

Project Review

In Colorado, there are three to five levels of review that a Student Researcher's project may need to pass through for competition purposes. If any of the review groups feel that there was a serious breach of ethical or safety protocols when the student did their project, they can deem the project has failed to qualify and not allow the Student Researcher to compete – even if the prior review board approved the project.

Scientific Review Committee

The Scientific Review Committee (SRC) is a group of qualified individuals that is responsible for evaluating project procedures to make sure all safety and legal requirements will be met and that the appropriate forms have been completed. The committee is composed of at least 3 people: a biomedical scientist with an earned doctoral degree, an educator and one other member.

If the Student Researcher's project involves vertebrate animals and/or potentially hazardous biological agents (microorganisms, rDNA, tissue), then the experimental procedures must be approved by the local SRC BEFORE the Student Researcher may begin working on the experimental portion of the project.

Institutional Review Board

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a group of individuals that is responsible for evaluating project procedures involving human subjects to make sure that all safety and legal and confidentiality requirements will be met and that the appropriate forms have been completed. The committee is composed of at least 3 people: an educator, a school administrator, and a psychologist, doctor (MD) or nurse (RN).

Regulated Research Institution Review Board

If the Student Researcher is working in a laboratory at a university or other research institution, projects involving vertebrates, humans, tissue, rDNA and microorganisms must be reviewed and approved by that institution's review board (not the Qualified Scientist/Mentor) BEFORE the Student Researcher may begin work on the experimental portion of the project. Some institutions may not review all of these types of projects – if they don't, then this must be certified by the Qualified Scientist/Mentor and approved by the school/local SRC on Form 6A.

Regional SRC

This group of people will review the Student Researcher's paperwork for compliance with the rules set forth here and paperwork completion.

State SRC

This group of people will review the paperwork for the Student Researchers who have been chosen to compete at the state level for compliance with the rules set forth here and paperwork completion.

In order to eliminate conflict of interest, the Adult Sponsor, parents, Qualified Scientist/Mentor(s) and Designated Supervisor(s) of the Student Researcher MUST NOT serve on the SRC or IRB reviewing that project.

Questions regarding specific experimental procedures or the rules should be directed to the Student Researcher's school SCR/IRB, but inquiries can be directed to the CSEF SRC or the Regeneron ISEF SRC as well at:

Regeneron ISEF SRC
SRC@societyforscience.org

CSEF SRC
csef@colostate.edu

“Tis better to ask permission than forgiveness.