
Forming an SRC/IRB

What is an SRC (Scientific Review Committee)?

- A group of individuals responsible for evaluating student research, certifications, and research plans for compliance with the rules, applicable state and federal laws and regulations at each level of science fair competition. Local SRCs are formed at school or district level, the regional, state, and at the Intel ISEF level. The Each level reviews the SRC forms of the students as they advance to each level before competition.
- Refer to the “*Intel International Rules and Guidelines*” at www.societyforscience.org. Click on Student Science. Go to Intel ISEF. Click on “*Rules, Forms, and Resources*”. Go to “*Forms*”; click on the “2018 Rules and Guidelines” link or on the booklet.” Review the applicable rules
- Research projects involving vertebrate animals and/or potentially hazardous biological agents (PHBA) MUST BE reviewed and approved BEFORE experimentation.
- Projects conducted at a Regulated Research Institution that were approved by its institutional board before experimentation, MUST ALSO BE approved by the regional and state SRC.

Scientific Review Committee Members (Must have a minimum of three persons)

- Operation and composition must comply with the Intel ISEF Rules.
 1. Include a biomedical scientist (Doctoral degree, such as Ph.D., M.D., D.V.M., D.D.S., Pharm.D, or D.O.)
 2. Include an educator (teacher, professor, etc.)
 3. Include at least one additional member
- Additional expertise may be added to assist or if the SRC needs an expert for example: At least one member should be familiar with proper animal care procedures for animal studies.
- Additional members are recommended for diversity and to increase the expertise of the SRC.
- The SRC Chair can be any one of the members. There can be more than one SRC chair to help with approvals. The local fair director can also serve as the chair.

Who cannot be on the SRC?

- The Adult Sponsor, parent or relative of the student(s), the Qualified Scientist, or the Designated Supervisor WHO oversees the project may NOT SERVE on the SRC reviewing THAT project.

What do SRC members look for when reviewing a student research?

1. Evidence of literature search and attribution
2. Evidence of proper supervision
3. Use of accepted and appropriate research techniques
4. Completed forms, signatures and dates showing maximum of one year duration of research and appropriate preapproval dates (where required)
5. Evidence of search for alternatives to animal use
6. Humane treatment of vertebrate animals
7. Compliance with local, state and federal rules and laws governing research involving human and/or vertebrate animals, potentially hazardous biological agents, hazardous chemicals, activities, and devices.
8. Prohibit introduction/disposal of non-native and/or invasive species (insects, plants, invertebrates, vertebrates) pathogens, toxic chemicals or foreign substances into the environment
9. Documentation of substantial expansion for continuation projects
10. Compliance with the Intel ISEF ethics statement

What is an IRB (Institutional Review Board)?

- A committee that, according to federal regulations (45-CFR-46) must evaluate the potential physical and/or psychological risk of research involving humans.
- All human research **MUST BE** reviewed and approved by an IRB **BEFORE** experimentation starts.
- Surveys and questionnaires to be used **MUST BE** reviewed and approved by the IRB

Institutional Review Board Members

- Must include a minimum of three members
 1. An educator
 2. A school administrator (Preferably a principal or vice-principal) or anyone who has the position of administrator
 3. An individual who is knowledgeable about and capable of evaluating the physical and/or psychological risk involved in the study. This may be a medical doctor, psychologist, physician, registered nurse, licensed social worker or licensed clinical professional counselor
- An SRC and IRB **can be combined** provided the required qualifications are met by members.
- If a member is needed and one is not in the immediate area, then documented contact with an external expert is appropriate and encouraged. A copy of the correspondence (e.g. email, fax, etc.) should be submitted as the signature of that expert.

Who cannot be on the IRB?

- The student's Adult Sponsor, parent or other relative, the Qualified Scientist, nor the Designated Supervisor **WHO** oversees the project may **NOT SERVE** on the IRB reviewing **THAT** project.

What do IRB members look for when reviewing a student's research?

1. Evidence that the project/study:
 - a. Design protects the human participant's rights and welfare
 - b. Design protects the student researcher
 - c. Is in compliance with ALL privacy and HIPAA laws when they apply to the project (e.g. medical information)
2. Level of risk: **Minimal Risk** OR **More than Minimal Risk** involved
3. Identifiers are not used (name, age, address, etc.)
4. Human participant(s) are volunteers with Adult **INFORMED CONSENT** or minors with **ASSENT**. Assent (agreement) by the minor is needed with parental permission.

Note on Human Participants Rules and Risk Assessment:

- Go to www.societyforscience.org. Click on Student Science. and go to *Intel ISEF*. Click on "Rules, Forms, and Resources". Go to "Forms" Click on the "2017 Rules and Guidelines" link or on the booklet. Review the applicable rules for "Human Participant Rules" Section pp. 8-11 especially, the "Human Participation Risk Assessment" p. 11.
- Also review the following sections:
 - a. "Exempt Studies"
 - b. Sections 1-11
 - c. "Human Participant Risk Assessment"
 - d. "IRB Waiver of Written Consent"
 - e. "Expedited Review"
 - f. "Human Participant—Student Invention"

What happens if the IRB finds some problems?

- Student resubmits research plan with clarifications, completed forms, correct dates, etc.
- IRB will review the resubmission

Important Note:

- An SRC can override an IRB decision if it feels the human subject's safety is in jeopardy.