SciFest@College 2027

Provisional Rules and Guidelines: Teachers

SciFest@College STEM fairs will take place in the Dundalk Institute of Technology, ATU (Donegal, Galway and Sligo), SETU (Carlow and Waterford), TUS (Athlone, Limerick and Thurles), MTU (Cork and Tralee), TU Dublin (Grangegorman and Tallaght), DCU and St Mary's College, Derry between April and June 2027. Dates of SciFest@College STEM fairs are posted here as they become available.

The closing date for receipt of completed entry forms to SciFest@College 2027 is Thursday 11 March 2027**.** After they have submitted their entry form students should continue to work on their project until the day of the fair in their chosen venue.

How to Enter Projects

1. Log on to www.scifest.ie. On the SciFest@College menu click on Information for Teachers or follow this link.
2. Download the Participation Consent and Media Release form; the form may also be accessed here.
3. Have the Participation Consent and Media Release forms signed by the students and by their parents/ guardians, and retain on file. You must have a signed form for all participating students.
4. Before your students can enter their projects you must register your contact details on the system; the registration form can be accessed from the Information for Teachers page on the SciFest@College menu. When you register you will receive an email with a link to the SciFest Teacher Portal. In your Teacher Portal you can amend your contact details, view your students' entries and 'sign off' on your students' entries; you can also withdraw/delete an entry or change the venue, teacher name or student name(s). Registration is a once-off process; your details remain on the system from year to year. However, you can have them deleted by emailing info@scifest.ie. Please see our privacy policy for details of how your data are used.
5. The student entry form is accessed from the Information for Students page on the SciFest@College menu. The link to the form is also in the Student Guidelines. The form can be saved and retrieved for completion/amendment at any stage until it is submitted. It may also be printed off. However, once the Submit Entry button is clicked the form cannot be retrieved for further editing. Please ensure that your students are aware of the importance of having the form checked before clicking the Submit Entry button.
6. When your students have submitted their entry forms log on to your SciFest Teacher Portal and, for each project, tick the two boxes that confirm that you have a signed Participation Consent and Media Release form

for each student and that you will inform your Principal (see point 7) of the student(s)' participation. The students' entries will not be accepted by the SciFest@College venue until you tick the two boxes. It is therefore essential that you complete this process as soon as possible but, in any event, **within seven days after the final entry date**.

7. Your portal includes a button to download a list of your students' projects. If more than one teacher has entered projects from your school all of the school's projects are on one sheet which can be downloaded by any of the registered teachers.
8. Remember to check the website www.scifest.ie regularly for updates.

Who Can Enter SciFest@College?

All second-level students, born after 1 May 2008 and attending school or being home-schooled in Ireland, including Northern Ireland, are eligible to enter. Each student may enter only one project, but a school may enter as many projects as they wish. A student may enter their project in only one venue, but schools may submit projects to as many venues as they wish. Entries will be judged in the following categories:

Age Category:

	Junior			Intermediate		Senior	
RoI	**1st Year**	**2nd Year**		**3rd Year**	**4th Year**	**5th Year**	**6th Year**
NI	**Year 8**	**Year 9**	**Year 10**	**Year 11**	**Year 12**	**Year 13**	**Year 14**

Project Type:

Individual	Group (Max. 3 students per group)

Project Category:

Physical Sciences	Life Sciences	Technology

Physical Sciences

This category includes projects in physics, chemistry, mathematics, meteorology, earth science, geophysics, space science, astronomy, computer science, engineering, etc.

Life Sciences

This category includes projects in botany, agriculture, forestry, horticulture, genetics, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, food science, environmental science, psychology, sociology, etc.

Technology

This category includes projects that directly apply scientific principles to solve a problem or improve an existing solution to a problem. Relevant areas include electronics, communications, aeronautics, chemical and electrical technologies, biotechnology, sound, robotics, etc. Projects in this category should normally include a working model or prototype.

If a project is entered in the wrong category the judges reserve the right to move the entry to the correct category.

NOTE:

- A student may not enter more than one project in SciFest@College in a given year.
- A student may not enter their project in more than one venue in a given year.
- Each project must have a separate entry form.
- Plagiarism is strictly prohibited.
- Where a student carries out work in an institution other than their school and/or under the supervision of someone other than their teacher this must be acknowledged in the report book; the acknowledgement must include the name and contact details of the person providing the supervision and of the institution, if applicable.
- A student(s) whose project has been accepted for exhibition and who subsequently finds that they are unable to exhibit their project should inform the organisers of their intention to withdraw as soon as possible but, in any event, not later than two weeks before the date of the STEM fair in which they entered; **failure to comply with this requirement may result in the school's access to the competition being restricted in future years.**

What Your Students Need to Bring with Them on the Day of the STEM Fair

1. Project Report Book
2. Visual Display

For more information go to www.scifest.ie. On the Resources menu click on SciFest@College and then on How to write your Project Report Book and How to design your project poster.

NOTE

- **The size of the display boards may vary depending on the venue; information on board size, etc. will be sent out by the relevant venue before the exhibition.**
- **Exhibitors are asked to refrain, where possible, from using brand names of firms/sponsors on their display board; reference to brands or firms should only appear in the Report Book.**

Judging

- The judges' decision in all matters relating to the award of prizes will be final.
- The judges reserve the right to change the entry classification of a project where appropriate and to withhold an award in the event of a project not reaching a satisfactory standard.
- If a project has not adhered to all the rules and guidelines of this competition the judges have the right to withhold awards or exclude the project at any stage during the judging process.
- SciFest CLG reserves the right to rescind an award at any time subsequent to the making of the award if it is established that the project has not adhered to all the rules and guidelines of the competition.

Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition (YSTE)

Students awarded any of the prizes listed below in the StripeYSTE in 2027 or a previous YSTE **may not enter the same project in SciFest@College 2027**.

Main Awards	Category Winners
Young Scientist(s)	1st in Category
Best Individual or Group	2nd in Category
Runner-up Individual	3rd in Category
Runners-up Group	

Students who exhibited at the StripeYSTE 2027 or a previous YSTE but **who did not receive any of the awards listed above** are welcome to enter their project in SciFest@College 2027. However, such students are expected to have carried out **additional work on their project** before entering it in SciFest.

Continuation Projects

SciFest encourages students to enter projects which are a continuation (continuation projects) of a previous SciFest entry. These projects must document that the additional research is an expansion of prior work (e.g. testing a new variable or new line of investigation, etc.). Increasing sample size and repeating previous experimentation with exactly the same methodology and research question are examples of unacceptable continuations.

Live Animals

As a general principle, studies involving live animals should not extend beyond observing the animals in their natural environment. Students whose projects involve studies of live animals must ensure that such studies are carried out in conformity with the statutory regulations. Please read Department of Education Circular: Use of live animals for scientific, educational or other purposes in schools. Guidance on acceptable practices can also be obtained here.

Health, Safety and Ethical Issues

Before a project involving potentially dangerous, pathogenic, toxigenic or allergenic organisms (animals/insects, plants or microorganisms) is undertaken a competent expert must be consulted to advise on health and safety issues. In general, normal laboratory rules and safety procedures must be observed at all times – see Safety in School Science, published by the Department of Education and Science in 2001, in particular, Chapter 3 of this document. The complete document may be downloaded from the Department of Education and Youth website here.

Where projects involve human subjects, e.g. in completing surveys or participating in experiments, appropriate permission must be obtained, including permission of parents/guardians where subjects are under 18 years of age. In all cases the wellbeing and privacy of subjects participating in a project must be ensured.

Personal Belongings

SciFest will not accept responsibility for damage to, or loss of, projects or personal belongings. Exhibitors are advised to remove valuable equipment from unattended stands. Projects are the property of the exhibitors but project content and material may be used by SciFest for exhibition or publication.

Patents

If contestants have an entry that can be used commercially and for which they seek patents they should have it registered before the STEM fair. For more information on this please visit the Intellectual Property Office of Ireland website.

School Visits to SciFest STEM Fairs

The majority of SciFest@College venues are unable to accommodate school visits during SciFest STEM fairs so please check with the local organisers to avoid disappointment.

Supervision of Participating Students

Students are expected to attend talks and to participate in all activities organised for them on the day by the College hosting the SciFest@College fair.

Participating students must be accompanied by at least one teacher and supervised at all times.

Use of Photographs/Videos/Sound Recording

By registering their contact details on the SciFest online entry system a teacher grants to SciFest, or anyone authorized by SciFest, including SciFest partners and sponsors, the right to use any photograph/video/sound recording taken of them while participating in, or in relation to their participation in, a SciFest event. Such photographs/videos/sound recordings may include their name, title of project(s), prize information, name of school, etc., and may be used in print and online media, including on social media and the websites of SciFest, its partners and sponsors, and in related marketing materials, without media or use limitation. The photographs/videos/sound recordings remain the property of SciFest and will be stored as long as necessary to fulfil these purposes. SciFest is not obligated to use the photographs/videos/sound recordings in any way. Deletion of a photograph, video or sound recording may be requested by emailing info@scifest.ie with appropriate identification.

By signing the SciFest Participation and Media Release form a student and a parent/guardian grants similar rights in respect of their child (see Entry Rules and Guidelines for Students, page 5).

Publication of Awards

Details of award winners are published on the SciFest website after the event. Details include the title of the project, the name/s of the student/s, the name of their teacher and the school's name and address. It is a condition of participation in the programme that teachers and students/parents/guardians agree to the publication of these details.

Use of Project Material

SciFest retains the right to publish details of projects that have been exhibited at a SciFest STEM fair. This information may be used in related publications, including on the SciFest and related websites, including social media websites, and in marketing materials, without media or use limitation.

Safety at a SciFest STEM Fair

- Live mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles or Agar plates containing micro-organisms will not be allowed into the exhibition hall.
- Exhibitors will not be permitted to have dangerous equipment, explosive or irritant chemicals, naked flames or any pathogenic, toxigenic or allergenic organism (animals/insects, plant or micro-organisms) on their stand during the exhibition.
- Exhibits must be safely designed and constructed.
- No sharp objects such as syringes or needles will be permitted in the exhibition hall.
- Exhibitors should behave responsibly and remain at their stands to speak to the judges and visitors.

Closing Date for Receipt of Completed Entry Forms:
Thursday 11 March 2027