

Judging the Regional Inventors Fair

Regional Inventors Fairs dates and registration guidelines are available on **the *Judge's Main* page at fl-rif.zfairs.com.**

Welcome All

Judges are vital to a successful event. This is a very diverse group consisting of experts in their fields, professionals, educators, business owners and employees, retirees, college students majoring in education, engineering and entrepreneurship, and more.

For experienced judges, this is a year like no other as you will soon understand. For newcomers, the experience will provide insight into the minds of Generation Alpha with a sprinkling of Z-er's . . . what's important to them and how well education is meeting their needs. It is reflected in their creative and critical thinking as well as their problem solving skills across a wide spectrum of interests.

Talking about impact, students having experienced earlier fairs encouraged the Officers and Board Members to push ahead in 2022, in the face of the devastation of Ian. And has it ever been worth it! Long term sponsors and judges deserve our unswerving gratitude for their support during these very challenging times.

This is a pivotal year back as Fairs return to FGCU's Alico Arena. The impact of a pandemic followed by a devastating hurricane has left its mark on many in SW Florida: lower student participation numbers; a diminishing field of judges from age and disaster impact; and frankly, a switch to a virtual platform. Uncertainties have become the norm. Contingency planning has become a necessity for the Edison Fairs.

The past several years of student participation at the national level has confirmed SW Florida can take great pride in the accomplishments of its youth. Thirteen students attended the 2023 Raytheon National Invention Convention. Fourteen prestigious awards were received!

January 2023 marks a milestone for the organization, now a educational 501c3 nonprofit. The filing was delayed for over twelve months, a direct effect of both the Covid virus and Ian's impact on key personnel. Our dedicated webmaster, colleague, and Inventor Fair participant himself, Ben Diamond, was impacted by Ian and had to take leave. Low funds further compounded the issue.

In keeping with the times, AI Guidelines are presented along with an AI Tracking Form. In brevity, evidenced based references must accompany AI research for it to be relevant and not just "hallucinations". If you have concerns of this being over your head, the guidelines emphasize honesty, integrity and trustworthiness. It is the student's responsibility to list their *AI prompts* along with *evidence based references*; to understand any research presented and to

support original information. If any concerns arise bring them to the attention of an administrator or the Fair Director before scoring the entry.

Down to the Business of Judging: Contingency Planning

Event Alternatives: Live In-Person, Hybrid Fair, or Virtual

- **On-Site Fair** remains the first choice.
- **Hybrid Events** make the most of both Live and Virtual Events. Greater participation numbers will favor the addition of virtual components as logbook, display & video can be viewed in advance.
- **Virtual Only Fair** back up plan in the face of adversity. Turns out, this has proven benefits.

Additional factors potentially impacting an In-Person Event:

- Participation numbers too low to warrant the use of a conference center or arena.
- Judge numbers insufficient for a live judging. Virtual judges recruited from a larger pool.
- Unpredictable events: Health alerts, venue disruption, inclement weather.
- Funding for onsite venue, setup, security and insurance costs must be accounted for.
- Sports arena venues must work around the sports calendar; not to be taken for granted.

Annual Planning Strategy

A live In-Person event will be pursued for late January/ early February. Participation numbers historically appear higher with initial school registrations and student estimates. Reliable numbers appear later in the year – November/December. Venue options will be impacted by the numbers.

Judge registrations, historically, are never clearly known until the day of judging due to flu season and conflicts of interest arising. **The earlier YOU are willing and able to show support will favor an In-Person Event.**

Recruiting for judging will begin as early as a venue date is secured. Until further notice, **'judge' registration will continue on the zFairs.com hosting site.** The **ALL INVENTOR REGISTRATIONS** link on the Main Page is a quick shortcut to **fl-rif.zfairs.com**. Further details will be shared on the **zFairs Judges page**.

Scoring Guidelines

| At the regional level | Ratings | Subcategory Scores | Overall Scores |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| • Fair | (below average) | 1-3 | 10-30 |
| • Good | (average) | 4-5 | 40-50 |
| • Very Good | (above average) | 6-7 | 60-70 |
| • Excellent | | 8-9 | 80-90 |
| • Exceptional | | 9+ | 90-99 (100 – Market Ready) |

ORIGINALITY JUDGING CRITERIA: Judges will use the following rubric to guide each invention's originality score. The following examples will guide their scoring:

- 1) **0** - the invention can be found online, at a store, or already has an existing patent.
- 2) **3** points - the concept of the invention already exists and the student's invention is different, but only minor changes have been made: size is larger/smaller; design is different; functionality is the same.
- 3) **7** points - the concept exists, but major changes have been made altering the design and function
- 4) **9+** points - the invention appears not to exist and a cursory internet search does not reveal it.

DISPLAY BOARD JUDGING CRITERIA: Display board judging is based on thoroughness and creativity. Judges will evaluate each board according to the rubric below as well as the depth of explanation provided by the entrant.

- 1) Well organized
- 2) Fonts are readable from 3 feet away. Style, size, and color are complimentary to and help balance the display.
- 3) Colors complement each other and shapes are in balance with the display.
- 4) Good grammar, punctuation, and spelling

Each display should have the following information

- 1) Student(s) name(s) and Grade(s)
- 2) Invention/Project Title (Note use of superscript [™] or [®])
- 3) Make note of "Patent Pending" (only if provisional or non-provisional patent application has been officially filed with the USPTO)
- 4) Make note of "Under Counsel" (represented by a patent attorney)
- 5) **Well organized information to include:**
 - **an Abstract/Summary and Sections of the Rubric (as described below).**
 - **How the invention was made: images of the inventor building or testing the invention.**
 - **Progression of iterations with brief details to support changes.**
 - **How the invention is used.**
 - **What if any scientific principles were used? What if any engineering disciplines were applied?**
 - **Testimonials or research results when used by individuals other than the inventor.**

PROTOTYPE/MODEL

- 1) Does the prototype provide evidence of the invention value? Are there any competitive product valuations?
- 2) Does the student demonstrate understanding and progressive engineering improvements (iterations)?
- 3) Are any considerations shared of the product life cycle: materials, manufacturing, packaging, storage, sales, product life, recyclable?
- 4) Environmental impact: Energy required to harvest materials, produce, use, recover for recycling
- 5) Does it present any risks using it?

LOGBOOK JUDGING CRITERIA

All aspects of the rubric are completed and supported in the Log: Originality, Identifying & Understanding, Ideating, Designing & Building, and Testing & Refining; the addition of a basic understanding of entrepreneurial factors to include manufacturing considerations, marketing options, and business approaches through selling or licensing of IPP or new business development.

Basics: Clarity, Neatness, Grammar, Spelling - As this may be the original workbook and not an after-the-fact personally reorganized logbook, consideration for legibility and organization may be given some wiggle room.

AI Clarification

The **AI Tracking Form** is a record of:

- relevant prompts the student searched with
- AI results directly related to the prompt.

The student risks points being shaved off or disqualification for omission of tracking evidence. As harsh as this may sound, decisions will favor the student as long as the student follows the guidelines.