

Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair

Judging Policies and Procedures

Judging at the Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair is conducted in a fair and ethical manner. Conflicts of interest are addressed and the process of judging and final decision making is as transparent as possible while maintaining the integrity of the process. Effective policies and procedures are in place and understood and adhered to by all involved. All of those involved in judging and in making winner selections do so with the best interest of the student participants.

The decisions of judges are final.

The Arkansas State Science Fair has established policies that address minimum judge qualifications for each level of judging as well as recruitment and selection of judges per judging tier. These policies also address how conflicts, perceived conflicts or potential conflicts of interest are addressed and avoided.

The Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair has established an acceptable minimum number of judges per project to reach conclusions: The Arkansas Science and Engineering Fair will strive to have a minimum of two judges reviewing each project.

All Arkansas State Science Fair judges will be required to attest to a statement of ethics before serving that addresses 1) serving in the best interest of fair and just competition, 2) acknowledging any conflict of interest, 3) refraining from any harassment of another individual, and 4) the requirement to decline any monetary payment or other considerations of value.

The Arkansas Science Fair Association and Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair Director and Executive Committee will not undermine the decision-making of the collective body of judges. This is particularly important if such leadership has a real or perceived conflict of interest via an association with student participants or a competing school.

The Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair has a written grievance policy and process to address concerns raised. This process will be operational throughout the science fair process and will address concerns of conflict as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Each ISEF-affiliated regional fair should furnish a certain number of qualified judges from their region to the state to ensure fairness.

The Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair's policy regarding the naming of Intel ISEF finalists: a panel of 4-5 overall judges from broad disciplinary areas will consider all top-place finishers in each disciplinary category for selection of the highest quality projects, which will represent the Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair at the International Science and Engineering Fair.

Category Award Judging Teams must have one of the following qualifications:

- Have a minimum of six years related professional experience beyond receiving their B.A., B.S., or Master's degree, **OR**
- Have a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent (D.O., Ed.D., D.D.S., D.V.M., etc.), **OR**
- Is a current graduate student with more than four years of doctoral-level research experience or who is within one year of doctoral dissertation defense.

Judges may include university faculty and scientists, industrial engineers and scientists, representatives of private and federal research centers and agencies, medical researchers, post-doctoral fellows, and senior graduate students. Affiliated science fair directors and elementary or secondary school teachers are generally NOT eligible to serve as Arkansas State Science and Engineering Fair category judges, but may serve as special awards judges.

To avoid conflict of interest, no Adult Sponsor, parent or other relative of the student, the Qualified Scientist, or Designated Supervisor who oversees the project may serve on the judging team reviewing that project.