

## REGIONAL FAIR ELIGIBILITY

Any student in grades 6-12 enrolled in a public, private, parochial, military, or home school within the following counties is eligible to try for entry into the CTSEF: Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Freestone, Hamilton, Hill, Lampasas, Limestone, McLennan, Milam, Navarro, and Robertson.

**ALL** projects must have been approved for entry by the CTSEF through STEM Wizard prior to the local school fair. Winning at the local level guarantees only that a student is *eligible to apply for entry* in the CTSEF.

Only current year forms and applications are used to determine eligibility of and participation by a student researcher.

The project submitted to the CTSEF must be the student's own work. It is the student's responsibility to check with the CTSEF for any additional restrictions or requirements.

CTSEF may certify up to the top three entries from each category of the junior division and senior division to enter state competition. Two Senior Division Finalists may be certified for international competition. Students must meet all ISEF rules and guidelines and not be over 21 years of age by May 1 of the fair year.

The CTSEF is under contract with Society for Science and the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) to conduct the regional fair according to the rules and guidelines that ISEF has set. **Participants must observe all the rules in this handbook.** Ignorance of these rules will not excuse anyone from meeting the entry requirements. The purpose of these rules is to provide basic guidance and to protect students, teachers, and parents, as well as human participants and animal subjects.

## ISEF ETHICS STATEMENT

Student researchers, as well as adults who have a role in their projects, are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. These standards include, but are not limited to:

- **Integrity.** Honesty, objectivity, and avoidance of conflicts of interest are expected during every phase of the project. The project should reflect independent research done by the student(s) and presented in their own words with proper citation, most particularly if artificial intelligence is used. The project may only represent one year of work and must not include fraudulent data, plagiarism, or inappropriate use of AI in presenting work that is not their own.
- **Legality.** Compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations is essential. In addition, projects conducted outside the U.S. must also adhere to the laws of the country and jurisdiction in which the project was performed. All projects must be approved by a Scientific Review Committee (SRC), and when necessary, must also be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and/or Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). It is recommended that students reference their local, state, or national laws and regulations.
- **Respect for Confidentiality and Intellectual Property.** Confidential communications, as well as patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property must be honored. Unpublished data, methods, or results may not be used without permission, and credit must be given for all contributions to the research.
- **Stewardship of the Environment.** It is the responsibility of the researcher and the adults involved to protect the environment from harm. Introduction or disposal of native, genetically-altered, and/or invasive species, (e.g. insects, plants, invertebrates, vertebrates), pathogens, toxic chemicals or foreign substances into the environment is prohibited. It is recommended that students reference their local, state, or national regulations and quarantine lists.
- **Acknowledgment of Risks.** All projects involve some amount of risk. Everyone is expected to recognize the hazards, assess the risks, minimize the risks, and prepare for emergencies.
- **Animal Care.** Proper care and respect must be given to vertebrate animals. The use of non-animal research methods and alternatives to animal research are

strongly encouraged and must be explored before conducting a vertebrate animal project. The guiding principles for the use of animals in research includes the following “Four R’s: Replace, Reduce, Refine, Respect.

- **Human Participant Protection.** The highest priority is the health and well-being of the student researcher(s) and human participants.
- **Potentially Hazardous Biological Agents (PHBAs).** It is the responsibility of the student and adults involved in the project to conduct and document a risk assessment, and to safely handle and dispose of organisms and materials.

**ALL PROJECTS** Scientific fraud and misconduct are not condoned at any level of research or competition. This includes plagiarism, forgery, use or presentation of other researcher’s work as one’s own and fabrication of data. Fraudulent projects will fail to qualify for competition in affiliated fairs and ISEF. Society for Science reserves the right to revoke recognition of a project subsequently found to have been fraudulent.