

Failure to Qualify for the CWSF

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3. Programs

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CWSF Judging

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Executive Director

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Contact:

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1 Failure to Qualify for the Canada-Wide Science Fair

While rare, it occasionally happens that a project fails to qualify for the Canada-Wide Science Fair (CWSF) after it has been selected by the Regional Science Fair (RSF). For example, a project that involved the death of several vertebrate animals failed to qualify, as did a project that required significant sleep deprivation. This policy defines the steps to be taken, and the options to be offered to the RSF involved.

2 Identifying the Problem

The issue will usually be identified during the ethics review of the five page reports, after the close of registration. It may also be identified during the safety check on the floor of the CWSF. Violations of Policies 4.1.1 , 4.1.2 Participation of Humans, 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 Use of Animals, and 4.3.2 Recombinant DNA , or other non-safety related issues such as plagiarism, will be referred immediately to the Chair of the National Ethics and Safety Committee. Violations of the rules on safety, so extreme that the project may Fail to Qualify for the CWSF, will also be referred immediately to the Chair of the National Ethics & Safety Committee.

The Chair of the National Ethics and Safety Committee will first file an Incident Report with the Executive Director, and then convene meetings of the National Ethics and Safety Committee to consider if the breach is so serious that the project will Fail to Qualify. Since time is very short, every effort must be made to do this within 24 hours. Prior to the start of the CWSF, this meeting will be held by conference call or other electronic means; if the CWSF is already in progress, the meeting will be held face-to-face.

3 Informing those Involved

3.1 If the decision of the committee is that the project has failed to qualify for the CWSF, the Chair of the National Ethics and Safety Committee will immediately inform:

1. The Executive Director.
2. The Delegate.
3. The Chair of the region.
4. The Chief Judge of the region.
5. The Zone Representative for the region.
6. The Chair of the Host Committee.
7. The Chair of the National Policy Advisory Committee (if not yet informed).
8. The National Judge in Chief

9. The CWSF Chief Judge Operations
10. The CWSF Chief Judge Recruitment.

4 Response from the Region

If the problem is identified prior to the start of the CWSF, the Region will be given 24 hours to provide any additional information as to why the project should, after all, qualify for the CWSF. If the problem is identified after the start of the CWSF, the Delegate will be given the opportunity to provide any additional information at that time as to why the project should, after all, qualify for the CWSF.

5 Confirming the Decision

After receiving any additional information from the RSF, the Chair of the Ethics and Safety Committee, will convene a second meeting to confirm or repeal the decision made at the meeting described in Section 2.

6 Possible Solutions to be Offered to the Region

If the final decision of the committee is that the project has Failed to Qualify, then the Region will be informed via emails or telephone calls to the Chair of the RSF, the Chief Judge of the RSF and the Delegate of the student(s) involved. The RSF is responsible for informing the student(s) and the parent(s) that this project has Failed to Qualify for the CWSF. The Regional Science Fair may select one of the two following options:

6.1 The student(s) may attend the CWSF, and participate fully in all activities, except that their project will not be displayed in the exhibit hall. They will be offered the opportunity to participate as members of the Student Support Team during judging, so that they can experience this component of the fair. There are several prior cases where students have done this, and in all cases it has been a great success. The project will be removed from the exhibit hall discretely, in the absence of all finalists, with as few adults present as possible. If the problem is identified on the exhibit floor, just prior to judging, this is the only option available.

6.2 These student(s) will not attend the CWSF. Another project may be invited to go instead, if travel bookings can be changed. It is not possible for these students to attend the CWSF as observers, and for a substitute project to go as well, because the number of students from each RSF attending the CWSF is confirmed many months earlier.

7 Origins of the Failure to Qualify

Failure to Qualify indicates that there is a failure at several levels. These include:

7.1 The students, who entered a competition without making themselves aware of the rules.

7.2 Their mentor(s) who failed to make themselves aware of the rules.

7.3 Several RSF volunteers who allowed the project to enter the Regional Science Fair without detecting that there was serious violation of the ethics or safety rules.

7.4 The judging team, who selected the students for the CWSF without asking themselves ?Is this project within the rules??

7.5 The web site designers, who have failed to put up a clear and obvious link to the Ethics Policies and safety rules that must be followed by each student.

Youth Science Canada encourages the Regional Science Fair committee to discuss the Failure to Qualify, and identify those areas that need improvement, so as to prevent occurrences in the future.

8 Appeals

The decision that a project has Failed to Qualify can be taken only by the National Ethics and Safety Committee. Thus this decision can be appealed only on the grounds that the appropriate procedure was not followed. The appeals committee will consist of the Executive Director, the Chair of the National Ethics and Safety Committee, and a third individual selected jointly by the Executive Director and the YSC National Judge in Chief who has not yet participated in the process.

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