

STEM Fair TIPS

Oct. 25, 2023

Most of the projects we see at the district fairs are science and engineering projects (with a few math and technology projects mixed in). The info below focuses on the differences between science and engineering, and how projects are judged at the district level. We hope this helps as you support your students with their projects, and in judging different types of projects at your school fair.

- Megan & Emily

Science & Engineering

Scientists seek to understand the natural world and generate knowledge. Science projects:

- ✓ Explore a QUESTION about the physical world.
- ✓ Follow the scientific method (page 7 of the handbook).
- ✓ [GSD judging rubric for science projects](#) (page 9 of the handbook).
- ✓ [Examples of science projects from previous GSD STEM Fairs.](#)

Engineers apply science knowledge and consider criteria and contrast to design solutions to problems. Engineering projects:

- ✓ Explore a PROBLEM and fulfill a need.
- ✓ Follow the engineering design process (page 7 of the handbook).
- ✓ [GSD judging rubric for engineering projects](#) (page 9 of the handbook).
- ✓ [Examples of engineering projects from previous GSD STEM Fairs.](#)

Helpful Links:

- [GSD STEM Fair Webpage](#)
- [STEM Fair Coordinator FAQ](#)
- [GSD STEM Fair Timeline](#)
- [Science Fair Friday Video Series](#)
- [Project Templates](#) *suggested for the virtual fair; some schools use them for their school fairs*
- [Pre-Approval Forms for 5th-8th grades](#)
- [GSD STEM Fair Handbook](#) *all the rules and guidelines for parents, students, and coordinators*
- [USEF website](#) *for info about the regional fair*

Questions? Please contact us!

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Safety Reminders

We love to have students working on projects they are interested in, and want to make sure they, and anyone else involved, stay safe!

- **NO bacteria or other microorganisms can be grown at home!** You can use lab space at a middle or high school. Let us know if you need help finding a lab.
- **Consent forms** are required if you are using human test subjects.
- **Safe disposal procedures** should be included in any investigation plan using chemicals.

