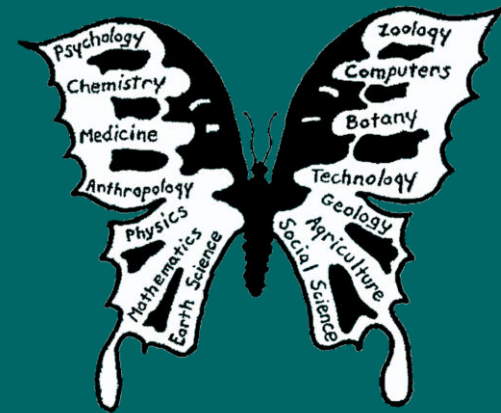


# SLV Regional Science Fair JUDGE TRAINING



# 76<sup>th</sup> Annual San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair

*Thursday and Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025*

- Judge Registration at <https://co-slvrsf.zfairs.com/>
- **Project preview** occurs from 1pm – 7pm on Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup> in Plachy Hall
- **Interviews with students** occurs on Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>
  - 9am–12:45pm for Elementary divisions (two shifts)
  - 9am-2:45pm for Junior and Senior divisions
- 30 winners from the Junior and Senior Divisions are eligible to participate in the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair (at CSU in Fort Collins on April 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

# Project Categories

## Categories

1. Behavior and Social Sciences
2. Biomedical
3. Botany
4. Chemistry
5. Consumer Science (Elem and Jr only)
6. Earth and Space Sciences
7. Engineering
8. Environmental Sciences
9. Mathematics and Computer Science
10. Physics
11. Zoology

# Be prepared to wear many hats...

1. Professional Authority
2. Role Model
3. Facilitator
4. Counselor & Motivator
5. Evaluator



# Two-Stage Judging Process

- Stage 1 – Review the projects in the absence of the students and select papers for consideration of Paper Award
  - 1pm – 7pm, Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>
- Stage 2 – Oral interviews with students present
  - 9am – 2:45pm, Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>



# Top 10 Things a Judge Should Do

1. Put the students at ease – be genuine & smile. Recognize that some students may be shy or speak English as a second language.
2. Encourage conversation.
3. Listen actively.
4. Ask the students about their project, not just what they did.
5. Ask the students enough questions to satisfy yourself that they understood the project – when you have reached the student's knowledge limit, **STOP** asking questions.
6. Let the students show their stuff – let them teach you something.
7. Give positive reinforcement to encourage participation.
8. Remember when you were 12 years old (or 9, or 17).
9. End the interview on a positive note.
10. Record constructive criticism in comment area in rubric.

# Top 10 Things a Judge Should NOT Do!

1. Display boredom.
2. Tally judging sheets while listening or talking to students.
3. Make assumptions.
4. Belittle the student or their project.
5. Spend your interview time talking about yourself
6. Ask personal questions about the student.
7. Criticize (negatively) or treat lightly.
8. Compare their projects to others you've seen in competitions or scholastic events.
9. Write negative comments in the comment area of rubric.

# As a Judge, what should I expect from the students?

- Pride in their projects and accomplishments
- Preparation for the fair and the ability to clearly and concisely explain their projects
- Ability to answer questions about their projects at levels appropriate to their grades and ages
- Wide variety of project quality and sophistication



# Judging Tips – Both Stages

- Look for evidence of laboratory, field, theoretical, engineering, or analytical work, not just library research or model construction.
- Be sure to take into consideration the amount of time spent working on the project and the amount of data collected (if it is pertinent to the student's research).
- Determine if there is adequate data to support the conclusions.. Are the conclusions based on a single experiment or replication of experiments?
- Was the student able to quantify their data?
- Does the experiment reflect the student's knowledge and abilities? We understand and expect that the students will be receiving help with their experiments, however, we want the final product to be their own work.
- "Proving" a hypothesis true is **NOT** the purpose of a science fair project. A well supported answer to a problem is.

# Judging Team Projects

- Team Projects will be located in their appropriate category based on the work (i.e., a plant project done by a team will be with the other Botany projects).
- It is expected that each member of the team demonstrate similar knowledge and have contributed equally to the work, and participate equally in the interviews

# How to Pre-Judge a Project on the First Day

- Remember that the physical display is **SECONDARY** to the student's knowledge of the project.
- Take a quick look at all of your assigned projects to get a feel for what they are about, what they look like and how they compare to each other.
- Read through the project display board. Were you able to understand quickly what the experiment was and what the results were?
- Read through the workbook, journal or lab notebook. The student should have one.
- Write down your questions and compliments on the scoring sheet for use in the oral interview on the second day.
- Record constructive criticism on the comment sheet and initial the sheet.

# Judging Tips – Oral Interview

- Arrive early and plan to stay through the entire judging interview period.
- Pace yourself. Your interviews should last no longer than 10-12 minutes with each of the students.
- For team projects, ask questions to determine whether **each** member of the team understands the project.
- Revise your scores as many times as you need.
- If you are stuck on a project see your Category Team Leader or Science Fair representative. Don't hesitate to ask questions.
- Be consistent with your scoring. Don't worry about how the other judges are scoring projects.
- Please don't give all of your projects the same score.
- Judge the "best" and encourage the rest.

# Judging Interview

## Personalize Your Language

- I liked...
- I enjoyed...
- I noticed...
- I feel that...
- I recommend...
- A technique I have used...
- I understand that...

## Possible Judging Questions

- What is the most important thing I should know about your project?
- How did you get your idea?
- What was your question?
- What were your results?
- What was your control?
- Did you run into any problems?
- What skills did you develop?
- What are your unanswered questions?
- If you continue your project, how would you proceed?
- Did you have fun? What did you learn?



Judging Form - General	Score (low to high)					
Introduction	0	1	2	3	4	5
a. Problem clearly stated						
b. Hypothesis clearly stated & reflected background info						
c. Appropriate background utilized						
Methods						
d. Design illustrates an understanding of scientific method						
e. Observations/data clearly summarized						
f. Data and conclusions recorded						
Paper and Display						
g. All data is understandable and clearly presented						
h. Writing is appropriate to student's level.						

Judging Form (cont)	Score (low to high)					
Interview	0	1	2	3	4	5
i. Understands facts, theories, & procedures						
j. Demonstrates enthusiasm for & commitment to project						
k. Understands & interprets data correctly & logically						
Creative Ability						
l. Approached the project with originality						
Results						
m. Tables, graphs, illustrations used effectively & correctly						
n. Student answered questions effectively & accurately						
o. Conclusions were justified						
p. Did project suggest any extensions to the student?						

Judging Form (cont)	Score (low to high)					
For Teams Only	0	1	2	3	4	5
q. Tasks & contributions of each team member are clearly outlined						
r. Each team member was fully involved with & familiar with all aspects of the project.						
s. The final work reflect the coordinated efforts of all team members						

Judging Form – Engineering	Score (low to high)					
Engineering Goals	0	1	2	3	4	5
a. Does project have clear objective						
b. Is the objective relevant to the potential user's needs?						
c. Is the solution workable, acceptable to the potential user, economically feasible?						
d. Could the solution be utilized successfully in design/construction of some end product?						
e. Is the solution a significant improvement over prior alternatives?						
f. Has solution been tested for performance under conditions of use?						
Paper and Display						
g. All data is understandable and clearly presented						
h. Writing is appropriate to student's level.						

Judging Form (cont) - Eng	Score (low to high)					
Interview	0	1	2	3	4	5
i. Understands facts, theories, & procedures						
j. Demonstrates enthusiasm for & commitment to project						
k. Understands & interprets data correctly & logically						
Creative Ability						
l. Approached the project with originality						
Results						
m. Tables, graphs, illustrations used effectively & correctly						
n. Student answered questions effectively & accurately						
o. Conclusions were justified						
p. Did project suggest any extensions to the student?						



Judging Form (cont) - Eng	Score (low to high)					
For Teams Only	0	1	2	3	4	5
q. Tasks & contributions of each team member are clearly outlined						
r. Each team member was fully involved with & familiar with all aspects of the project.						
s. The final work reflect the coordinated efforts of all team members						

Judging Form - Mathematics	Score (low to high)					
Mathematical Thought	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. Seeks to solve a problem or answer a question?						
2. Query, problem or mathematical pursuit clearly stated?						
3. Logically outlines/organized and complete?						
4. Note and acknowledge limitation of the study?						
5. Reached a conclusion?						
Procedure						
1. Systematically conducted?						
2. Clearly demonstrates & explains mathematical principles?						
3. Limited so that it can be effectively completed?						

Judging Form (cont) Math	Score (low to high)					
Display	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. States the query problem or mathematical pursuit clearly?						
2. States the objective of the project clearly?						
3. Procedure clearly organized to explain the work, is concise & complete?						
4. Summarizes the conclusions reached?						
Paper						
1. Does the paper communicate the findings?						
2. Was the presentation of the math logical, clear, & correct?						
3. Are all necessary materials in the notebook & paper?						
4. At least 3 bibliographies cited correctly?						
5. More detailed than the information on the display?						
6. Acknowledge help with project?						

## Judging Form (cont)

Score (low to high)

Interview	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. Speaks clearly, slowly, concisely, enough for comprehension?						
2. Understands facts, theories, procedures?						
3. Recognizes alternate interpretations?						
4. Demonstrates enthusiasm for and commitment to the project?						

# After the Interviews – Determination of Grand Awards, CSEF, and ISEF Finalists

- Grand Awards for each Category are 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, and two Honorable Mentions.
- Judging teams convene with the category Team Leader to make decisions regarding project placement for Grand Awards.
- Score sheets should be returned to the Team Leader for disposal.
- Team Leaders convene to determine Best of Fair, CSEF Finalists, and two ISEF Finalists and a Alternate



# Questions or Problems?

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Registration: <https://co-slvrslf.zfairs.com/>

*Thank you for your commitment to the future of  
our youth and science education!*