

REQUIRED FORMS GUIDE



Required Forms for Regional and State Science Fair Eligibility in Georgia (Grades 6–12)

All Georgia students in grades 6–12 must follow the [International Rules for Pre-College Science Research](#) to be eligible for competition in a regional or state-level fair. This includes completion of **research forms** and obtaining appropriate **approvals**.

It is the responsibility of the student and their supporting adults to know the rules and evaluate the project before it begins to determine which forms and approvals it requires.

Most forms must be completed BEFORE experimentation or data collection begins. Many projects must also be approved by an SRC or IRB committee BEFORE experimentation or data collection begins (see page 2). Students should use the [Rules Wizard](#) and consult their local SRC/IRB to ensure all requirements are met.

Failure to follow the rules may result in disqualification at any stage, including revocation of honors and awards.

ACRONYM KEY:

(see [Rules](#) for definitions)

QS = Qualified Scientist

DS = Direct Supervisor

SRC = Scientific Review Committee

IRB = Institutional Review Board

RRI = Regulated Research Institution

Forms required for EVERY project:

Complete one form per project unless otherwise indicated.

☐ Forms Cover Sheet	The Forms Cover Sheet and GSEF Participation Agreement are primarily required for projects competing at the state-level (GSEF) ; school and regional fairs may not require these, or they may use different versions.
☐ GSEF Participation Agreement	The GSEF Participation Agreement is required for every student attending GSEF , including team members.
☐ Official Abstract Form	Summarizes the most important ideas about your project and allows judges to quickly determine its nature and scope. (Required for state-level fair (GSEF); school/regional fairs may use a different Abstract form.)
☐ Form 1: Adult Sponsor Checklist	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Adult Sponsor - with student - reviews what forms and approvals are required for compliance with ISEF rules and local, state, and federal laws. The Adult Sponsor may not serve on, or sign on behalf of, the SRC/IRB that reviews the project before and/or after experimentation.
☐ Form 1A: Student Checklist	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Student provides details about research and experimentation. Must be accompanied by Research Plan / Project Addendum (see below).
☐ Research Plan / Project Addendum <i>free-typed; not a form</i>	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Written before experimentation to detail rationale, research question, methodology, and risk assessment. Changes made during research can be added to the original plan as an addendum. Note: Some changes may require returning to SRC/IRB for new review/approval before proceeding.
☐ Form 1B: Approval Form <i>one per student (not per project)</i>	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Student, parent/guardian, and SRC (if required) consent to and approve the project. Must be signed by student and parent/guardian BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION . For ALL projects, must be signed by Regional Fair SRC in section 3 after experimentation and prior to competition at Regional Fair/GSEF. If research involves human participants, vertebrate animals, or PHBAs and was not conducted at a RRI, must be signed by SRC in section 2a BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION ; for research conducted at RRI, SRC signs in section 2b after experimentation confirming institutional pre-approval and compliance with ISEF rules. No Adult Sponsor, QS, DS, or relative of the student may serve on, or sign for, the SRC/IRB reviewing the project.
☐ Form 2A: Student Support Disclosure Form	Student provides details about any support or assistance received during completion of the project, including usage of generative AI.

Additional forms required for specific types of research:

Some projects require SRC/IRB approval prior to experimentation. See [Rules Wizard](#) and info on page 2 for guidance.

☐ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Required for research using human participants, vertebrate animals, potentially hazardous biological agents, or DEA-controlled substances . Completed by QS/DS BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION .
☐ Form 2C: Regulated Research Institution/Industrial Setting	Required for research conducted at a college/university, medical facility, industrial setting, or other lab/research setting other than home, school or in the field. Completed by supervising adult at RRI after experimentation.
☐ Form 3: Risk Assessment	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Required for research involving hazardous chemicals, activities, devices, or DEA-controlled substances , some human participants projects, and some PHBA projects (see full rules). Recommended for student-designed inventions/prototypes. Completed by student and signed by QS/DS BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION .
☐ Form 4: Human Participants <i>(sample consent form)</i>	IRB MUST APPROVE BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Required for research involving human participants , which includes surveys, testing/providing feedback on invention/prototype/application, and cases where the researcher is the subject of the research. MUST BE APPROVED BY FULL IRB* (ALL 3 SIGNATURES) BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION/SURVEYING/DATA COLLECTION . IRB determines risk, supervision, and consent required.
☐ Form 5A: Vertebrate Animal or Form 5B: Vert. Animal (RRI)	SRC MUST APPROVE BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Required for research involving vertebrate animals . 5A is for research conducted at home/school/field, which MUST BE APPROVED BY SRC* BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION/DATA COLLECTION . SRC determines level of supervision required (DS, QS, and/or veterinarian). 5B is for research conducted at a RRI, which must be approved by institution's IACUC. 5B is completed and signed by QS/PI after experimentation.
☐ Form 6A: Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents (PHBAs)	SRC MUST APPROVE BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Required for research involving microorganisms, rDNA, fresh/frozen tissue (including primary cell lines, human and other primate established cell lines and tissue cultures), blood, blood products, or body fluids . QS/DS selects box describing research setting and required approvals. MUST BE APPROVED BY SRC*/IACUC/IBC BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION/DATA COLLECTION . SRC indicates agreement/approval before experimentation if <i>not</i> done at RRI or after experimentation if done at RRI.
☐ Form 6B: Human/Animal Tissue	BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION Required in addition to 6A for research involving fresh/frozen tissue (including primary cell lines, human and other primate established cell lines and tissue cultures), blood, blood products, or body fluids . MUST BE COMPLETED BY QS/DS BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION/DATA COLLECTION .
☐ Form 7: Continuation/Research Progression Project	Required for projects that continue or expand upon a previous year's work . Must be accompanied by Abstract and Research Plan from previous year(s).

Projects Requiring Approval Prior to Experimentation/Survey/Data Collection

Projects involving **human participants** (including surveys), **vertebrate animals** (including pets), or **potentially hazardous biological agents** (including samples swabbed from common surfaces) must receive **official approval** from a **Scientific Review Committee (SRC)** or **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** **before** any experimentation / surveying / data collection begins.

Projects conducted at a **Regulated Research Institution (RRI)** may have different requirements than those conducted at home, school, or in the field. RRIs include laboratories (government, college/university, commercial), medical facilities, hospitals, and industrial settings such as manufacturing facilities.

This guide does not account for all situations and is not an exhaustive list of requirements. See [International Rules](#) for complete rules and clarification of terms, including Qualified Scientist, Regulated Research Institution (**RRI**), Scientific Review Committee (**SRC**), Institutional Review Board (**IRB**), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (**IACUC**), and Institutional Biosafety Committee (**IBC**).

If the project involves:	These approvals and forms are required*:
 HUMAN PARTICIPANT(S) A human participants project is any project that involves observing or collecting data from or about any human. Human participant projects include, but are not limited to, the following: • Having a participant do any activity, even if low-risk (e.g., physical exertion, tasting a substance) • Psychological, educational, and opinion studies (including surveys) • Studies where student is the subject of their own research (e.g., measuring the effect of listening to music on their own heart rate) • Testing of student-designed invention, prototype, computer application, etc. by anyone other than student researcher • Data/record review projects that include data that are not de-identified/anonymous • Behavioral observation studies for which any of the following apply: a) involve interaction with individuals or where the researcher has changed the environment (e.g., posted a sign, placed an object); b) occur in non-public or restricted access settings (e.g., day care, doctor's office); c) involve recording personally identifiable information	Must be approved by IRB <u>BEFORE</u> experiment / survey / data collection begins. Required for research conducted at home, school, or field: ☑ Form 4: Human Participants ☑ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist - <i>as required by IRB*</i> ☑ Form 3: Risk Assessment - <i>as required by IRB*</i> Required for research conducted at RRI: ☑ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist - <i>as required by IRB*</i> ☑ Form 2C: Regulated Research Institution ☑ Form 3: Risk Assessment - <i>as required by IRB*</i>
 VERTEBRATE ANIMALS A vertebrate animal project is any project that involves observing or collecting data from or about any vertebrate animal (including pets). Vertebrate animal studies involve any of the following: • Live, nonhuman vertebrate mammalian embryos or fetuses • Tadpoles • Bird and reptile eggs starting 72 hours prior to hatching • All other nonhuman vertebrates (including fish) at hatching or birth Research conducted at home/school/field must involve only agricultural, behavioral, observational or supplemental nutritional studies on animals AND only non-invasive and non-intrusive methods that do not negatively affect animal's health or well-being.	Must be approved by SRC (or RRI's IACUC) <u>BEFORE</u> experiment / data collection begins. Required for research conducted at home, school, or field: ☑ Form 5A: Vertebrate Animal ☑ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist - <i>if required by SRC*</i> Required for research conducted at RRI: ☑ Form 5B: Vertebrate Animal (RRI) ☑ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist - <i>if required by SRC*</i> ☑ Form 2C: Regulated Research Institution
 POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS BIOLOGICAL AGENTS (PHBAS) PHBA studies involve microorganisms (including bacteria, viruses, viroids, prions, rickettsia, fungi, and parasites), rDNA technologies or human or animal fresh/frozen tissues, blood, or body fluids. A project involving tissues is considered a PHBA tissue study (and not a vertebrate animal study) if the tissue is obtained from an animal that was euthanized for a purpose other than the student's project. Experimentation involving the culturing of potentially hazardous biological agents, even BSL-1 organisms, is prohibited in a home environment. Samples may be collected at home but must be immediately transported to a laboratory. The student researcher and supervising adults must conduct an initial risk assessment on Form 6A: PHBA Risk Assessment.	Must be approved by SRC (or RRI's IBC / IACUC) <u>BEFORE</u> experiment / data collection begins. Required for research conducted at home, school, or field: ☑ Form 6A: PHBA Risk Assessment ☑ Form 6B: Human & Vertebrate Animal Tissue - <i>if applicable*</i> ☑ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist - <i>if required by SRC*</i> Required for research conducted at RRI: ☑ Form 6A: PHBA Risk Assessment ☑ Form 6B: Human & Vertebrate Animal Tissue - <i>if applicable*</i> ☑ Form 2B: Qualified Scientist - <i>if required by SRC*</i> ☑ Form 2C: Regulated Research Institution

*See [International Rules](#) for complete rules.