

Phases of ISEF – Beginning to End

The science fair project phases follow this general schedule. Months have been included to help students stay on track so that they are ready to compete at the regional fair in late February/early March. An individual science fair project may require more or less time in any phase and students should take a careful look at their calendars to see how they can best schedule their time.

Idea Development – September/October	
1. Pre-Register for ISEF and get a meeting scheduled with an ISEF Coordinator	
2. Start your logbook	
3. Decide on a topic	
4. Review the Guidebook, especially the calendar included there	
5. Dig into the background research	
6. Define your research question or engineering goal	
7. Create your hypothesis or design criteria	
8. Complete the précis	
Research or Engineering Plan – October/November	
9. Develop a procedure for your invention or investigation	
10. Evaluate the risks associated with your project – think about potentially hazardous biological agents, hazardous activities, the safety of human participants, or the safety of vertebrate animals	
11. Write your Research or Engineering Plan and turn it in to Google Classroom	
12. Get comments on your research plan from teachers and then make revisions	
Experimentation or Invention – November/December	
13. Have your project approved by the SRC or IRB	
14. Apply for a grant if you need additional funding	
15. Order and collect all materials needed	
16. Schedule time in the lab/field/workshop	
17. Conduct your experiment or engineering process or observational study	
Data Analysis - January	
18. Attend a statistics seminar and schedule a statistics advising appointment to learn about data analysis	
19. Complete the Literature Review and Conclusions in Google Classroom	
20. Complete the Post Project Summary in Google Classroom	
Presentation Preparation - February	
21. Get your poster board ready (digital or analog)	
22. Prepare for interview questions by practicing with others	
23. Prepare all other presentation materials you will need, make sure you update your research or engineering plan so that it reflects any changes you made during experimentation or invention	
24. Compete at the CREST-Jane Goodall Science Symposium!!	

Completing a science fair project is a big undertaking so all students should check in weekly with an ISEF Coordinator to ensure they are making steady progress in the field. Additional information about each of these steps can be found in the Guidebook and in the Google Classroom.