

FAQs for ASEF 2026

Alabama Science and Engineering Fair



What is Science and Engineering Fair (SEF)?

Science and Engineering Fair (SEF) is an opportunity for students to engage in independent research and showcase their findings in a competitive and educational environment. It encourages curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving by allowing students to explore scientific and engineering concepts of their choosing through hands-on experimentation.

What are the steps for doing a Science and Engineering Fair (SEF) project?

- Project Development – Participants research a topic, create a detailed research plan, and follow ethical guidelines.
- Research & Experimentation – Students narrow their focus to a scientific, testable question or engineering challenge, conduct experiments, collect data, and analyze results.
- Presentation & Communication – Students prepare a poster or display board and present their work at school/county fairs.
- Competition & Recognition – Projects are judged based on scientific rigor, creativity, and presentation skills, with top students advancing to regional, state, and even international fairs.

How can I get involved in Science and Engineering Fair?

- Work with a teacher and/or adult sponsor.
- Review and follow ISEF rules.
- Submit and gain approval for a research plan.
- Complete your research project.
- Present your poster at local fairs and then potentially regional and state fairs.
- Use **STEM Wizard** for regional registration if selected for regional fair.

How can I advance to the Alabama Science and Engineering Fair (ASEF)?

After local fairs, winners advance to one of four regional fairs in either the middle school junior division (grades 6-8) or high school senior division (grades 9-12). Top students from each regional fair in each category progress to the Alabama Science and Engineering Fair (ASEF) in April with a chance to compete for 150 awards totaling more than \$15,000.

How can I receive a bid to the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (Regeneron ISEF)?

Students in 9-12th grade that compete at one of four regional fairs and/or the state fair (ASEF) are eligible to receive a bid to Regeneron ISEF, held each year in May. Each regional/state fair in Alabama gives out 1-4 bids (depending on the number of students that compete and the funding available at each fair).

When can I conduct my research? Can I continue my project from last year?

Projects can span 12 months starting January 2025. Continuing past projects requires **ISEF Form 7** to show your new work versus your previous work.

What rules do we follow at Alabama regional and state fairs?

The Alabama regional and state fairs follow the Regeneron ISEF Rules, which are the official guidelines set by the Society for Science. These rules ensure that all student research projects meet ethical and safety standards while maintaining scientific integrity. **All students are required to fill out ISEF Forms 1, 1A, 1B and 3.** Complicated projects may require additional paperwork (see Regeneron ISEF Rules).

When do I use STEM Wizard?

Only the students that will attend a regional fair should upload their information on STEM Wizard. Students cannot upload their paperwork until their teacher/adult-in-charge has approved and signed their forms.

Who checks the ISEF paperwork?

Each regional fair and the state fair have a team of qualified scientists on a Scientific Review Committee (SRC) that works together to review all paperwork. ISEF paperwork ensures that students are following our strict set of ethical standards.

Can I work with animals?

Yes, you may work with vertebrate animals only if:

- You obtain **State SRC pre-approval** with ISEF Forms 5A/B.
- You provide **IACUC documentation** with your name listed.
- You do not euthanize animals (grounds for automatic disqualification).

What are some common reasons projects fail to qualify at Alabama fairs?

Students who euthanize vertebrate animals are automatically disqualified from participating in our fairs. Also, students that plagiarize their work from other groups or fail to cite their AI use are subject to disqualification.