Introduction

So, you are going to be a Science Olympiad Event Supervisor or an Event Volunteer. Thank You and Congratulations! You are stepping into the role that has the most impact on participants' Science Olympiad experience during the competition while at the same time offering some of the best opportunities to share your STEM knowledge and passion with students.

To help you in this role there are several key sources of information that Science Olympiad produces you need to be aware of and review. First are the event rules. If you haven't done so already, you can access a digital copy of the rules for your Division here for free. All Event Supervisors are encouraged to review both the General Rules, found in the Rules Manuals and Appendix A of this book, and specific event rules found in the manual, as both rule sets apply to your event. Second, make sure to visit the official Science Olympiad web site (www.soinc.org) often for Clarifications/Rules Changes and Frequently Asked Questions that may apply to the event that you are to supervise. Also, on the web you can find additional information such as checklists, scoresheets, and guidelines about your event on its Event Page. Third, you have this Logistics Manual which provides highlights of key information concerning your event as well as some general pieces of advice and guidance that will help make your experience as an event supervisor easier and more enjoyable.

As an event supervisor, you are responsible for **all aspects** of the event including but not limited to:
- familiarity with event rules, General Rules, Rules Clarifications and FAQ's on the National website. Students/coaches will have read the rules many, many times. Be sure you have done the same thing;
- working with the tournament director and host site to ensure all equipment, tests, and materials needed to run the event are in hand;
- approving and setting up event space;
- printing scoresheets and any additional paperwork required for the event;
- if necessary, developing and printing copies of test and answer sheets for students and answer keys for volunteer graders;
- starting and ending the event on time; and,
- coordinating roles and activities of any volunteers assigned to your event.

If you have any questions about expenses and materials, volunteers, meals, tournament shirts or submitting materials (e.g.; tests, answer sheets) for copying or archiving you should contact your tournament director in advance of the tournament.

When it comes to the day of the tournament, we would advise you to:
- Check all equipment ahead of time. All equipment should be the same for teams and in working order.
- Give yourself ample time to set up for your event; if at all possible, try to set up event the day before.
- Make sure the event is run so ALL participants have the same conditions for competition.
- **Be Flexible-** participants are young, excited, and unfamiliar with campus. Whenever possible, let students compete even if they're late. But if they do arrive late, they should not be given extra time to finish. They should only finish what they can do in the time since arrival.
- Read over the rules and make sure you understand them. The students will know them very well!
- Familiarize yourself with the Rules Clarifications and FAQ's; they apply to all states and all tournaments and originate at the national level.
- Make sure you understand how the scoring criteria work.
- Remember that the RULES, INCLUDING THE GENERAL RULES, RULES CLARIFICATIONS, and FAQ's, ALWAYS TAKE PRECEDENCE.
- If your event room has windows to the hall or in the door these windows should be covered.

Guidelines for Events with Written Tests

If your event should happen to feature a written test, please consider the following suggestions to facilitate a better testing experience and easier scoring.

- Write the event so that the questions, or activities, align to the event rules. Make sure to include a mix of difficulty within your activities so that about 15% of them are easy, 60% of them are of medium difficulty, and 25% are difficult. Event Supervisors who are looking for additional guidance should look at the Webb's Depth of Knowledge document posted on the Event Supervisors' page at https://www.soinc.org/officials/event-supervisors. This document associates question difficulty with the verbs used to describe the question task as well as provides example question stems for each degree of difficulty.
- Avoid questions that are overly tricky or delve into trivial topics. Difficult does not mean tricky or trivial.
- Arrange your test so that it has a cover sheet which identifies the Event Name, Division, and Tournament date.
- Follow the cover sheet with a page that contains instructions on how answers should be recorded, how much time the participants have to complete the test, if they may write on the test packet, and any resources they may or may not use. Questions should follow on subsequent pages. This arrangement will allow participants to look at the instructions and ask any questions they may have without seeing the test questions.
- Questions and pages all should be sequentially numbered so participants will notice if a page is missing.
- Follow good test and question organization and structure. For example, questions and answers should not cross pages. For multiple choice – indicate "Select best answer" or "All that apply".
- Evenly space out, align, and size answer boxes where participants should write their responses.
- Make sure each question's point value reflects the information that you expect the participants to provide as an answer. For example, a question asking the participants to name the 3 bones found in the human ear should be worth 3 points with the correct name for each bone being worth a single point.
- Make sure to select questions so that no one can get every question correct. If several teams get every question correct, it is difficult to determine the final placement of a team.
- Have a header on each page which includes a space for the participants to write their team name and team number as well as their own names in case the pages separate.
- Have a footer that shows the page number and has space to record the total score for that page. Try to alternate the position left to right to make it easier to record the information on double-sided documents.
- Include a page at the end that has a place to record the totals from each page. This will facilitate calculating the sum of page totals and make it easier to find errors.
- Announce the amount of time left periodically (i.e., 30, 15, 10, 5 minutes).
- Provide staple pullers and staplers so that teams can separate events if they wish. Teams that separate the test should reassemble and staple them – missing pages are the responsibility of the team and not event staff.
- Use sign in sheets and check them to make sure that teams without grades did not show.

Guidelines for Events with Labs

If your event is best suited to be an experimental activity, or a rotation through a variety of laboratory stations, consider these suggestions to make sure participants have the best experience possible.

- Periodically notify teams of the amount of time remaining in the event.
- Make sure to provide instructions on how to clean up the laboratory space or laboratory stations.
- Model and enforce proper safety precautions and safety equipment usage.
- Prepare a rubric in advance to help you consistently score the participants' work.

Guidelines for Events with Labs (continued)

- Consider using an even number scale for your rubric (e.g.; 4 points, 6 points, or 8 points) to help avoid ties.
- Have a system for breaking all ties.
- Write an answer for essay questions that you consider ideal.
- Identify factors that make it ideal.
- Determine the number of points for an ideal score.

- Determine what constitutes awarding few points.
- If different people are grading the reports, it is recommended that the same person grades the same part of the test. Having different people grade the entire test often results in unfair grading and should be avoid if at all possible.
- Include as much hands-on application as possible.
- Ensure there is a place for names and team numbers on all paper testing materials.
- Once judging begins, if a student leaves the testing room for any reason, he/she cannot return.
- All activities must begin and end on time. Do not give any extra time as this could make students late for their next event and this practice will not be consistent for all teams.

Guidelines for Building Events

- Identify all materials and equipment needed to carry out activities or test/measure events.
- Any equipment or materials that are not specified in the rules for the students to bring MUST be supplied by the event supervisor.
- Let your tournament director know as soon as possible if there are items you need but are having difficulty sourcing on your own.
- Consider using painter's tape instead of masking tape for marking dimensions on floors as it is much easier to remove.
- Most building events specify tie breakers in their rules. If one is not specified, you will need to designate a tie breaker before the tournament.
- Make sure students have their team numbers and names on all devices. Handle the devices as little as possible to avoid accidental damage.
- Have a checklist of things to check for each team/device.
- Make sure you have sufficient time to judge devices and determine if there are any construction violations before teams compete.
- For devices that are required to fit in a 3-D box, having a physical box of the desired dimensions is a quick way of making this judgement.
- For events that have other specific dimensions, consider building a measuring scale out of pasteboard. Much easier than measuring the device with ruler/tape.
- Do not release times, distances, or other pertinent information prior to impounding.
- Begin as close as possible to the time indicated on the event schedule.
- Read and follow the event rules carefully.
- If a device is judged to have a construction violation, the team should be notified immediately as to the exact nature of the violation.
- As the Event Supervisor, decide if you will allow teams to make minor adjustments to devices to eliminate construction violations. Whatever you decide, please be consistent.
- Students may not confer with spectators or be coached in any way.
- Do not allow students to compete without proper safety equipment.
- Consider using the Score Sheets for your event made available on the Science Olympiad Scoresheets page.

Guidelines for Building Events (continued)

- Check that only materials allowed by the rules are brought in by students.
- Once judging begins, if a student leaves the testing room for any reason, he/she cannot return.
- If a team fails to show up for its sign-up time for a legitimate reason, the Event Supervisor can (but does not have to) allow them to be judged during a different time slot.

Key Terms

Event Name: Indicates how the event should appear in programs, schedules, and awards ceremonies. It is followed by the Division or Divisions in which the event is currently being run.

Impound: Indicates if any items associated with the event need to be collected and sequestered prior to any events starting on tournament day. If Impound is required, this will require additional space to securely hold the impounded items. It will also require additional volunteers to manage and supervise Impound throughout the tournament.

Room Type: Describes the types of classroom spaces in which the event can be successfully run.

Estimated Hours of Prep Time (including set-up): This is an estimate of the amount of time required of an event supervisor to prepare the needed event materials and set up the event space prior to the arrival of participants at the tournament.

Minimum Suggested Supplies: This is a description of the minimal amount of materials that an event supervisor needs to have in order to successfully run the event at a tournament. It reflects the items listed in the Event Parameter, and other sections, of the Event Rules.

Helpers: Indicates how many adult volunteers, in addition to the Event Supervisor, are needed to successfully run the event. Depending upon the event, these Helpers do not necessarily need a specialized science background. Often times, a general science background and experience working with and supervising children will suffice. In some cases, when the event has two parts running simultaneously (e.g.; Sounds of Music, Machines) additional event supervisors are needed and are called out here.

Additional Notes: This section shares special notes and tips from experienced Event Supervisors, Tournament Directors and Rules Committee Members. Often you can find ideas that will improve the event and offer some time savings for new supervisors.

Notes on Scheduling Events

Try to schedule the following events as early as possible in the day to give Event Supervisors as much time as possible to score all student work:
- Experimental Design
- Disease Detectives
- Write It, Do It (WIDI)

Disease Detectives, Experimental Design, and WIDI are likely to have the same students participating in each event. If possible, try to not schedule all the events at same time for one team. Disease Detectives can probably be a bit more flexible.

It is recommended that device events should be scheduled using a sign-up system as opposed to allowing walk-ins because walk-ins tend to create large clusters of teams at the end of the day. Ideally these sign-ups would be done online, at least one week prior to the tournament. Tournament directors should consider activating sign ups on different days and different times to ensure that teams signing up have equal opportunity and access to sign-up for slots. If at all possible, arrange the sign-up process so that a single person from a team can sign-up participants for all events.