

# Science and Engineering Fair of Houston

## Display & Safety Regulations

Please address any questions regarding SEFH Display & Safety Regulations to  
[info@sefhouston.org](mailto:info@sefhouston.org)

### Display & Safety Committee Mission

The mission of this committee is to ensure that all competitors qualify for competition according to the rules established in conjunction with the Scientific Review Committee and Society for Science & the Public.

The SEFH Display & Safety (D&S) inspection process can be initiated only when all items are present at the display. The D&S Committee will offer guidance on Display & Safety issues for projects approved by the SRC to compete in SEFH. Occasionally, the SEFH D&S Committee may require students to make revisions to conform to Display & Safety regulations. Persistent issues will be directed to a committee of individuals which may include D&S and/or Scientific Review Committee (SRC) executive committee members.

The following regulations must be adhered to when a participant exhibits a project at SEFH.

1. A student may enter only one exhibit. The student must be a full-time student in good standing at a SEFH affiliated school. The entry exhibit must be the work of the student or team entering the Fair.
2. Completed project entry and approval forms must be electronically registered in STEMWizard prior to the deadline date for entry, including the payment of any project entry fee.
3. The exhibit must be set up in the category indicated on the entry form and at the assigned location. All projects will be assigned a project display table. The exhibitor is responsible for the set-up of his/her own exhibit.
4. The exhibit must pass inspection by the D&S Committee on Friday evening at the Fair. Exhibits that do not pass inspections must be removed from the exhibit area on Friday evening prior to closing time.
5. Project laboratory notebooks for all related research are highly encouraged and should be available at the display for review by judges.
6. Students for individual and team projects must be at their project during all judging periods.

The following regulations must be adhered to when a student exhibits a project at SEFH. As SEFH is an affiliated fair of ISEF, you must adhere to the additional restrictions or requirements of this fair. Knowledge of these requirements is the responsibility of the student, Adult Sponsor, and Fair Director.

### DISPLAY REGULATIONS

#### Maximum Size of Project

- Depth (front to back): 30 inches or 76 centimeters
- Width (side to side): 48 inches or 122 centimeters
- Height (floor to top): 96 inches or 244 centimeters
  - Board height not to exceed 60 inches or 152 centimeters

Please be aware when ordering posters that the mechanism supporting the poster should conform to the maximum size limitations stated above.

- All project materials and support mechanisms must fit within the project dimensions (including table covers).
- Fair-provided tables at SEFH will not exceed a height of 36 inches (91 centimeters).
- All projects must utilize the assigned table space thus it becomes part of the project.
- All demonstrations must be done within the confines of the assigned space. When not being

demonstrated, all project components must be returned to the project display and must fit within allowable dimensions as defined above.

### FORMS REQUIRED TO BE VISIBLE AND VERTICALLY DISPLAYED AT THE PROJECT BOOTH

The placement of the required forms may include the front edge of the table, the display board, or in a free-standing acrylic frame placed on the table top.

#### Forms required at all projects:

1. An original Official Abstract and Certification as approved (stamped/embossed) by the SEFH Scientific Review Committee.
  - a. Upon SRC approval, the stamped/embossed Official Abstract and Certification will be provided.
    - The abstract must be the official SEFH Abstract and embossed/ stamped by the SEFH Scientific Review Committee.

- No other format or version of your approved Abstract will be allowed for any purpose at SEFH. Abstract handouts to judges and to the public are limited to UNALTERED photocopies of the official abstract and certification.
- b. The term “abstract” may NOT be used as a title or reference for any information on a finalist’s display or materials at the project except as part of displaying the official stamped/embossed abstract.
    - It is the recommendation of the Display & Safety Committee to NOT include the word “abstract” nor the abstract itself when preparing backboards or posters prior to the fair. However, it is reasonable to leave a blank space (8½” x 11”) on the backboard/poster so as to facilitate the addition of the official abstract. Keep in mind this document can also be displayed vertically on the front edge of the table or in a free-standing acrylic frame.
2. SEFH Project Inspection Sheet (received on-site at the Fair)
    - a. This form documents the project as approved by the Scientific Review Committee and is used to document the Display & Safety Committee’s review process and final approval.
    - b. The Inspection sheet must contain a stamp of approval by a Display & Safety Committee member by the close of registration the evening before competition.

**Additional Forms required (only when applicable):**

1. **Regulated Research Institutional/Industrial Setting Form (1C)**
  - a. If work was conducted in a regulated research institution, industrial setting or any work site other than home, school or field at any time during the current SEFH project year, the **Regulated Research Institutional/Industrial Setting Form (1C)** must be completed and vertically displayed at the project booth.
  - b. The information provided by the mentor on Form 1C may be referenced to confirm that the information provided on the project board is that of the finalist. Only minimal reference to a mentor’s or another researcher’s work is allowable and must only reflect background information or be used to clarify differences between finalist’s and others’ work
2. **Continuation/Research Progression Projects**

**Form (7)**

- a. If a study is a continuation/research progression, the Continuation/Research Progression Projects Form (7) must be completed and vertically displayed at the project booth.
- b. The display board and abstract must reflect only the current year’s work. The project title displayed in the finalist’s booth may mention years of continuing research (for example, “Year Two of an Ongoing Study”).
- c. Reference to past work on the display board must be limited to summative past conclusory data and its comparison to the current year data set. No raw data from previous years may be publicly displayed; however, it may be included in the student research notebooks and/or logbooks if properly labeled.

**Forms Required at Project but not Displayed**

1. Forms, excluding those listed above, that were required for the Scientific Review Committee approval should not be vertically displayed, but must be available in the booth in case asked for by a judge or other SEFH official. These forms include, but are not limited to, Checklist for Adult Sponsor (1), Student Checklist (1A), Research Plan, Approval Form (1B), and a photograph/video release form.
2. A photograph/video release form signed by the subject is required for visual images of humans (other than the finalist) displayed as part of the project.

**Forms NOT to be at the Project Display Booth or in the Exhibit Hall**

Completed informed consent/assent forms for a human participant study are NOT to be displayed and should NOT be present at the project display. The Finalist may include a sample (incomplete) form in their logbook or research notebook but under NO CIRCUMSTANCE should the completed informed consent/assent forms for a human participant be in the Exhibit Hall.

**Photograph/Image Display Requirements**

1. Any photograph/visual image/chart/table and/or graph is allowed if:
  - a. It is not deemed offensive or inappropriate (which includes images/photographs showing invertebrate or vertebrate animals/humans in surgical, necrotizing or dissection situations) by the Scientific Review Committee, the Display & Safety Committee, or SEFH
  - b. It has a credit line of origin (“Photograph taken by...” or “Image taken from...” or “Graph/Chart/Table taken from...”). If all images,

etc. displayed were created by the finalist or are from the same source, one credit line prominently and vertically displayed on the backboard/ poster or tabletop is sufficient.

- i. All images **MUST BE** properly cited. This includes student-created logos, background graphics, photographs and/or visual depictions of the finalist or photographs and/or visual depictions of others.
  - ii. All visual depictions of others require a signed photo/video release form in a notebook or logbook at the project booth. These signed release forms must be available upon request during the set-up and inspection process, but may not be displayed.
  - c. Sample release text: “I consent to the use of visual images (photos, videos, etc.) involving my participation/my child’s participation in this research.”
2. Finalists using any presentation or demonstration outside of a project board must be prepared to show the entire presentation to the Display & Safety Inspectors before the project is approved. All aforementioned rules apply to this presentation and the presentation may not be altered in any way after the final Display & Safety inspection. Examples of presentations that require approval include, but are not limited to PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote, software program/simulation and other images and/or graphics displayed on a computer screen or other non-print delivery method.

### **Items/Materials Not Allowed on Display or at Project Booth**

1. Any information on the project display or items that are self-promotions or external endorsements are not allowed in the project booth
  - a. The use of commercial logos including known brands, institutional crests or trademarks, flags unless integral to the project and approved by the SRC via inclusion in the Official Abstract and Certification.
  - b. Any reference to an institution or mentor that supported the finalist’s research except as provided in an acknowledgement section of the poster and within official ISEF paperwork, most notably Form 1C. Published research papers may only be present within a lab notebook.
  - c. Any reference to patent status of the project.
  - d. Any items intended for distribution such as disks, CDs, flash drives, brochures, booklets, endorsements, give-away items, business cards,

printed materials or food items designed to be distributed to judges or the public.

2. Any awards or medals, except for past or present ISEF medals that may be worn by the finalist.
3. Postal addresses, World Wide Web, email and/or social media addresses, QR codes, telephone and/or fax numbers of a project or finalist. Note: The only personal information that is permissible to include on the display is the finalist name, school, city, state, country, age and grade.
4. Active Internet or email connections as part of displaying or operating the project at SEFH.
5. Any changes, modifications, or additions to projects including any attempt to uncover, replenish or return removed language or items after the approval by the Display & Safety Committee and the Scientific Review Committee is prohibited.
  - a. Finalists who do not adhere to the agreement on the SEFH Inspection Sheet regarding the following regulation may fail to qualify:  
*I/we understand that the initial Display & Safety Inspection has been completed, but that additional reviews occur and that I/we should check back regularly. I/we will vertically display this form at our project at all times. I/we have not and will not store packing material under the booth. I/we further understand that returning items that have been removed by the SRC or D&S and/or adding items that are not permitted after final clearance are grounds for failing to qualify for competition and/or forfeiture of all awards received.*

### **SAFETY REGULATIONS**

#### **Not Allowed at Project or Booth**

Note: In the case in which a Finalist’s Project includes an item that is prohibited from display, please consider taking photographs and/or documenting the significance of the prohibited item through video.

1. Living organisms, including plants
2. Glass
3. Soil, sand, rock, cement and/or waste samples, **even if permanently encased in a slab of acrylic**
4. Taxidermy specimens or parts
5. Preserved vertebrate or invertebrate animals
6. Human or animal food
7. Human/animal parts or body fluids (for example, blood, urine)
8. Plant materials (living, dead, or preserved) that are in their raw, unprocessed, or non-manufactured state
9. All chemicals including water. Absolutely no liquids can be utilized in the Project Display
10. All hazardous substances or devices (Example: poisons, drugs, firearms, weapons, ammunition, reloading devices, granules or powders, grease/oil and sublimating solids such as dry ice)

11. Items that may have contained or been in contact with hazardous chemicals (Exception: Item may be permitted if professionally cleaned and documentation for such cleaning is available). Filters (including microbial) may not be displayed unless the Display & Safety Committee can reasonably determine that the device was cleaned or was never used (please include receipts in your notebooks and/or logbooks)
12. Sharp items (for example, syringes, needles, pipettes, knives)
13. Flames and highly flammable materials
14. Batteries with open-top cells or wet cells; no battery may be left in the exhibit hall overnight
15. Drones or any flight-capable apparatus unless the propulsion power source removed
16. 3D Printers unless the power source is removed
17. Inadequately insulated apparatus capable of producing dangerous temperatures are not permitted
18. Any apparatus with belts, pulleys, chains, or moving parts with tension or pinch points that are not appropriately shielded
19. Any display items that are deemed distracting (i.e. sounds, lights, odors, etc.)
20. Personal items or packing materials stored underneath the table or in the booth overnight
21. Any apparatus or project material deemed unsafe by the Scientific Review Committee, the Display & Safety Committee, or the SEFH

## Electrical Regulations

1. **Electrical power will not be supplied to any project at SEFH.**
2. Electrical devices must be protectively enclosed. Any enclosure must be non-combustible. All external non-current carrying metal parts must be grounded.
3. Energized 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 finalist. Exposed electrical equipment or metal that may be energized must be shielded with a non-conducting material or with a grounded metal box to prevent accidental contact
4. Decorative lighting or illumination is discouraged. If used, lighting must be as low a voltage as possible and must be LED lighting that does not generate heat. Incandescent and fluorescent light bulbs are prohibited. When student is not at the exhibit, all electrical power must be disconnected, or power bars must be switched off (Exception: during pre-judging audio visual displays may be available.)
5. An insulating grommet is required at the point where any wire or cable enters any enclosure.
6. No exposed live circuits over 36 volts are allowed.

## Laser/Laser Pointer Regulations

Any Class 1, Class 2, Class 3A, or Class 3R lasers are allowed to be used responsibly. No other lasers may be used or displayed.

1. Laser beams may not pass-through magnifying optics such as microscopes and telescopes.
2. Lasers must be labeled by the manufacturer so that power output can be inspected. Lasers without labels will NOT be permitted.
3. Handheld lasers are NOT permitted.
4. Lasers will be confiscated with no warning if not used in a safe manner.