

2027 APS Science & Engineering Fair

Condensed Guidelines

(Full version at <https://www.societyforscience.org/isef/international-rules/>)

Science & Engineering Fair Ethics Statement

adapted From International Rules and Guidelines for Science Fairs

Student researchers, as well as adults who have a role in their projects, are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. These standards include, but are not limited to:

Integrity - Honesty, objectivity, and avoidance of conflicts of interest are expected during every phase of the project. The project should reflect independent research done by the student(s) and be free of fraudulent data and/or plagiarism and represent only one year's work.

Legality - Compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations is essential. 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. All projects must be approved by a Scientific Review Committee (SRC), and when necessary must also be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and/or Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). Native, genetically-altered, and/or invasive species, (e.g. insects, plants, invertebrates, vertebrates), pathogens, toxic chemicals or foreign substances reintroduced into the environment is prohibited. It is recommended that students reference their local, state or national laws and regulations.

Respect for Confidentiality and Intellectual Property - Confidential communications, as well as patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property must be honored. Unpublished data, methods, or results may not be used without permission, and credit must be given for all contributions to the research.

Stewardship of the Environment - It is the responsibility of the researcher and the adults involved to protect the environment from harm. Introduction or disposal of native, genetically-altered, 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.

Acknowledgment of Risks - All projects involve some amount of risk. Everyone is expected to recognize the hazards, assess the risks, minimize the risks, and prepare for emergencies.

AI use Policy - in accordance with the Metro Area Science fair we want to provide you with [guidelines](#) on how to responsibly engage with Large Language Models (LLMs), or AI, like Chat GPT. While we do not expect the incorporation of these tools, here are some guidelines for the responsible use of AI that will ensure the integrity of your project and uphold ethical standards in the field of science.

We have limited capacity to vet projects that include vertebrates, humans or potentially Hazardous Biological agents this year. We will be considering building out this element in future years.

ALL PROJECTS 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 ISEF. Society for Science reserves the right to revoke recognition of a project subsequently found to have been fraudulent.

	Aurora Public Schools
Project Size Limits & display guidelines	Tri Fold board Format • Depth (front to back): 24 inches or 61 centimeters • Width (side to side): 48 inches or 122 centimeters • Height (floor to top): 36 inches or 92 centimeters Total display dimension including trifold board and demonstration materials • Depth (front to back): 24 inches or 61 centimeters • Width (side to side): 48 inches or 122 centimeters For guidelines on how to construct your project board please use the student Authentic Student Project Worksheets on the APS Science and Engineering Fair webpage.
Project Type	All projects must be inquiry-based and have testable questions. We will allow inquiry and demonstration projects, however the regional and state fair will not accept these projects if you plan on attending those events. For ideas on the different types of projects, please refer to the student handbook on our science fair website.
Required Forms	For the required forms please see APS Science and Engineering Fair Website: • Registration Form by January 5, 2027 • Checklist and Media release
Team Projects	Team Projects: Maximum of three (3) members. Compete in a separate category. Team membership may not change from fair to fair. One member should be appointed team spokesperson. All team members' names must appear on the Registration Form found on the APS Science and Engineering Fair Website.
Other Requirements	We have limited capacity to vet projects that include vertebrates, humans or potentially Hazardous Biological agents this year. We will be considering building out this element in future years.
Registration	Registration Form by December 15, 2025
Risk Assessment for all Projects	• The student researcher must conduct a risk assessment in collaboration with a parent/teacher/guardian or Qualified Scientist prior to experimentation. This risk assessment should be documented in the research plan to include the risk assessment process, supervision, safety precautions and appropriate methods of disposal. • The use of hazardous chemicals, human/vertebrate subjects, or regulated substances will not be permitted at the APS 2025 Science and Engineering Fair. However, the use of hazardous devices and involvement in hazardous activities require direct supervision by a parent/guardian/teacher. Please refer to the ISEF rules for what qualifies the above items. • For all chemicals, devices or activities requiring a federal and/ or state permit, the student/supervisor must obtain the permit prior to the onset of experimentation. A copy of the permit must be available for review by adults supervising the project and the local, affiliated, and ISEF SRCs in their review prior to competition. • The student researcher must minimize the impact of an experiment on the environment. Examples include using minimal quantities of chemicals that will require subsequent disposal; ensuring that all disposal is done in an environmentally safe manner and in accordance with good laboratory practices and following local, state, federal guidelines.
Metro Science Fair	The APS Science and Engineering Fair is not required to attend The Metro Area Science Fair in 2025. APS has no say over any Metro policies and they will be different from our district fair. Please see their website (https://clas.ucdenver.edu/denversciencefair/) and contact them for Metro Science Fair details if you are planning on attending on February 20th, 2026.

Judging Guidelines

Each project will be evaluated in the following areas:

- Research question or design
- Design/methodology
- Execution
- Creativity
- Poster/slides
- Interview

for a total of 60 points. Projects who score in following levels:

- Developing 0-24 points
- Approaching 25-6 points
- Meets 37-48 points
- Exceeds 49+

For more details on the evaluation criteria of each component, please check out the Judges page on our [website](#).