

## Regional Science Fair Ethics Committees

**Category:**

3. Programs

**Policy Number:**

3.1.1.3

**Policy Section:**

Regional Science Fairs

**Approved by:**

Executive Director

**Date Approved:**

Sun, Mar 7, 2004

**Date Effective:**

03/08/2004

**Date Last Amended:**

Mon, Jul 6, 2015

**Date of Next Review:**

Wed, Aug 1, 2018

**Contact:**

National Judge in Chief

### 1 Role and Membership

1.1 Youth Science Canada encourages each affiliated Regional Science Fair (RSF) to form an Ethics Committee of between one and three people, who will become familiar with the ethical and legal issues involved in science research by young scientists.

1.2 Ideally, at least one member of the committee should have a background in health care such as a nurse, occupational therapist or medical doctor, and one in the care of animals such as a veterinarian.

### 2 Approval of Projects

2.1 All affiliated Regional Science Fairs are encouraged to adopt a policy requiring prior approval by an Ethics Committee of projects involving humans or animals where there is non-trivial or substantial risk. The purpose of such a policy is to educate young scientists in the ethical issues involved, and to ensure that the project meets the Youth Science Canada rules for science fairs. Such a policy will also ensure that, in most cases, appropriate guidance is provided before experimentation begins and that the Regional Fair or CWSF Chief Judge is not often required to deal with a project that is in serious violation of the rules. A sample policy statement follows:

1. All projects involving the participation of humans or the use of animals require approval by the RSF Ethics Committee before experimentation is started.
2. All projects must have an adult supervisor who will ensure that appropriate safety precautions are taken at all times to ensure the safety of the student scientist.

### 3 Difficult or Unclear Situations

3.1 In situations where an approval decision is more challenging or where the policy is unclear, the Regional Science Fair, but not the student(s), may refer the project to the National Ethics and Safety Committee who, after seeking appropriate professional advice, will make a ruling as to whether the project is eligible for science fair competition.