ESB

SCIENCE BLAST

DELIVERED BY THE RDS



DEMYSTIFYING the Judging Process

RDS

ESB Energy for generations

Taighde Éireann Research Ireland

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The purpose of the judging experience is to ensure that the students can discuss their work and receive positive feedback and support from someone who works in a STEM-related field.



Who are the judges?

The judges are individuals who work in a STEM-related field. Previous judges have worked for organisations such as ESB, Trinity College, Teagasc, UCD and Amazon with interest in lots of areas such as mathematics, chemistry, engineering, biodiversity, agriculture, renewable energy, education and more. Judges are matched to projects in their subject area and expertise where possible.

What is the role of our judges?

The role of the judge is to provide constructive feedback to pupils and teachers on their work, to provide them with insight for how they could extend their project investigation (for example by plotting data or changing a variable to see what happens) and to ensure a positive experience overall. This encouragement is especially important for our first time participants.





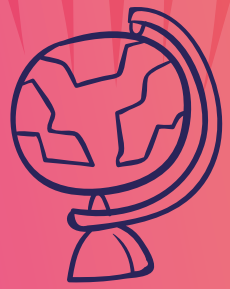
Before the showcase event

Before the event we allocate a judge to each project, being mindful of judges' expertise and the subject of the projects. We allocate judges who have experience with children with additional needs to special schools' projects. We also pair Irish-speaking judges with Gaelscoileanna projects. Your judge will receive your project information prior to the event. This ensures they can make the most of their time when visiting the stands.

At the showcase event

The judges will visit your stand during a specific time at the showcase event to talk to the children about their investigations (you will know the approximate time period the judges are visiting stands from our email communication before the event). Please make sure that there is **always** a handful of children at your stand to chat to the judges, so they don't have to make return visit to stands. After chatting with your pupils, they will return in the afternoon to give their feedback and award your trophy at an agreed time.

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What questions will they ask?

During your 15-20 minutes with the judge, they will have a discussion with your students. The judges will ask some questions to guide the discussion. The areas they may cover in the discussion, along with some sample questions are included below:

Scientific method

What was the question you set out to investigate? What did you think might happen? What did you do to get evidence you needed? How did you organise your evidence to explain the results? How did you piece it all together to answer your project's question?

Critical thinking

Did you come across any challenges during your investigation? What did you do? Was there something that went wrong that you fixed? Was there something that didn't work that you had to find another way to do?

Creativity

Why did you choose your question? Why did you carry out this method (e.g survey, interview)? Why did you use x material in your experiment or display?



Collaboration

How did you divide up the work for the project? How did you decide who took what responsibility / who did what? What was your favourite part of working on a project with all of your class?

Communication

Did all students take a turn to present, answer a question or show what they contributed?



What will the feedback look like?

The judges will fill in a feedback form that you will receive, along with your trophy. The judges will provide feedback under the following headings (similar to the questions); scientific method, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication and they will also give any additional comments where necessary. Feedback will be constructive and aims to encourage students to continue to build on their skills.

Preparing your pupils

To ensure the children feel confident speaking with the judge and showcase all their wonderful work effectively, we would suggest providing time for pupils to prepare the presentation aspect of their investigation before coming to the event. Perhaps they could practice presenting and answering questions about their projects with each other, with other teachers or with different classes in the school.



The most important thing about ESB Science Blast is that it's not about the end result, it is about the learning experience along the way.

Contact us for support and information on anything you're unsure of **scienceblast@rds.ie**

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