions? If so, explain. Why is it necessary?
- d. **Risk Assessment:** What are the risks or potential discomforts to participants? How will you minimize risks? List any benefits to participants.
- e. **Protection of Privacy:** Will identifiable information (e.g., name, address, phone number) be collected? If anonymous, describe how you will ensure confidentiality? Where will data be stored and how long will it be kept?
- f. **Informed Consent Process:** Describe how you will inform participants of the risks and benefits of the study, that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw at any time.

### 2. Vertebrate animal research:

- a. Discuss potential ALTERNATIVES to vertebrate animal use and why they are not feasible.
- b. Explain potential impact or contribution of this research.
- c. Detail all procedures to be used, including methods used to handle animals and detailed chemical concentrations and drug dosages.
- d. Detail animal numbers, species, strain, sex, age, source, etc.
- e. Describe housing and oversight of daily care.
- f. Discuss disposition of the animals at the end of the study.

### • Potentially hazardous biological agents research:

- a. Give source of the organism and describe BSL assessment process.
- b. Detail safety precautions and discuss methods of disposal.

### 4. Hazardous chemicals, activities & devices:

- a. Describe Risk Assessment process, supervision, safety precautions.
- b. Material Safety Data Sheets are not necessary to submit with the research plan.

The research plan is the most important document because it provides the regional SRC/IRB committee the necessary details of the planned research.

This detailed description of the research guides the SRC/IRB to be able to determine if the proper forms were completed and if they contain the correct information.

**MUST** be VERY detailed and clearly delineate the role of the student vs. the role of any mentors or other researchers.

The entire RP **MUST** be in FUTURE tense!!

Protocol forms packet must include tentative and actual start dates (1A), a detailed research plan, all work site information (1A & other forms as indicated), and clear identification of the student and mentor roles.

# Approval Form (1B)

**A completed form is required for each student, including all team members.**

## 1. To Be Completed by Student and Parent

### a. Student Acknowledgment:

- I understand the risks and possible dangers to me of the proposed research plan.
- I have read the ISEF Rules and Guidelines and will adhere to all International Rules when conducting this research.
- I have read and will abide by the science fair ethics statement.

**Student researchers are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Scientific misconduct are not condoned at any level of research or competition. Such practices include but are not limited to plagiarism, forgery, use or presentation of other researcher's work as one's own, and fabrication of data. Student projects will fail to qualify for competition in affiliated fairs and ISEF.**

Student's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Acknowledged (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

(Must be prior to experimentation.)

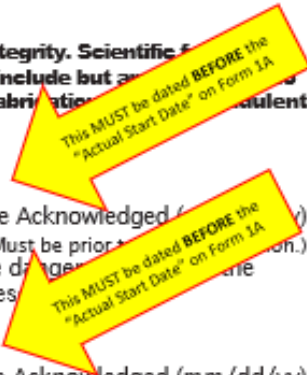
**b. Parent/Guardian Approval:** I have read and understand the risks and possible dangers of the **Research Plan/Project Summary**. I consent to my child participating in this research.

Parent/Guardian's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Acknowledged (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

(Must be prior to experimentation.)



## 2. To be completed by the local or affiliated Fair SRC

(Required for projects requiring prior SRC/IRB APPROVAL. Sign 2a or 2b as appropriate.)

**a. Required for projects that need prior SRC/IRB approval BEFORE experimentation** (humans, animals or potentially hazardous biological materials)

The SRC/IRB Chair's signature and the SRC/IRB Chair's signature included. My signature included. My signature included. My signature included.

**DO NOT write anything in this space unless you are the SRC/IRB Chair or their Designee.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SRC/IRB Chair's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)  
(Must be prior to experimentation.)

**b. Required for research conducted at an affiliated Fair SRC with no prior SRC/IRB approval**

OR

This project was approved by the project institution and complies with institutional approval requirements.

**DO NOT write anything in this space.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SRC Chair's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)  
(May be after experimentation)

## 3. Final ISEF Affiliated Fair SRC Approval (Required for ALL Projects)

**SRC Approval After Experimentation and Before Competition at Regional/State/National Fair**

I certify that this project adheres to the applicable ISEF Rules and Guidelines and complies with all ISEF Rules.

**DO NOT write anything in this space.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional SRC Chair's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
State/National SRC Chair's Printed Name  
(where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)

## Revised-Regulated Research Institutional/Industrial Setting Form (1C)

**This form must be completed AFTER experimentation by the adult supervising the student research either virtually or on site, conducted in a regulated research institution, industrial setting or any work site other than home, school or field.**

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the Supervising Adult in the Setting (NOT the Student(s)) after experimentation:**

(Responses must be on the form as it is required to be displayed at student's project booth; please do not print double-sided.)

Research was supported at my work site:

1. Describe the student experience at your work site (check all that apply):
  - Used Equipment  Yes  No
  - Minimal interaction with our group  Yes  No
  - Mentored by me or someone else from our group  Yes  No
  - Worked as a sub-set of our ongoing research  Yes  No
  - Had an independent project from our group  Yes  No

2. Please describe the independent and/or creative work done by the student, particularly in developing the hypotheses or engineering design.

3. Detail the student's role in conducting the research (e.g. design, data collection, analysis). Differentiate what the student observed and the student analyzed.

4. Did the student(s) work on the project as part of a group? Were there other high school students present? If yes, please list students names and describe how their work was related to the project.

5. If this project is under a grant and needs to be acknowledged, please provide the grant number.

If any of the research was done at a standard research facility (college, pharmaceutical company, environmental test facility, etc.) or a facility where advanced research is allowed (certain high schools or local labs), the Form 1C is REQUIRED!

If the project is to be a data analysis only AND the data is publicly available, then nothing else is needed.

If data is covered by privacy rules/laws (ex: patient data) or from a private source (ex: proprietary data), the student MUST show documentation of how the data became available and how/why they were allowed to view it and study or analyze it.

The best thing to do is have the mentor/designated supervisor from the source organization send a short letter on their letterhead explaining that there were no HIPAA violations. This is even if the data has been de-identified.

I attest that the student has conducted research as indicated above. I have indicated above if the research was reviewed by a regulatory board (IRB/IACUC) and if the student has obtained approval. Copies are provided to the student. The student will be presenting the research publicly in competition and I have communicated with the student regarding any requirements for the student to be aware of regarding restrictions of what is publicized.

This should be the MENTOR and NOT the teacher.

This MUST be dated AFTER the "End Date" on Form 1A.

Direct Supervisor's Printed Name	Signature	Title
Institution	Date Signed (must be after experimentation) (m m / dd / yy)	
Address	Email/Phone	

## Qualified Scientist Form (2)

May be required for research involving human participants, vertebrate animals, potentially hazardous biological agents, and hazardous substances and devices. Must be completed and signed before the start of student experimentation.

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

### To be completed by the Qualified Scientist:

Scientist Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Educational Background: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Experience/Training as relates to the student's area of research:

Position/Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Email/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you reviewed the ISEF rules relevant to this project and the science fair ethics statement relevant to this project?  Yes  No
2. Will any of the following be used?
  - a. Human participants  Yes  No
  - b. Vertebrate animals  Yes  No
  - c. Potentially hazardous biological agents (microorganisms, rDNA and tissues, including blood and blood products)  Yes  No
  - d. Hazardous substances and devices  Yes  No
3. Will this study be a sub-set of a larger study?  Yes  No
4. Will you directly supervise the student?  Yes  No

### To be completed by the Qualified Scientist:

I certify that I have reviewed and approved the Research Plan/Project Summary prior to the start of the experimentation. If the student or Direct Supervisor is not trained in the necessary procedures, I will ensure her/his training. I will provide advice and supervision during the research. I have a working knowledge of the techniques to be used by the student in the Research Plan/Project Summary.

Qualified Scientist's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Approval (m m /dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

### To be completed by the Direct Supervisor when the Qualified Scientist cannot directly supervise.

I certify that I have reviewed the Research Plan/Project Summary and have been trained in the techniques to be used by this student. I will provide direct supervision.

Direct Supervisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Experience/Training of Designated Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Approval (m m /dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_



### Risk Assessment Form (3)

**Must be completed before experimentation; recommended for all projects. May be required for projects involving Human Participants, Hazardous Chemicals, Materials or Devices or Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents.**

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the Student Researcher(s) in collaboration with Direct Supervisor/Qualified Scientist:** (All questions must be answered; additional page(s) may be attached.)

1. Identify and assess the risks and hazards involved in this project.
2. a) List all hazardous chemicals, activities or devices to be used; b) identify and list all microorganisms to be used that are exempt from pre-approval (see Potentially Hazardous Biological Agent rules).
3. Describe the safety precautions and procedures that will be used to reduce the risks.
4. Describe the disposal procedures that will be used (when applicable).
5. List the source(s) of safety information.

**To be completed and signed by the Direct Supervisor (or Qualified Scientist, when applicable):**

I agree with the risk assessment and safety precautions and procedures described above. I certify that I have reviewed the Research Plan/Project Summary and the International Rules, including the science fair ethics statement, and will provide direct supervision.

Direct Supervisor's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

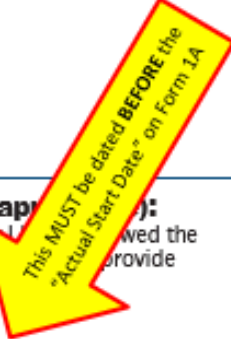
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Review (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Experience/Training as relates to the student's area of research \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email contact information \_\_\_\_\_



## Human Participants Form (4)

**Required for all research involving human participants not at a Regulated Research Institution. If at a Regulated Research Institution, use institutional approval forms for documentation of prior review and approval. (IRB approval required before recruitment or data collection.)**

Student's Name(s)	Title of Project
Adult Sponsor	Phone/Email

**MUST BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT RESEARCHER(S) IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ADULT SPONSOR/DIRECT SUPERVISOR/QUALIFIED SCIENTIST:**

I have submitted my Research Plan/Project Summary which addresses ALL areas indicated in the Human Participants Section of the Research Plan/Project Summary Instructions.

I have attached any surveys or questionnaires I will be using in my project or other documents.

Any published instrument(s) used was /were legally obtained.

I have attached an informed consent that I would use if required by the IRB.

Yes  No Are you working with a Qualified Scientist? If yes, attach the Qualified Scientist Form 2.

Even though your school IRB may have given approval, the study **MUST** conform to **ALL** ISEF rules/requirements.

### BELOW – IRB USE ONLY

**MUST** be completed by Institutional Review Board (IRB) after review of the research plan. All questions must be answered for the approval to be valid. (If not approved, return paperwork to the student with instructions for modifications.)

Approved with Full Committee Review (2 signatures required) and the following conditions: **(ALL must be answered)**

1. Risk Level (check one)
  - Minimal
  - Moderate
  - Significant
2. Qualified Scientist ( )
3. Risk Assessment Rec ( )
4. Written Minor Assent
  - Yes
  - No
5. Written Parental Permission
  - Yes
  - No
6. Written Informed Consent
  - Yes
  - No

This form is to be filled out by the IRB reviewing the project for prior approval (school, regional). However, if it is your school IRB, be sure they are aware of the rules and limitations of student research projects as published in the ISEF rules. For more information and the full list of rules: <https://sspcdn.blob.core.windows.net/files/Documents/SEP/ISEF/2025/Rules/Book.pdf>

**IRB SIGNATURES (All 3 signatures required)** None of these individuals may be the adult sponsor, direct supervisor, qualified scientist or related to (e.g., mother, father of) the student (conflict of interest).

**I attest that I have reviewed the student's project, that the checkboxes above have been completed to indicate the IRB determination and that I agree with the decisions above.**

**Medical or Mental Health Professional (a psychologist, medical doctor, licensed social worker, licensed clinical professional counselor, physician's assistant, doctor of pharmacy, or registered nurse) with expertise related to this project.**

Printed Name	Degree/Professional License
Signature	Date of Approval (Must be dated BEFORE the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A) (mm/dd/yy)
<b>Educator</b>	
Printed Name	Degree/Professional License
Signature	Date of Approval (Must be dated BEFORE the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A) (mm/dd/yy)
<b>School Administrator</b>	
Printed Name	Degree/Professional License
Signature	Date of Approval (Must be dated BEFORE the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A) (mm/dd/yy)

This **CANNOT** be the same teacher that signed as the "Adult Sponsor"

This must be dated **BEFORE** the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A

This must be dated **BEFORE** the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A

This must be dated **BEFORE** the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A

## Human Informed Consent Form

**Instructions to the Student Researcher(s):** An informed consent/assent/permission form should be developed in consultation with the Adult Sponsor, Direct Supervisor or Qualified Scientist.

This form is used to provide information to the research participant (or parent/guardian) and to document written informed consent, minor assent, and/or parental permission.

- When written documentation is required, the researcher keeps the original, signed form.
- Students may use this sample form or may copy ALL elements of it into a new document.

If the form is serving to document parental permission, a copy of any survey or questionnaire must be attached.

Student Researcher(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

I am asking for your voluntary participation in my science fair project. Please read the following information about the project. If you would like to participate, please sign in the appropriate area below.

Purpose of the project:

If you participate, you will be asked to:

Time required for participation:

Potential Risks of Study:

Benefits:

How confidentiality will be maintained:

If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact:

Adult Sponsor/QS/DS: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email: \_\_\_\_\_

This is just an example of a consent form, though if filled out in detail may be used as the official Informed Consent for the project. If a survey was done online, submit a copy of ALL of the consent questions used as part of that survey. **You MUST submit a copy of whatever consent form is going to be used. If the project involves a survey instrument, that survey MUST be included with the protocol paperwork for IRB review.**

### Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate there will not be negative consequences. Please be aware that if you decide to participate, you may stop participating at any time and you may decide not to answer any specific question.

By signing this form I am attesting that I have read and understand the information above and I freely give my consent/assent to participate or permission for my child to participate.

**Adult Informed Consent or Minor Assent** Date Reviewed & Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(mm/dd/yy)

Research Participant Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parental/Guardian Permission** (if applicable) Date Reviewed & Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(mm/dd/yy)

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Vertebrate Animal Form (5A)

**Required for all research involving vertebrate animals that is conducted in a school/home/field research site.  
(SRC approval required before experimentation.)**

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

### To be completed by Student Researcher:

1. Common name (or Genus, species) and number of animals used.
2. Describe completely the housing and husbandry to be provided. Include the cage/pen size, number of animals per cage, environment, bedding, type of food, frequency of food and water, how often animal is observed, etc. Add an additional page as necessary.
3. What will happen to the animals after experimentation?
4. Attach a copy of wildlife licenses or approval forms, as applicable
5. The ISEF Vertebrate Animal Rules require that any death, illness or unexpected weight loss be investigated and documented by a letter from the qualified scientist, direct supervisor or a veterinarian. If applicable, attach this letter with this form when submitting your paperwork to the SRC prior to competition.

### To be completed by Local or Affiliate Fair Scientific Review Committee (SRC) BEFORE experimentation.

#### Level of Supervision Required for agricultural, behavioral or nutritional studies (select one):

- Direct Supervisor REQUIRED. Please have applicable person sign below.
- Veterinarian and Direct Supervisor REQUIRED. Please have applicable persons sign below.
- Veterinarian, Direct Supervisor and Qualified Scientist REQUIRED. Please have applicable persons sign below and have the Qualified Scientist complete Form (2).

The SRC has carefully reviewed this study and finds it is an appropriate study that may be conducted in a non-regulated research site.

#### Local or Affiliate Fair SRC Pre-Approval Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
SRC Chair Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (must be prior to experimentation) (mm/dd/yy)

#### To be completed by Veterinarian:

- I have reviewed this research and animal husbandry with the student before the start of experimentation.
- I have approved the use and dosages of prescription drugs and/or nutritional supplements.
- I will provide veterinary medical and nursing care in the event of illness or emergency. (Fees may apply.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
E

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)

#### To be completed by Direct Supervisor or Qualified Scientist when applicable:

- I have reviewed this research and animal husbandry with the student before the start of experimentation and I accept primary responsibility for the care and health of the animals in this project.
- I will directly supervise the experiment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Em

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)

## Vertebrate Animal Form (5B)

Required for all research involving vertebrate animals that is conducted in at a Regulated Research Institution. (IACUC approval required before experimentation. Form must be completed and signed after experimentation.)

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Protocol Number of IACUC Approved Project \_\_\_\_\_

You **MUST** include a copy of the actual IACUC form with the protocol number

### To be completed by Qualified Scientist or Principal Investigator:

1. Species of animals used: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of animals used: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Describe, in detail, the role of the student in this project: animal procedures and related equipment that were involved, oversight provided and safety precautions employed. (Attach extra pages if necessary.)

3. Was there any weight loss or death of any animal? If yes, attach a letter obtained from the qualified scientist, direct supervisor or a veterinarian documenting the situation and the results of the investigation.

4. Did the student's project also involve the use of tissues?

No

Yes; complete Forms 6A and 6B

5. What laboratory training, including dates, was provided to the student?

6. **Attach a copy of the Regulated Research Institution IACUC Approval.** A letter from the Qualified Scientist or Principal Investigator is not sufficient.

Qualified Scientist/Principal Investigator	
Printed Name	
Signature	Date (mm/dd/yy)

This **MUST** be dated **AFTER** the "End Date" on Form 1A

## Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents Risk Assessment Form (6A)

Required for research involving microorganisms, rDNA, fresh/frozen tissue (including primary cell lines, human and other primate established cell lines and tissue cultures), blood, blood products and body fluids.  
SRC/IACUC/IBC approval required before experimentation.

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the QUALIFIED SCIENTIST/DIRECT SUPERVISOR in collaboration with the student researcher(s). All questions are applicable and must be answered; additional page(s) may be attached.**

### SECTION 1: PROJECT ASSESSMENT

1. Identify potentially hazardous biological agents to be used in this experiment. Include the strain, source, quantity and the biosafety level risk group of each microorganism.
2. Describe the site of experimentation including the level of biological containment.
3. Describe the procedures that will be used to minimize risk (personal protective equipment, hood type, etc.).
4. What final biosafety level do you recommend for this project given the risk assessment you conducted?
5. Describe the method of disposal of all cultured materials and other potentially hazardous biological agents.

### SECTION 2: TRAINING

1. What training will the student receive for this project?
2. Experience/training of Direct Supervisor as it relates to the student's area of research (if applicable).

### SECTION 3: For ALL CELL LINES, MICROORGANISMS AND TISSUES – To be completed by the QUALIFIED SCIENTIST or Direct Supervisor - Check the appropriate box(es) below:

- Experimentation on the microorganisms/cell lines/tissues to be used in this study will NOT be conducted at a Regulated Research Institution, but will be conducted at a (check one) \_\_\_BSL-1 or \_\_\_BSL-2 laboratory (include a copy of the checklist for BSL-2). [This study has been reviewed by the local SRC and the procedures have been approved prior to experimentation.]
- Experimentation on the microorganisms/cell lines/tissues to be used in this study will be conducted at a Regulated Research Institution and was approved by the appropriate institutional board prior to experimentation; institutional approval forms are attached.  
Origin of cell lines: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of IACUC/IBC approval \_\_\_\_\_
- Experimentation on the microorganisms/cell lines/tissues to be used in this study will be conducted at a Regulated Research Institution, which does not require pre-approval for this type of study. The SRC has seen and approved the research plan and supporting documentation and acknowledges the accuracy of the responses above.

### CERTIFICATION – To be SIGNED by the QUALIFIED SCIENTIST or Direct Supervisor

The QS/DS has seen this project's research plan and supporting documentation and acknowledges the accuracy of the information provided above. This study has been approved as a (check one)  BSL-1/ BSL-2 study, and will be conducted at the appropriate laboratory.

QS/DS Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of review (m/m/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION 4: CERTIFICATION – To be completed by the LOCAL SUPERVISOR

The SRC has seen this project's research plan and supporting documentation and acknowledges the accuracy of the information provided.

SRC Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of review (m/m/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

This MUST be dated BEFORE the "Actual Start Date" on Form 1A

DO NOT write anything in this space.

## Human and Vertebrate Animal Tissue Form (6B)

Required for research involving fresh/frozen tissue (including primary cell lines, human and other primate established cell lines and tissue cultures), blood, blood products and body fluids. If the research involves living organisms please ensure that the proper human or animal forms are completed. All projects using any tissue listed above must also complete Form 6A.

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

### To be completed by Student Researcher(s):

1. What vertebrate animal tissue will be used in this study? Check all that apply.
  - Fresh or frozen tissue sample
  - Fresh organ or other body part
  - Blood
  - Body fluids
  - Primary cell/tissue cultures
  - Human or other primate established cell lines
2. Where will the above tissue(s) be obtained? If using an established cell line include source and catalog number.
3. If the tissue will be obtained from a vertebrate animal study conducted at a research institution attach a copy of the IACUC certification with the name of the research institution, the title of the study, the IACUC approval number and a copy of IACUC approval. If human tissues were used, attach a copy of IRB approval.

### To be completed by the Qualified Scientist or Direct Supervisor:

- I verify that the student will work solely with de-identified organs, tissues, cultures or cells that will be handled by him/her by myself or qualified personnel from the laboratory; and that if vertebrate animals were used, they were euthanized for a purpose other than the student's research.
- AND/OR**
- I certify that the blood, blood products, tissues or body fluids in this project will be handled in accordance with the standards and guidance set forth in U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Act, 29CFR, Subpart J, Section 1910.103, Pathogens.

This MUST  
be dated  
BEFORE  
the "Actual  
Start Date"  
on Form  
1A

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Approval (mm/dd/yy)  
(Must be prior to experimentation.)

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

## Continuation/Research Progression Projects Form (7)

**Required for projects that are a continuation/progression in the same field of study as a previous project. This form must be accompanied by the previous year's abstract and Research Plan/Project Summary.**

Student's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by Student Researcher:** List all components of the current project that make it new and different from previous research.

Components	Current Research Project	Previous Research Project: Year: _____
1. Title		
2. Change in goal/ purpose/objective		
3. Changes in methodology		
4. Variable studied		
5. Additional changes		

Continuation projects **MUST** include this form. For the immediately prior year, researcher **MUST** include **BOTH** the Abstract & Research Plan. For any years farther back, the researcher **MUST** include the Abstract and Research Plan for *each* additional prior year's work in comparison to the current year's work.

Attached are:

Abstract and Research Plan/Project Summary, Year \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that the above information is correct and that the current year Abstract & Certification and project display board properly reflect work done only in the current year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Printed Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Signature (mm/dd/yy)