

Pocahontas County Science and Engineering Fair

Middle School (Grades 6-8) Rules

All Projects

1. Students must be in grades 6-8 and live in Pocahontas County.
2. Each student may only enter one project.
3. Students enrolled in full-time virtual instruction are eligible to submit projects for competition at the school level.
4. Homeschool students who contact the school to participate in the fair may be accepted on a case-by-case basis.
5. **No group or team projects.**
6. Each project may only include research conducted this calendar year, beginning January 2020.
7. Projects must be registered within one of the eighteen divisions on page 7 of the [Science & Engineering Fair Project Guide](#). The school can further narrow these down: for example, into Engineering, Life Sciences, Chemistry, and Physical Sciences.
8. No copying of another researcher's work is allowed.
9. Projects must follow all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
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11. Projects must follow all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
12. The following forms are **required for each project**:
 - a. WV Approval Form – Found [here](#).
 - b. WV Rules Agreement Form – Found [here](#).
 - c. WVSEF Abstract for Middle School – Found [here](#).
 - d. WVSEF Checklist of Adult Sponsor – Found [here](#).
 - e. WVSEF Student Checklist – Found [here](#).
 - f. WVSEF Research Plan – Found [here](#).
13. Projects that are demonstrations, "library" research, informational projects, or "explanation" models are not recommended nor appropriate.
14. No student or school names may appear on abstracts or projects.
15. No students' or participants' facial photographs may appear on abstracts or projects.

Project Displays and Videos

16. The display must be no more than 108 inches tall, 48 inches wide, and 30 inches deep, and must be freestanding (does not need to lean against a wall).
17. The following are **prohibited** from displays:
 - a. Student or school names
 - b. Student or participant facial photographs
 - c. Live animals
 - d. Flames, highly flammable materials, or heat sources (hot plates, etc.)

- e. Dry ice
 - f. Weapons and ammunition (including toys and replicas)
 - g. Sharp items (knives, needles, etc.)
 - h. Tobacco products
 - i. All hazardous or potentially hazardous substances or deices (poisonous chemicals, drugs, etc.)
 - j. Batteries with open-top cells (car, motorcycle batteries, etc.)
 - k. Any item intended for distribution
 - l. Any personal information, including websites, email accounts, social media handles, etc.
 - m. Any item prohibited by Board of Education policies
 - n. Any item a fair coordinator deems to be unsafe or inappropriate.
18. Any video submitted to the state fair must be between 3 and 5 minutes long.

Competition and Judging

- 19. Schools may direct judges to use the WV Science & Engineering Science Fair Judging Form on page 12 of the [Science & Engineering Fair Project Guide](#), or they may develop their own judging guide
- 20. Projects in the same division and the same grade band (elementary, middle, and high school) will be judged against each other.
- 21. For each grade band, the judges will determine one "best of fair" project.
- 22. The "best of fair" project will submit a 3-5 minute video presentation to the West Virginia State Fair between March 1 and March 12, 2020.

Prohibited Projects

- 23. The following are prohibited with no exceptions:
 - a. Projects done at home that involve microorganisms, including (but not limited to) mold, bacteria, viruses, prions, fungi, and parasites.
 - b. Vertebrate animal research (including humans) that involves pain or withholding of food or water.
 - c. Projects involving class IV lasers.
 - i. Projects involving lower-class lasers must be under direct supervision of a qualified adult.
 - d. Projects involving radioactive substances or equipment that emits any form of ionizing radiation.
 - e. Projects involving hazardous or potentially hazardous chemicals or reagents, DEA controlled substances, tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs, firearms, or explosives.
 - f. The introduction or disposal of non-native, genetically-altered, and/or invasive species, pathogens, toxic chemicals, or foreign substances into the environment.

See the [USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service](#) website for information on quarantines.

Projects Involving Human Participants

24. All projects involving humans must be reviewed by an Institutional Review Board, which includes an educator, a school administrator, and a medical or mental health professional, **before** experimentation begins.
 - a. For more information on IRBs, see page 10 of the [Science & Engineering Fair Project Guide](#).
 - b. The Green Bank Observatory will assist in setting up an IRB upon request. Contact Luci Finucan at lfinucan@nrao.edu to request help with this.
25. All human participants must be provided the opportunity to opt-out of participation.
26. All participants (or their legal guardian, if under the age of 18) must sign an informed consent form.
 - a. An informed consent form can be found on the ISEF site [here](#).

Projects Involving Non-Human Vertebrate Animals

27. All vertebrate animal research must be reviewed by a Scientific Review Committee, which includes a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, an educator, and one additional member, **before** experimentation begins.
 - a. For more information on SRCs, see page 10 of the [Science & Engineering Fair Project Guide](#).
 - b. The Green Bank Observatory will assist in setting up an SRC upon request. Contact Luci Finucan at lfinucan@nrao.edu to request help with this.
28. All vertebrate animal research must be of an observational nature.
29. Vertebrate animal research may not be done on an animal other than a family pet.

Projects Involving Biological Agents

30. Any experimentation that involves bacteria, viruses, prions, fungi, parasites, or any other microorganism that must be cultured should be done in a BioSafety Level 2 Laboratory.
31. Any project that involves biological agents must be reviewed by a Scientific Review Committee, which includes a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, an educator, and one additional member, before experimentation begins.
 - a. For more information on SRCs, see page 10 of the [Science & Engineering Fair Project Guide](#).
 - b. The Green Bank Observatory will assist in setting up an SRC upon request. Contact Luci Finucan at lfinucan@nrao.edu to request help with this.