

Special Awards Program Policy



Participation in the special awards program of the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair (CSEF) offers a unique opportunity for organizations, colleges and universities, and businesses to support and encourage the achievement of young people in science and engineering.

Special awards sponsorship is open to scientific and engineering societies; agencies of the federal government; colleges and universities; individuals and businesses. All sponsoring organizations and their awards must adhere to the principles and philosophy of the Colorado State Science Fair, Inc. (CSSF) as expressed in its mission statement:

The Colorado State Science Fair, Inc. honors excellence in science, engineering and technology; providing opportunities for students from all regions of the state to create and present their research in environments that nurture interests in science and technology; promoting professional skills, high ethical standards, diversity, and continuing intellectual development.

Selection of award winners must be based on the scientific merit of the project, the sponsor's criteria, and must meet accepted scientific norms. Diversity is a goal of the Special Awards program and the precepts of the CSSF mission statement will be used as a guide when determining Special Awards criteria.

Special Awards Program

Special Awards given at the state level may include cash awards, scholarships, paid summer internships, scientific meeting invitations, equipment, summer courses, books, equipment, certificates, bonds, etc. of at least \$50 in value. The maximum equivalent cash value of these awards is unlimited.

Scholarship Program

Scholarships given at the state level may include full or partial tuition scholarships, summer internships, travel to research facilities, book or equipment grants, and guaranteed admission. The equivalent cash value of these awards is unlimited.

The following items should be considered when developing a new special award, scholarship or internship:

General Considerations:

- Target audience [grade level(s), type(s) of project(s), etc.]
- Special restrictions [citizenship, gender, ethnicity, etc.]
- Number of awards to be given
- Selection criteria

Scholarship Specific Considerations:

- Funding level/items covered [tuition, room & board, number of years, etc.]
- Renewability criteria [GPA, hour requirements, etc.]

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Internship Specific Considerations:

- Creation of a job description/statement of work [work site location, responsibilities, time period of internship, etc.]
- Supervision
- Compensation/reimbursement/pay
- Safety & liability
- Housing and transportation
- Student reporting at the end of internship [seminar, written report, presentation at a professional meeting, etc.]

Special Award/Scholarship Organization Responsibilities

Special Awards sponsoring organizations must agree to support and abide by the rules and policies of the CSSF. Award criteria may be based on the sponsoring organization's goals and priorities, but need to meet accepted scientific norms. Selection of award winners must be based on the scientific merit of the project(s) along with the criteria designated by the sponsor. Diversity is a goal of the Special Awards programs and the precepts of the CSSF mission statement will be used as a guide when determining Special Awards criteria.

- The sponsoring organization must complete the online registration form prior to March 1 each year on awards to be given at the upcoming CSEF. The online form asks for the following information: Coordinator's name and address, judge's names and addresses and the award presenter's name and address. After the initial data input, any changes in awards need to be updated in the CSEF database.
- Sponsoring organizations must assemble their own panel of judges who will be present on the day of judging to select winners. Special Award judges should be actively engaged or highly experienced in the field of the special award being judged and should be interested in career opportunities and educational developments for students. Judges may be recruited from any part of the state. Any travel expenses incurred, including salaries, mileage, accommodations and meals are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.
- In order to meet CSEF schedules, judges must submit awardee(s) names no later than 5:30 p.m. on the day of the judging. Any results submitted after this time may not be included in the Awards Ceremony program or press releases.
- It is highly recommended that the sponsoring organization arrange for a representative to be present at the CSEF Awards Ceremony to present their awards. The Awards Ceremony is a very important part of the CSEF; it recognizes the sponsor's commitment to the program; it is good publicity; and allows for personal recognition of outstanding students.
- If the actual award will not be available to give to the awardee(s) at the Awards Ceremony, then the sponsoring organization shall, at a minimum, present a letter with pertinent information on the organization's letterhead at the Awards Ceremony. When an awardee's social security number is required to process an award, the sponsoring organization must provide, in a letter to the awardee, a request for the required information, where to send this information, and a date when the awardee can expect their award.

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CSEF Special Awards Committee Responsibilities

The Special Awards Committee and the CSSF Board of Directors reserve the right to refuse any Special Award deemed scientifically unacceptable, does not adhere to scientific principles, does not fit the current categories established for grand awards judging, or does not meet the principles outlined in the CSSF mission statement.

- The CSEF Special Awards Committee will coordinate all Special Awards activities at the state level to maintain proper balance, recognition and relationships within the overall CSEF program.
- The CSEF Special Awards Committee will publicize the participation and awards of the sponsoring organization to regional fairs, the press, other sponsors and fair officials. This will include a digital version of the Official Photo (taken at the Awards Ceremony) being sent to the sponsoring organization's coordinator.
- Judging guides, presenter instructions and program information will be sent to the designated Special Awards coordinator entered into the online registration database prior to the March 1 deadline. Proffering of this information and materials will constitute provisional acceptance of the Special Award and the sponsoring organization. Questionable submittals will be reviewed by the Committee Chair, the CSEF Director and the CSSF President. The sponsoring organization will be notified in writing of denied submittals.
- The Chair of the Special Awards Committee and the CSEF Director will review all new Special Awards organizations for compliance with CSEF policies and guidelines. Then the Chair of the Special Awards Committee will submit new sponsoring organizations and their awards to the CSSF Board of Directors for final approval. If the CSSF Board of Directors deems an organization's award(s) or criteria to be unacceptable, ruling notices will be forwarded to the sponsoring organization in writing.
- The CSEF Special Awards Committee will arrange facilities for a judges' briefing, judges' discussion areas, refreshments and access into the project judging areas.
- The CSEF Special Awards Committee will arrange an Awards Ceremony to be held on Friday of the CSEF, and plan a program for the presentation of all special awards, internships and scholarships.
- The CSEF Special Awards Committee will assist the Regional Science Fair Directors in promoting their Special Awards programs.

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Colorado State Science Fair, Inc. Board of Directors Special Awards

The Board of Directors of the Colorado State Science Fair present the following special awards on an annual basis:

- **Technical Writing Awards** – The technical writing awards are named after Ralph Desch (senior division) and Elemer Bernath (junior division), two driving forces behind the Colorado Science & Engineering Fair. To be considered for either award, students must prepare a technical report as if they were planning to be published in a scientific journal. Judges for this award assess the technical quality of the report based on the evaluation rubric. Students wishing to be considered for this award must indicate that on their registration form and submit an electronic copy of the report via email to the CSEF Director by April 1st. The winners receive a \$100 cash award and a certificate.
- **Student Choice Awards** – The CSEF provides awards for Finalists to choose their favorite Junior Division and Senior Division projects. Ballots are provided in their registration packet and must be turned in by 2 p.m. the Friday of the CSEF. Winners in each division receive a \$100 cash award and a trophy.
- **Pioneers of Science Awards** – The Board of Directors of the CSEF understands the hard work and dedication that goes into completing a research project of the caliber it takes to become a CSEF Finalist. Board members elect to sponsor an award in any one of the 12 categories in the Junior Division and choose the student(s) to recognize based on their enthusiasm and demonstrated research potential. These awards are named after great pioneers of science, mathematics and engineering. The winners in each category receive a \$50 cash award.
- **Poster Art Contest** – The CSEF provides an award to encourage the students of Colorado to create the artwork to be used in the following year's CSEF publicity (poster, programs, web site, awards, etc.). Submissions must be received by the Thursday of the CSEF and follow these guidelines:
 - Poster designs must represent some aspect of science, engineering and/or mathematics.
 - Black and white illustrations only (ink is preferred); no color entries.
 - Design area is limited to 8" wide by 10.5" tall.
 - Student collaborations (up to two students) on poster designs is permitted.
 - Name and school must be printed on the back of the entry in pencil.
 - Entries must include the following information about the fair prominently displayed somewhere in the design (preferably in an area where we can digitally enhance this information):
 - Colorado Science and Engineering Fair
 - For Colorado Students in Grades 6 to 12
 - Hosted by the Natural Sciences Education & Outreach Center
 - At Colorado State University
 - Fort Collins, CO
 - Dates of the Next CSEF

Winners will be chosen by the CSEF Finalists and will receive a \$100 cash award.