

# **LOCAL SCIENTIFIC REVIEW COMMITTEE (LSRC)**

## **Previously Referred to as INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)**

A Local Scientific Review Committee (LSRC) is a committee that, the Western Nevada Regional Science & Engineering Fair mandates, must evaluate the potential physical or psychological risk of research involving human and animal (vertebrates) subjects. All proposed human and animal research must be reviewed and approved by an LSRC before experimentation begins. This includes any surveys or questionnaires to be used in a project. **\*NOTE-** Vertebrate animals, as covered by these rules, are defined as live, nonhuman vertebrate mammalian embryos or fetuses, tadpoles, bird and reptile eggs within three days (72 hours) of hatching, and all other nonhuman vertebrates (including fish) at hatching or birth.

Animal studies must conform to the International Science & Engineering Fair's Animal Experimentation rules. For information on the rules and the forms contact our Regional Fair's Scientific Review Committee Chairman, Dr. Simmonds at [rsimmonds@unr.edu](mailto:rsimmonds@unr.edu)

A LSRC at the elementary or middle school level must consist of a minimum of three members. Additional members are recommended to avoid conflict of interest. The LSRC should include:

- a) The school's science fair director or science teacher  
**(May NOT be the student's classroom or sponsoring teacher!)**
- b) The school principal or administrator AND
- c) One of the following: a psychologist, psychiatrist, medical doctor, or appropriate medical professional.

Each elementary or middle school site must establish an LSRC to handle human and animal related science fair or science festival projects. ***All projects involving animals or humans require approval by the school site LSRC prior to the start of any experimentation and the Site Fair Director must retain the original.*** This eliminates the need for approval of these studies from anyone other than your school.

### **Three basic questions need to be asked:**

- 1) Are students involved in the study? If, Yes, then you need to have parent permission slips before conducting the research (Each site is responsible for making their own).
- 2) Are animals involved? If, Yes, and the animal(s) could be harmed, in any way, then you need to have a veterinarian check the condition of the animal(s) prior to conducting the research. (Keep all original paper work)
- 3) What is the "Risk Assessment?"

## ***Risk Assessment***

The LSRC may find that a project may not need to complete and LSRC, IF, No more than minimal risk exists when the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in DAILY LIFE or during performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

### 1. Physical Risks

- a. Exercise other than ordinarily encountered in DAILY LIFE would be considered more than minimal risk
- b. Ingestion, tasting, smelling, or application of a substance would typically be considered more than minimal risk. However, ingestion or tasting projects that involve commonly available food or drink should be evaluated by the LSRC who will determine risk level based upon the nature of the study. ***An ingredient listing of all food ingested or tasted must be supplied to each test subject prior to the start of the experimentation and subject approval forms must be obtained.***
- c. Exposure to any potentially hazardous material would be considered more than minimal risk.
- d. **PROJECTS INVOLVING UNKNOWN MICROORGANISMS.** Studies involving unknown microorganisms present a challenge because the presence, concentration, and pathogenicity of any agents isolated are unknown and, potentially, could be of danger to human health. In science fair projects, these studies typically involve the collection and culturing of microorganisms from the environment (e.g., soil, household surfaces, skin and so forth). For purposes of competition in the Western Nevada Regional Science & Engineering Fair (WNRSEF), studies involving unknown microorganisms can be considered acceptable only if **ALL** of the following conditions are met:
  - The organisms are cultured in a plastic petri dish (or other standard non-breakable container) and sealed.
  - The study involves only procedures in which the Petri dish remains sealed throughout the experiment (e.g., counting presence of organisms or colonies).
  - The sealed Petri dish is disposed of via autoclaving or disinfection under the supervision of the Designated Supervisor.
  - Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Chair of the WNRSEF Scientific Review Committee for projects conducted in a recognized research facility with in-house approval of the student's project.

### 2. Psychological Risks

- a. A research activity (e.g. survey, questionnaire, viewing of stimuli) or experimental condition that could potentially result in emotional stress would be considered more than minimal risk.

All Elementary and Middle School projects must have a copy of their LSRC taped to the back of the left side of the project along with copies of the ingredient list and copies of all necessary consent forms from all subjects and guardians placed in a clear sheet protector or folder attached to the back of the Display Board and/or a copy of the veterinarian's examination of the animal, if required. **Display and Safety will not approve projects that do not meet this requirement and the Project "WILL FAIL TO QUALIFY!"**

# LOCAL SCIENTIFIC REVIEW COMMITTEE

## APPROVAL FORM

Student(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Science Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IF additional information is needed, Complete on the back of this form.

**Teacher:** Please sign if you feel this form is neat and readable, and proposes a viable Science Fair Project that follows the scientific method and in which neither animals nor humans will be harmed.

Science Teacher Approval Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### LSRC Waiver of Written Informed Consent for Human or Animal Participation

The LSRC may waive the requirement for documentation of written informed consent/assent/parental permission if the research involves **only minimal risk and anonymous data collection and if it is one of the following:**

- Research involving normal educational practices.
- Research on individual or group behavior or characteristics of individuals where the researcher does not manipulate the subjects' behavior and the study does not involve more than minimal risk.
- Surveys, questionnaires, or activities that are determined by the LSRC to involve perception, cognition, or game theory and do NOT involve gathering personal information, invasion of privacy or potential for emotional distress.
- Studies involving physical activity where the LSRC determines that no more than minimal risk exists and where the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in DAILY LIFE or during performance of routine physical activities.

**If there is ANY uncertainty regarding the appropriateness of waiving written informed consent/ assent/parental permission, it is strongly recommended that documentation of written informed consent/assent/parental permission be obtained.**

### For School/Site Use Only:

HUMAN or ANIMAL SUBJECTS
Permission Slips needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (Keep slips with the project)
Check-up of Human or Animal Subjects required by Doctor, school nurse or Veterinarian? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, Doctor's, Nurse's or Veterinarian's (before and after experimentation) check-up <b>MUST be attached to back of project display.</b>

### APPROVALS –

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal / Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Doctor Signature/ Appropriate Medical Professional

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Science Fair Coordinator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Reviewed