Virtual NEOSEF 2021
Project Material Guidelines

The NEOSEF Board of Directors, under advisement from the staff of the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair, have established the project materials that will be used during judging at the Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair in 2021. These guidelines have been established to address a judging process that will occur remotely and through a digital medium.

Judging will take place starting March 3 and will include virtual interviews for selected students on March 15 and 16. See neosef.org for details and timeline on the judging process.

**REQUiRED Items:**

I. **ISEF-Compliant Forms**
   a. This process remains the same as prior years. Forms will be uploaded into STEM Wizard (neosef.stemwizard.com) and will be reviewed for compliance by NEOSEF staff.
   b. Judges will not have access to any of the forms except the Official Abstract (250 words).
   c. All forms need to be uploaded into STEM Wizard by February 5, 2021.

II. **Project Presentation**
   a. The project presentation replaces the project poster used during in-person fairs. Appendix II provides complete instructions of the format requirements and recommendations.
   b. There are three suggested templates based on project type:
      i. Science Projects,
      ii. Engineering Projects
      iii. Mathematics/Computer Science Projects.
   c. Project presentations will be required to be submitted by February 5 and will then be locked for Display & Safety inspection prior to competition.

III. **A Quad Chart**
   a. The quad chart summarizes the project in a single page for a quick overview by the judges.
   b. Appendix III provides complete instructions with format requirements and recommendations as well as sample templates.

IV. **Project Video (2-minute maximum)**
   a. This video summarizes the project for a public audience. See Appendix IV for instructions.
   b. Upload the video into STEM Wizard by February 5, 2021 and be sure to comply with the 2-minute maximum.
   c. Remember the audience is the general public that is not likely to have the same technical expertise as the judges, so use your two minutes wisely!
V. Research Paper

a. Any student in grades 7/8 who wishes to be considered for the Broadcom MASTERS program must submit a research paper. A research paper is recommended, but not required for all other students.

b. Please be aware that the virtual format means judges will not have the opportunity to speak with as many students face to face as they would in a typical in-person fair. As a result, many award and prize decisions (including all Special Awards) will be based only on the artifacts uploaded into STEM Wizard, so the NEOSEF board highly recommends all students submit a research paper.

Additional OPTIONAL materials:

All judges will have access to these optional materials, just as they would at an in-person booth, but there is no guarantee that the judges will review them.

Video Demonstration/Simulation/Animation (1 minute maximum)
If a project is best explained by showing a demonstration, simulation or animation, you may include a short video.

Lab Notebook Image/Excerpt
NEOSEF does not require any project to submit a laboratory notebook. However, many students have this record of their research timeline and process and typically have it available at their booth. A student may upload a PDF of up to 4 pages of a lab notebook to provide evidence of its use, but it is strongly advised NOT to share the notebook in totality to protect your intellectual property.
Appendix I. Submission and Review Process

**NEOSEF Paperwork**
As an ISEF-affiliated fair, NEOSEF is obligated to use ISEF forms for all submitted projects. All students must create an account in STEM Wizard ([STEM Wizard](#)) and upload the appropriate forms and required artifacts by February 5, 2021. Minimally, all projects must have [Checklist Forms 1, Student Checklist Form 1A](#), Project Plan/Summary and [Approval Form 1B](#). The other forms students may need will be determined by the nature of their research project.

**Display & Safety**
Display & Safety inspections will be conducted virtually and will include a review of all submitted materials and enforcement of the display guidelines as published on the NEOSEF web site. This includes providing appropriate credits for photographs, graphs and other visuals and in having any permissions of individuals depicted in any project materials (on the board, slides or in the video) available. The review process will take place starting February 8, 2021.

**Timeline**
The timeline for the NEOSEF 2021 judging process is described in detail in the Judging document on neosef.org. Judges will begin reviewing materials uploaded into STEM Wizard March 3. We anticipate some students, but not all, will be asked to be available for virtual interviews with groups of judges on March 15 and possibly March 16.

**Calendar of Processes**
The following deadline dates attempt to provide the framework for the timing as we understand it currently.

1. Deadline for original submission of paperwork and all project materials: February 5, 2021
2. Review of paperwork and forms by NEOSEF staff: February 8-19, 2021
3. Display and safety review by NEOSEF staff: February 8-19, 2021
4. Project materials released to judges for review: March 3, 2021
5. Virtual interviews for selected students: March 15-16, 2021
6. Final results and awards announced: March 18, 2021
Appendix II. Project Presentation Instructions

You may prepare your Project Presentation for Virtual NEOSEF 2021 using any software tools that you desire, but the final document submitted for display to the judges must satisfy the following requirements.

Format Requirements

1. **The Project Presentation must be a single PDF document limited to no more than 8 pages total for 7/8 grade projects or 12 pages for 9/12 grade projects.**
2. You must use a page size no larger than standard 8½” X 11”.
3. The PDF document must open with default magnification “Fit Page” so that the entire page is visible at the same time. Recognizing that almost all judges will view your Project Presentation on screens that are wider than they are tall, you should create all pages in Landscape mode.
4. Your PDF document must not have instructions to open in “full screen mode.” Eliminating this mode automatically precludes page transitions and embedded videos or animations, so do not attempt to include these in your Presentation. (There is provision elsewhere in your submission for an optional video if you need something to move in order to illustrate your project.)
5. The page background color must be white.
6. Text color must be predominantly black, but limited color for emphasis is acceptable.
7. All text should be easily readable when viewing the entire page at once. We recommend body text no larger than 18 pt and no smaller than 14 pt. to ensure readability. **Exception:** You may use a smaller font size, down to 10 pt., for figure captions or photo credits.
8. All Project Presentation elements must conform to D&S rules as if placed on a physical poster for display to judges and the public. Passing a Display & Safety inspection will be required to compete.

Format Recommendations:

1. Do not use non-standard fonts or colors to “stand out from the crowd” or to be entertaining. It is recommended that you use a font such as Arial, Calibri, Helvetica or Century Gothic.
2. Page titles should all be the same size. That size should be larger than headings within each page. In turn, headings should be larger than body text. We recommend body text no larger than 18 pt and no smaller than 14 pt.
3. Avoid long expository paragraphs. State your points succinctly.
4. Use bullets to set out individual points of interest. Use numbered lists when the ordering of points of interest is important (e.g., instructions to be followed in order, or items needing a reference anchor for citation elsewhere in your Presentation).
5. All body text should adopt a common font style and size. Recommended Page Title font size is 28-34 pt, Heading font size is 20-24 pt and Body text font size is 14-18 pt.

Project Presentation Templates

Choose one of the following templates to create your presentation. Do not include information not specified in this template. If you are submitting a continuation project, include only information related to this year’s research unless otherwise directed in the instructions below. You may include graphical elements as they would explain or illustrate your work and can be contained within the overall page limits.

Each of the seven (7) required sections in each template must start on its own page. Each page may use as many pages as you want, as long as all formatting instructions are satisfied and the entire project file is no more than 8 pages for grade 7/8 projects or 12 pages for grade 9/12 projects.

**TEMPLATE I: Science Projects**
**TEMPLATE II: Engineering Projects**
**TEMPLATE III: Mathematics/Computer Science Projects**
Project Presentation Template: Science Project

1. **Project Title**
   - The following should be included:
     - Project Title
     - Student Name
     - School
     - City and Zip Code
   - You may include your school logo, but do not include co-authors or where your research was conducted on the Project Title page.

2. **What is your research question?**
   - Explain what is known or has already been done in your research area. Include a brief review of relevant literature. If this is a continuation project, a brief summary of your prior research is appropriate here. Be sure to distinguish your previous work from this year’s project.
   - What were you trying to find out? Include a description of your purpose, your research question, and/or your hypothesis.

3. **Explain your methodology and procedures for carrying out your project in detail.**
   - What did you do? What data did you collect and how did you collect that data? Discuss your control group and the variables you tested.
   - DO NOT include a list of materials.

4. **What were the result(s) of your project?**
   - Include tables and figures which illustrate your data.
   - Include relevant statistical analysis of the data.

5. **What is your interpretation of these results?**
   - What do these results mean? Compare your results with theories, published data, commonly held beliefs, and expected results.
   - Discuss possible errors. Did any questions or problems arise that you were not expecting? How did the data vary between repeated observations of similar events? How were results affected by uncontrolled events?

6. **What conclusions did you reach?**
   - What do these results mean in the context of the literature review and other work being done in your research area? How do the results address your research question? Do your results support your hypothesis?
   - What application(s) do you see for your work?

7. **References**
   - This section should not exceed one page. Limit your list to the most important references.
   - List the references/documentation used which were not of your own creation (i.e., books, journal articles).
Project Presentation Template: Engineering Project

1. **Project Title**
   - The following should be included:
     - Project Title
     - Student Name
     - School
     - City and Zip Code
   - You may include your school logo, but do not include co-authors or where your research was conducted on the Project Title page.

2. **What is your engineering problem and goal?**
   - What problem were you trying to solve? Include a description of your engineering goal.
   - Explain what is known or has already been done to solve this problem, including work on which you may build. You may include a brief review of relevant literature.
   - If this is a continuation project, a brief summary of your prior work is appropriate here. Be sure to distinguish your previous work from this year’s project.

3. **Explain your methods and procedures for building your design.**
   - What did you do? How did you design and produce your prototype? If there is a physical prototype, you may want to include pictures or designs of the prototype.
   - If you tested the prototype, what were your testing procedures? What data did you collect and how did you collect that data?
   - DO NOT include a separate list of materials.

4. **What were the result(s) of your project?**
   - How did your prototype meet your engineering goal?
   - If you tested the prototype, provide a summary of testing data tables and figures that illustrate your results.
   - Include relevant statistical analysis of the data.

5. **What is your interpretation of these results?**
   - What do these results mean? You may compare your results with theories, published data, commonly held beliefs, and/or expected results.
   - Did any questions or problems arise that you were not expecting? Were these problems caused by uncontrolled events? How did you address these?
   - How is your prototype an improvement or advancement over what is currently available?

6. **What conclusions did you reach?**
   - Did your project turn out as you expected?
   - What application(s) do you see for your work?

7. **References**
   - This section should not exceed one page. Limit your list to the most important references.
   - List the references/documentation used which were not of your own creation (i.e., books, journal articles).
Project Presentation Template: Mathematics/Computer Science

1. Project Title
   • The following should be included:
     o Project Title
     o Student Name
     o School
     o City and Zip Code
   • You may include your school logo, but do not include co-authors or where your research was conducted on the Project Title page.

2. INTRODUCTION - What is your research question?
   • Explain what is known or has already been done in your research area. Include a brief review of relevant literature.
   • Explain what is known or has already been done in your research area. Include a brief review of relevant literature.
   • If this is a continuation project, a brief summary of your prior work is appropriate here. Be sure to distinguish your previous work from this year’s project.

3. FRAMEWORK - Notation and framework.
   • Introduce the concepts and notation needed to specify your research question, methods, and results precisely.
   • Define relevant terms, and explain prior/background results. (Novel concepts developed as part of your project can be presented here or in Section 4, as appropriate.)

4. FINDINGS - Present your findings and supporting arguments.
   • What did you discover and/or prove? Describe your result(s) in detail. If possible, provide both formal and intuitive/verbal explanations of each major finding.
   • Describe your methods in general terms. Then:
     o Present rigorous proofs of the theory results – or, if the arguments are long, give sketches of the proofs that explain the main ideas.
     o For numerical/statistical results, include tables and figures that illustrate your data. Include relevant statistical analysis. Were any of your results statistically significant? How do you know this?

5. CONCLUSIONS - What is your assessment of your findings?
   • How do the results address your research question? And how have you advanced our understanding relative to what was already known?
   • Discuss possible limitations. Did any questions or problems arise that you were not expecting? What challenges do you foresee in extending your results further?
   • What application(s), if any, do you see for your work?

6. REFERENCES
   • This section should not exceed one page. Limit your list to the most important references.
   • List the references/documentation used which were not of your own creation (i.e., books, journal articles).
Appendix III. Quad Chart Instructions

A “quad chart” is a single page divided into four quadrants providing a high-level summary of the project. It is intended to be more visual than detailed in order to quickly introduce your judges to what is important about your project. Follow the model below that corresponds to the Project Presentation template you selected.

1. You must use a page size no larger than standard 8½”x11”.
2. The page background color must be white.
3. Text color must be predominantly black, but limited color for emphasis is acceptable.
4. The minimum allowable font size is 14 pt. Exception: You may use a smaller font size, down to 10 pt., for figure captions or photo credits.
5. All four quadrants of your Quad Chart should each be the same size with a single border line delimiting each, as in the examples below. The Title section should be only as tall as necessary to include your project title and other identifying information (see section on Quad Chart Title).
6. The Quad Chart should not include a bibliography, references, or acknowledgments.

### Science Project Quad Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1: Research Question</th>
<th>Q3: Data Analysis &amp; Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2: Methodology</th>
<th>Q4: Interpretation &amp; Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Engineering Project Quad Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1: Engineering Problem &amp; Project Objectives</th>
<th>Q3: Data Analysis &amp; Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2: Project Design</th>
<th>Q4: Interpretation &amp; Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quad Chart Title:
- Line one is the title of your project
- Line two is your name, school, city, and zip code

Quadrant 1: Research Question/Engineering Goal
- This should reflect material in #2 of the Project Presentation Template.
- Please state the research question or engineering problem being addressed
- A leading core graphic or visual is encouraged, but not required.

Quadrant 2: Methodology/Project Design
- This should reflect material in #3 of the Project Presentation Template.
- Please provide a succinct, bulleted summary of the methodology/project design

Quadrant 3: Data Analysis & Results
- This should reflect material in #4 of the Project Presentation Template.
- It is advised that this quadrant should primarily be a graphic representation of relevant data and results.
- Text should be kept to a minimum.

Quadrant 4: Interpretation & Conclusions
- This should reflect material in #5 and #6 of the Project Presentation Template.
Appendix IV. Project Video Instructions

Record a video (maximum duration 2 minutes) explaining your project. Although the video will be viewed by the judges, remember the target audience for this video is members of the general public.

What to include in your video:

1. **Introduce Yourself**: State your full name, school, and your city. Rather than reciting your project title, consider explaining your project in a single sentence.

2. **Explain Your Project**: Summarize your research into main points:
   a. What did you do?
   b. What did you find?
   c. What conclusions did you draw?

To note:
- You can use any props or visuals you may have that are within the Display & Safety guidelines.
- Do not include anyone in your video other than the student researchers of the project.

Best Practices for Filming:

These videos will not be edited. To ensure your video is the best representation of your work, please keep these best practices in mind while filming:
- Film yourself in a well-lit and non-distracting environment so the viewer’s focus stays on you and your work.
- For best results, film your video horizontally (landscape).
- Keep the camera still and in place during filming.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough that the recording is able to pick up every word you say.
- Avoid long pauses.
- Listen to your video after recording to ensure your voice is clear and audible, and that the video has not picked up too much background noise.

For more information or clarification

You are welcome to contact NEOSEF fair officials for clarification on required forms or project displays

Wendy Sweet, NEOSEF Fair Director
Email: sweetw@ccf.org
Phone: 216-445-9950

Jim Bader, NEOSEF President
Email: jxb14@case.edu
Phone: (216) 368-5289

Dr. Nancy Dilulio, NEOSEF Board
Email: nad3@case.edu
Phone: 216-368-2928

Dr. Christine Moravec, NEOSEF Board
Email: moravec@ccf.org
Phone: 216-445-9949