



## Middle School Science Fair Paperwork Reference Guide

*This document is intended to provide guidance about the rules and documentation for science fair projects that aspire to compete at regional or state competition that may lead to a nomination and an opportunity to compete in this Middle School national competition. Some areas of research require pre-approval and knowing this up-front as students are generating their project idea will help in the successful planning, documentation, and implementation of the project.*

### Science Fair Paperwork

The requirements and documentation procedures may vary dependent on your fair, but knowing these general requirements are important:

- Some projects require Pre-Approval by a Scientific Review Committee (SRC) and/or Institutional Review Board (IRB) including projects that use:

(including projects involving the use of inventions, Apps, prototypes)  
[animal-rules/human-participants/](#) for more information.  
(Please see more about the IRB below, the SRC, and the SRC.)

[animal-rules/vertebrate-animals/](#) for more information.

[animal-rules/vertebrate-animals/](#) for more information.



- Use the Rules wizard <https://ruleswizard.societyforscience.org/> to determine what forms & approvals are needed before starting a project.
- The Society accepts Regeneron ISEF forms and/or local science fair forms.

### **What is an 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. This IRB is intended to be formed at the school level. An IRB must consist of a minimum of three members including the following:

- An educator
- A school administrator (preferably principal or vice principal)
- A medical or mental health professional. This person must be knowledgeable about and capable of evaluating the physical and/or psychological risk involved in a given study.

Visit <https://www.societyforscience.org/isef/international-rules/roles-and-responsibilities-of-students-and-adults/#IRB>