



SciFest@School 2017

Guidelines for Teachers and Students

General

SciFest@School science fairs are in-house science fairs hosted by individual schools. They can take place at any time during the year at a time which suits the particular school.

A SciFest@School science fair may involve students from any year group and may be as small or as large as the teacher(s) may consider appropriate. A fair may involve a selected group of students, a class group(s) or a year group(s).

A SciFest@School may be used to select projects to progress to the next level – SciFest@College. However, projects may be entered directly in a SciFest@College science fair without having participated in a SciFest@School.

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 Skills website here: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Safety-in-School-Science.pdf>.

Where projects involve human participants appropriate permission **must** be obtained and their wellbeing and privacy must be ensured at all times.

Live Animals

As a general principle, studies involving live animals should not extend beyond observing the animals in their natural environment. Projects involving studies of live animals **must always** be carried out in conformity with the statutory regulations. Copies of the regulations are available from the Department of Health, Hawkins House, Dublin 2. Online guidance from the Department of Health can be accessed [here](#). Guidance on acceptable practices can also be obtained [here](#) and [here](#).

Patents

If a project has commercial potential and the student(s) wish(es) to seek a patent(s) for it, they are advised to have it registered at the earliest opportunity. Further information can be obtained from the Patents Office: <http://www.patentsoffice.ie>.