

# Georgia College Regional Science & Engineering Fair

## Student Exhibitor and Sponsor/Teacher Handbook

This handbook contains important information for students who have been selected from one of the 10 counties in the Georgia College region. The winners from local, school, county or district Science & Engineering Fairs across the region earn the opportunity to advance to the Georgia College Regional Science & Engineering Fair (RSEF) competition. RSEF will take place the first Friday of February at the Georgia College Centennial Center in Milledgeville.

**To qualify for RSEF, all projects must adhere to the Intel ISEF Rules & Guidelines for scientific research protocol.** These guidelines outline the precautions that must be taken and the appropriate committee approvals that must be sought before beginning any scientific research.

### Useful Resources

**Georgia College RSEF webpage:**

- <http://science349.wixsite.com/gcsec/regional-fair-info>

**GSEF webpage:**

- [www.georgiacenter.uga.edu/gsef](http://www.georgiacenter.uga.edu/gsef)

**ISEF Rules & Guidelines (also apply to RSEF and GSEF):**

- <https://www.societyforscience.org/isef/international-rules/>

**ISEF Required Forms (also apply to RSEF and GSEF):**

- <https://www.societyforscience.org/isef/forms/>

**Questions? Contact RSEF at [science@gcsu.edu](mailto:science@gcsu.edu) or 478-445-7531.**

Georgia College & State University's Regional Science & Engineering Fair (RSEF) is proud to be affiliated with the Georgia Science & Engineering Fair (GSEF) and the International Science & Engineering Fair (ISEF). The Regional Fair showcases the results of scientific inquiry by elementary, middle and high school students in central Georgia. Participants learn how to identify problems and design unique, organized and logical strategies to solving the questions. The research process teaches students how scientists and engineers contribute to the advancement of science and engineering.

14 Participating Counties: Baldwin, Bibb, Columbia, Hancock, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Laurens, Putnam, Richmond, Monroe, Washington, Wilkinson, and Twiggs

### **Why should YOU participate in Fair?**

At Georgia College's Regional Science and Engineering Fair, our hope for your participation is that you become captivated by the fun and challenge of doing a science or engineering project. A good project will certainly present a challenge and the benefits of overcoming those difficulties will last you for a lifetime. Students tell us that the scariest part of science fair is judging; they also tell us that talking to the judges was the best part of the process. We hope you will make new friends who share your interests and that you gain insights into possible careers.

Visit our Georgia College Science and Engineering Fair video to see what others have to say about their experience.

<https://vimeo.com/156458873>

## What to Expect At the Fair

### Students:

- Wear your name tag (received at Registration/Check-In).
- Project set-up is between 7:30 AM – 8:15 AM.
- You are expected to be at your project display between 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM.
- Leave a note (with a time indication) at your project if you have gone to the restroom.
- *Junior/Senior Division Exhibitors:* You also may be asked to stay by your project from 11:30 AM to 12:00 PM so that we can complete GSEF/ISEF advancement judging.
- Projects are open to public viewing between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM.
- Judges will probably come to speak with you one at a time. Some Judges represent Category Awards (1st, 2nd, honorable mention in scientific category), while others are looking for Special Award recipients, and all are really important. *Please ask category judges to sign your Judge's Placement Card (on the table next to your project number).*
- There may be long periods when no one is there to judge your project. Bring a good book or homework to read while remaining quiet.
- Keep your project area tidy.
- Dress for success. You are encouraged to dress as neatly and professionally as you can. Don't forget to wear your name tag.
- Remove projects beginning at 3:00 PM (Primary/Elementary) and 6:00 PM (Junior/Senior). **Early removal may result in disqualification.**

### Teachers/Sponsors:

- After Project Check-In and setup is complete (after 8:15 AM) you will NOT be permitted on the exhibitor floor. The project will be disqualified if unauthorized people are at the project area (please share this information with parents and observers).
- Make sure the exhibitors are seated quietly in the bleachers between 8:15 – 8:30 AM for an exhibitor orientation.
- If the exhibitor receives a safety violation, please assist the exhibitor in going to the safety booth (NEW\* located at the Racquetball Rooms) and help the exhibitor resolve the violation. We realize a safety violation can scare the younger exhibitors so try to calmly resolve the matter so they do not lose focus.
- Teacher/Sponsor Meeting will be at 10 AM. Bring all questions/concerns you have to discuss.
- **Awards Ceremony:**
  - *Primary/Elementary Division* exhibitors and teachers need to be in line for the Awards Ceremony no later than 1:45 PM.
  - *Junior/Senior Division* exhibitors and teachers need to be in line for the Awards Ceremony no later than 3:45 PM.
  - **Lineup will be on the main floor of Centennial Center and look for your SCHOOL sign. We need 1-2 teachers/sponsors per school for lineup. All other teachers, parents and sponsors need to sit in the bleachers.**

# Project Numbering System

Entries are displayed by (1) division, (2) field of study (ISEF category number), and (3) sequential number of project entry.

## (1) Letter Designation

J=JUNIOR DIVISION (GRADES 6-8)

S=SENIOR DIVISION (GRADES 9-12)

## (2) Category Group

### BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES:

- ANIMAL SCIENCES - 01
- BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING - 05
- CELLULAR AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY - 06
- COMPUTATIONAL BIOLOGY AND BIOINFORMATICS - 08
- EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE - 09
- MICROBIOLOGY - 16
- PLANT SCIENCES - 18

### CHEMICAL SCIENCES:

- BIOCHEMISTRY (03)
- CHEMISTRY (07)
- MATERIALS SCIENCE (14)

### HEALTH and SOCIAL SCIENCES:

- BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE (02)
- BIOMEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCE (04)
- Technology Enhances the Arts (21)
- TRANSLATIONAL MEDICAL SCIENCE (22)

### PHYSICAL AND COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCES:

- EMBEDDED SYSTEMS - 10
- ENERGY: SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS AND DESIGN - 11
- ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY: STATICS AND DYNAMICS - 12
- ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING -13
- MATHEMATICS - 15
- PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY - 17
- ROBOTICS AND INTELLIGENT MACHINES - 19
- SYSTEMS SOFTWARE - 20

## (3) Sequential exhibitor numbers

001-200

For example, Project Number J0903 is JUNIOR Division, Biological Sciences Group, Earth and Environmental Science Category 09, and Exhibitor number 03. Each category group is color-coded and easy to find on the exhibitor floor.

## **SCHEDULE of Events (*tentative*)**

<b>THURSDAY EVENING (FEBRUARY 5, 2026)</b>	
5:00 – 8:00 PM	<b>Early Project Set-up</b> – Centennial Center
<b>FRIDAY MORNING (FEBRUARY 6, 2026)</b>	
7:00 – 8:30 AM	<b>Check-in and Project Set-up</b> – Centennial Center
8:00-9:15 AM	<b>Safety Inspections</b> (*If you receive a safety violation then proceed to the Safety Booth to resolve the situation)
9:30 AM	<b>Welcome Remarks</b> – Exhibit Hall by Fair Director
10:00 AM – Noon	<p><b>Student Interviews with Judges Panel</b></p> <p>Each participant must be at their project at specific interview times (printed on Name Badge)</p> <p>Block A – Interviews (10:00 am – 11:00 am)</p> <p>Block B – Interviews (11:00 am – 12:00 pm)</p> <p>Activities will be offered for students during their “off-hour” from interviews and for guests that are waiting.</p> <p><b>*NOTE – some students may be asked to stay a little longer for Special Awards and Grand Prize interviews, if needed.</b></p>
10:00 AM – Noon	<b>STEM Marketplace and Activities</b>
12:00 – 1:30 PM	<p><b>Lunch Break</b></p> <p>*Participants are responsible for providing their own lunch. Picnic tables are available if needed.</p>
<b>FRIDAY AFTERNOON (FEBRUARY 7, 2025)</b>	
1:30-4:00 PM	<p><b>Fair Open to the Public</b> – Centennial Center</p> <p><b>*Participants are <u>not</u> required to stand at their exhibits.</b></p>
2:00 – 4:00 PM	<b>STEM and Campus Activities - TBA</b>
4:30 – 6:00 PM	<b>Awards Ceremony</b> – Location TBA
6:00 – 7:00 PM	<b>Project Removal and Clean-up</b> – Centennial Center

# What to expect during JUDGING

## Awards

There are three kinds of awards.

- **Category Awards** are given by the Georgia College RSEF for scientific merit, including the First Place, Second Place, and Honorable Mention Awards in each of the categories. About 30% of projects receive a Category Award.
- **Grand Prize Awards** are given by the Georgia College RSEF to top division projects (**Best of Class**). The top high school project (**Best of Show**) is selected for further competition at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Almost 40 projects from middle and high school are selected for further competition at the Georgia State Science Fair.
- **Special Awards** are given by various professional organizations and companies. Each organization has its own criteria. Special awards may take many forms, including certificates, cash, trips, equipment, and internships.

## Pre-judging

The exhibitor hall is opened at 8:30 A.M. for judges to come in and read your boards, look through notebooks, and read the abstract.

## Category Awards Judging

At least two judges must evaluate each project. These judges are instructed to choose first, second, and/or honorable mention awards from their group of projects. Projects are judged with projects from the same category and with similar fields of study.

Category judges use the judging criteria posted on our website will select approximately 30% of the projects to win category awards.

Category judges wear red JUDGE ribbons. Category judges are instructed to sign the Project Placement Card (on the table next to your project number), so that we can check that at least two judges have evaluated each project.

## Special Awards

Special Awards are handled by the organization sponsoring each award. The criteria for the award are determined by the sponsoring organization, and they usually supply the judging team.

Some of these judging teams look at every project on the floor while others are interested only in projects having to do with one specific subject (for example: they may only want to look at projects related to water). If the topic of your project doesn't match the criteria for their organization, the judges will not stop to discuss your project with you. The judges often use the titles of the projects to determine whether a project will be reviewed.

## Grand Prize judging

Grand Prize (Best of Show and Best of Class) judging includes all projects per division. Judges for these groups have either a doctorate in their field or equivalent experience, the same requirements in place for GSEF and ISEF judges.

In addition to identifying the Grand Prize winners and the Grand Prize alternates, the Grand Prize judging teams rank the other outstanding projects.

## Georgia Science and Engineering Fair (GSEF) Judging

All the Junior/Senior division Grand Prize projects are qualified to participate at GSEF.

The Georgia Science and Engineering Fair Judging team then uses the additional ranking information from the Grand Prize judging teams, and their own assessment of other outstanding projects to identify other candidates for the GSEF.

Once the GSEF judging team selects the GSEF candidates and ranks the GSEF alternates, they verify the students have won an award in the category judging. To be a GSEF qualified candidate, the student must be both selected by the GSEF judging team and have won a category award. Winning a first place category award does not guarantee selection for GSEF as either a candidate or alternate.

# Don't Forget! Exhibit Display Guidelines

## 1. Exhibit size

Cannot exceed 15 inches (38 cm) deep, front to back; 48 inches (122 cm) wide, side to side; and 5 ft (150 cm) high above the table top. Any materials which are to be displayed must fit on the table in front of the display board. This space is approx. 15" x 24". Display boards of 3-4ft height (vs 5 ft) are recommended by the judges for adequate readability.

## 2. Your abstract and notebook **must** be displayed with your project. All other forms must be in the notebook and easily available.

## 3. UNACCEPTABLE FOR DISPLAY (where possible, use photos or drawings instead)

- NO RESEARCH INSTITUTION LOGOs ALLOWED
- No formal *Project Summaries* are allowed for distribution (only the Abstract may be distributed)
- All liquids, including water
- Human or animal food (ex. popcorn, M&Ms, etc.)
- Living organisms (including plants, fungi, and bacteria)
- Soil or waste samples, toxic waste samples
- Dried plant materials
- Taxidermy specimens or parts
- Preserved vertebrate or invertebrate animals or their parts
- Human/animal parts or body fluids (blood, urine)
- Laboratory/household chemicals
- Batteries with open-top cells
- Poisons, drugs, controlled substances, hazardous substances or devices (for example: firearms, weapons, ammunition, reloading devices, model rockets)
- Dry ice or other sublimating solids (solids which vaporize to a gas without passing through a liquid phase)
- Sharp items (for example: syringes, needles, pipettes, knives)
- Any flames, open or concealed, or highly flammable materials
- Gases or empty tanks that previously contained combustible liquids or gases, including butane and propane
- Awards, medals, business cards, flags, endorsements or acknowledgements from previous fairs.
- Photographs or other visual presentations depicting vertebrate animals in surgical techniques, dissections, necropsies, other lab techniques, improper handling methods, improper housing conditions, procedures, etc.
- Photographs of people other than student presenter(s) unless signed Form 4 is available.



## 4. Display Safety Requirements

- Proper attention to safety is expected of all participants, including compliance with the following requirements:
- No hand-held laser pointers of any power. No operation of Class III or Class IV lasers.
- No operation of unshielded belts, pulleys, chains, or moving parts with tension or pinch points.
- Any exhibit producing temperatures that could cause physical burns must be adequately insulated.
- Properly fasten all wiring. Nails, tacks, or unshielded staples are not acceptable.
- Electrical power: Only supplied to projects which cannot be displayed any other way. NOT FOR LAPTOPS alone.
- Electrical power supplied to approved projects and, therefore, the maximums allowed for projects is 120 or 220 Volt, A.C., single phase, 60 cycles. Maximum circuit amperage/wattage available is determined by the electrical circuit capacities of the exhibit hall and may be adjusted on-site by the Display and Safety Committee. For all electrical regulations "120 Volt A.C." or "220 Volt A.C." is intended to encompass the corresponding range of voltage as supplied by the San Jose Convention Center.
- All electrical connectors, wiring, switches, extension cords, fuses, etc. must be UL-listed and must be appropriate for the load and equipment. Connections must be soldered or made with UL-listed connectors. Wiring, switches, and metal parts must have adequate insulation and over-current safety devices (such as fuses) and must be inaccessible to anyone other than the Championship participant. Exposed electrical equipment or metal that may possibly be energized must be shielded with a non-conducting material or with a grounded metal box to prevent accidental contact.
- Wiring that is not a part of a commercially available UL-listed appliance or piece of equipment must have a clearly visible fuse or circuit breaker on the supply side of the power source and prior to any project equipment.
- There must be an accessible, clearly visible on/off switch or other means of disconnect from the 120 or 220 Volt power source.
- Computerized PowerPoint® presentations or equivalents can be made from battery powered laptops only, and are allowed only to provide data unavailable in any other format.
- At its discretion, the compliance committee may restrict the operation of the project, or exhibition of specified items, to the time of judging only. Failure to follow these restrictions can result in project disqualification after judging is completed.
- If applicable, Forms 1C and/or Form 7 should be displayed. Each signed Form 4 should be available, but not displayed.

***The Georgia College Regional Science and Engineering Fair will disqualify any exhibit which, in its opinion, does not comply with all preceding Project Display Rules.***

## Loss or Damage

The Georgia College Regional Science and Engineering Fair assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to any project or project part. Valuable items should be simulated or removed when the student is not present at his/her project.

***Projects not removed by 7:00 PM Fair Day may be trashed and destroyed.***

***GCSU is NOT responsible for keeping/saving your projects!***