

# TRI-STATE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

Dear teachers and potential science fair sponsors,

I am writing to inform you of a few moderate/major changes for the 2019 Tri-State Science and Engineering Fair (TSEF) that have been implemented to better prepare those exhibitors wishing to advance to the Hoosier Science and Engineering (HSEF) for success. Some of these will not affect you at all. On the other hand, some teachers may need to change the way that science fair content is delivered at their schools. Over the summer, all SEFI-affiliated regional fair directors were called to a meeting in Indianapolis to receive updates regarding steps forward for Indiana fairs. From this meeting three notable changes were made. I have outlined them below and I encourage you to visit the [TSEF website](#) for more information. Please also feel free to call me to discuss what these changes mean for you specifically.

1. All Senior Division students (grade 9-12) must have their projects reviewed by the USI Safety Review Committee (SRC) BEFORE EXPERIMENTATION CAN BEGIN. This means that all projects must have their Form 1, Form 1A, and Form 1B plus their research plan/project summary submitted via the [sefireg.org](http://sefireg.org) web portal before they may begin experimentation. **If students wish to advance to the HSEF, this must be submitted for review by October 12, 2018.** Technically, this has always been the rule, however it was barely enforced. Many projects from across the state competed in the HSEF but were disqualified behind the scenes due to the fact that paperwork was not in order and/or issues with their projects were not resolved before experimentation began. The state fair director is urging regional directors to underscore the importance of the Senior Division focusing on project development, using the correct forms, approval, rules safety, and then FINALLY registration. For those students who do not get their forms and paperwork turned in to the SRC for approval by the October 12 deadline, they may still compete for regional prizes (excluding the Grand Awards) at the TSEF, however they will compete in the Non-HSEF Advancement Track. All Senior Division teachers and exhibitors should read all of the information found at <http://www.usi.edu/science/southwest-indiana-stem/tri-state-science-and-engineering-fair/for-exhibitors-9-12/> right away. Note: There may be some exceptions for students who learn that they do not need SRC approval (according to the Rules Wizard) because their projects do not involve vertebrates, humans, or potentially hazardous substances. **Research papers are required for any student in the Senior Division HSEF Advancement Track.** Any teacher that would like information about bypassing the USI SRC and forming their own school-based SRC, please contact me as soon as possible. This is an alternative to the October 12 deadline.

2. Students entering projects in the Junior Division (grades 6-8) and wishing to advance to the HSEF (Junior Division HSEF Advancement Track) must complete and upload the [Indiana Junior Division Project](#) Form to the [sefireg.org](http://sefireg.org) website and complete a research paper. No other forms or SRC approval are required for the Junior Division. As in years past, no Elementary Division (K-5) projects will advance to the state fair.
3. Elementary and Junior Division exhibitors are not required to undergo SRC reviews. It is the duty of the teacher/adult sponsor to ensure that rules found in the [Middle School Science Research Handbook](#) are followed. Elementary/Junior Division (grades K-8) students should steer clear of projects involving human subjects, vertebrates, all bacteria, and potentially hazardous substances. Please visit <http://www.usi.edu/science/southwest-indiana-stem/tri-state-science-and-engineering-fair/for-exhibitors-k-8/> for more information and a TSEF checklist.
4. The "[Dates to Remember](#)" page is updated. There is one additional deadline this year. The Teacher/Adult Sponsor Registration Deadline is Friday, February 1, 2019. Teacher SEFI accounts must be activated by this date.

I am hopeful that by developing a track for HSEF advancement, we can focus earlier on mentoring these students throughout the process to ensure their competitiveness at HSEF. This will also take some of the pressure off of students wishing to compete at the TSEF but find themselves overwhelmed and disheartened by the intensity of the requirements. Regardless of which track or division that your students are competing in, it is imperative that all teachers/adult sponsors read the updated website and the ISEF rules (for Senior Division)/Indiana Rules (Elementary/Junior Division).

Please, if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to discuss them with me.

**Allison F. Grabert '02**

Director, TSEF

Southwest Indiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (SwISTEM) Resource Center

**University of Southern Indiana**

8600 University Boulevard

Evansville, IN 47712

812-228-5019 (office)

[afgrabert@usi.edu](mailto:afgrabert@usi.edu) | [www.swistem.org](http://www.swistem.org) | [www.facebook.com/SwISTEM](https://www.facebook.com/SwISTEM)