

TE TŪKOHU NGĀWHĀ

2026

INFORMATION BOOKLET



MĀTAURANGA
MĀORI, SCIENCE &
ART DESIGN FAIR



Te Tūkōhu Ngāwhā
Mātauranga Māori Science & Design Fair

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Te Tūkōhu Ngāwhā

Mātauranga Māori Science & Design Fair

1. Vision Statement

Te Arawa Lakes Trust Ko te Pae Tawhiti

Purpose Statement

“Te mā o te wai e rite ana kia kite i ngā tapuwae a te kōura.”

“The quality of the water is such that you can see the footsteps of the kōura.”

Te Tūkohu Ngāwhā Ko te Pae Tawhiti Purpose Statement

“Empowering young leaders to explore mātauranga Māori, western science and creative design | enhancing our connection to wai, whenua and whānau for generations to come”



Te Tūkohu Ngāwhā
Mātauranga Māori Science & Design Fair

2. Dates & Venue

Te Tūkōhu Ngāwhā 2026

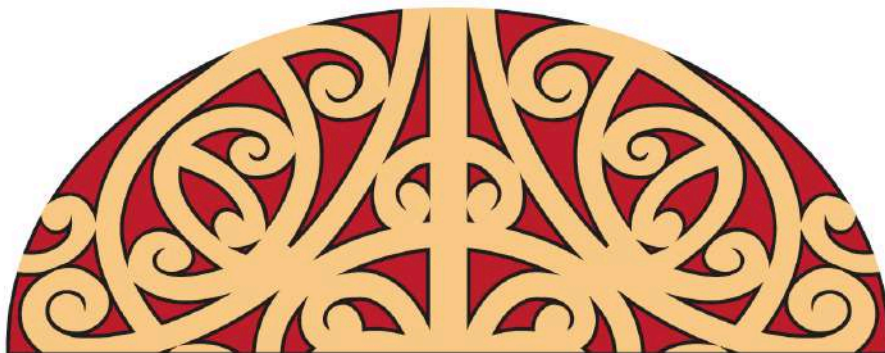
Dates:

Wednesday 26th
August - Friday 28th
August 2026

Term 3 | Week 6

Venue:

Energy Events Centre
Rotorua



ENERGY EVENTS CENTRE
ROTORUA | NEW ZEALAND



Te Tūkōhu Ngāwhā
Mātauranga Māori Science & Design Fair

3. Submission Areas

Areas available for submission:

Award Winning Science / Mātauranga



Students enter a project that investigates or explores an environmental issue under one of the following categories:

- Biosecurity
- Biodiversity and Conservation
- Mātauranga Māori
- Sustainability
- Water Environments (Freshwater and Marine)
- Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience



Visual Art Component

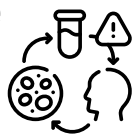
Students enter an art piece encapsulating the same themes in the science / matauranga



Environmental Science Photography Award



Students submit a photograph encapsulating the whakatauki “**Toitū te wai, Toitū a Papatuanuku, Toitū te Tangata | If the water is healthy, Mother Earth will be healthy, and the people will be healthy**”

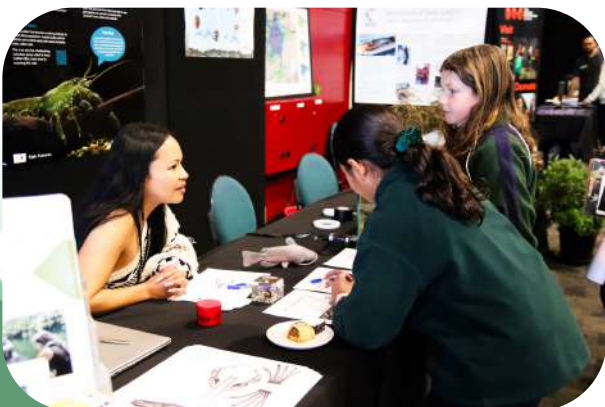


STEM School Promotion Exhibition

In 2026, schools are invited to showcase their kura STEM programme through a poster or exhibition board, with kōrero prepared to answer the following prompt:

“This programme helps us learn how to support the future of our taiao because...”

Note: this component is NOT judged.



4. Entry Criteria & Exhibit Information

Categories:

If students are entering in the **Science /Mātauranga** or the **Visual Art Component**, their exhibit/project based on **ONE** of the following categories:

- Biosecurity
- Biodiversity and Conservation
- Sustainability
- Water Environments (Marine and Freshwater)
- Mātauranga Māori
- Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience

Students can work in groups, pairs or individually. All participants names must be disclosed on the project.



Science / Mātauranga Exhibit Dimensions:

Project boards (can be purchased from Warehouse Stationary) need to fit within a dimension of:

W: 1.2m

H: 1.5m

D: 0.75m

Exhibits that require more space than this, please disclose with Science Fair Coordinator Keeley Grantham at keeley@tearawa.iwi.nz.

Art Competition Dimensions:

The Art Competition does not have any size restrictions. As long as it can be presented in some form at the fair on the day, you may do whatever you like in terms of size/displays. Please let us know if you need technology/power sources to showcase your project.

4. a) Registration Process

Information for Schools Registering:

- There must be one designated teacher per school as part of this registration
- Once you have registered your school via the google forms link, you will receive a confirmation email
- The designated teacher will receive all correspondence regarding the fair (individual student registration forms, fair programmes, information, etc)
- **Registrations for schools will close Friday 26th June 2026**

Exhibits cannot be submitted unless the school registration form is complete or you have spoken to us about registering without a school. See FAQ page.

Once a school registration is complete, a separate registration form must be completed with each project. This will include details such as:

- Names involved in project
- Age/year group involved
- Category of project
- Title of project

This registration form will be sent out to each individual school for students to complete, again, after the school has registered.

Registrations for individual projects will close Friday 17th July 2026



Registration Process

Register school using google forms link
School registrations close Friday 26th June 2026

This tells us how many schools to expect

Receive confirmation of school registration through email

Designated teacher will receive this

Discuss within your school: what students want to be involved? Entire classes?

Time for action!

Complete projects, update any details on projects ASAP

Submit / register individual projects using new google forms link

Individual project registrations close Friday 17th July

Includes project name, category entered etc.

Project planning, brainstorming ideas, come up with design concepts etc

Project drop off times:
Tuesday 25th August 2pm-5pm
Wednesday 26th August 7am-8.30am

Judging will occur on Day One of the event (Wednesday 26th August) after pōwhiri. Timings TBC.

Designated Teachers will be notified of award recipients on Thursday 27th August. Prizegiving will be held on Friday 28th August

5. Designing a Project

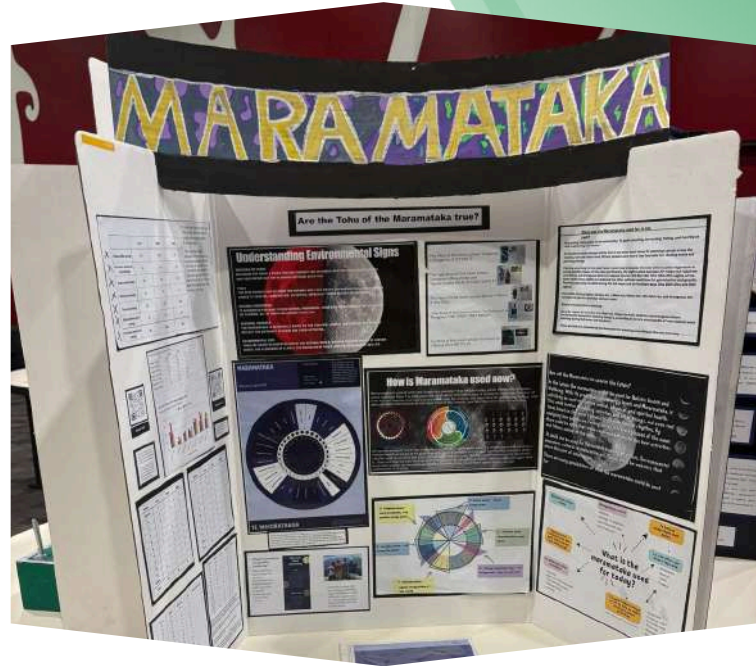
Science and Mātauranga Exhibition

Students can choose how they'd like to share their projects.

This can be in a format of:

- An experiment
- A design/information board
- A prototype
- A poster

It should be eye catching and sufficiently show the students thinking process throughout the project. The Scientific Method can be used as a guideline to showcase their project, but it is not a requirement to use this method (Aim, Hypothesis, Testing, Results, Discussion, Conclusion). For example, this method might not work well for an information board or infographic display. You will be supplied with a judging rubric to assist with project design.



Visual Art Component

Students must submit a piece of artwork which fits in within one of the following categories:

- Biosecurity
- Biodiversity and Conservation
- Water Environments (Marine and Freshwater)
- Mātauranga Māori
- Sustainability
- Climate Change & Resilience

The art competition is open plan and can be of any creation pertaining to one of the above categories. If the project needs attaching to the wall or set up on a table, please let us know and we can help with the set up/display.



Designing a Project

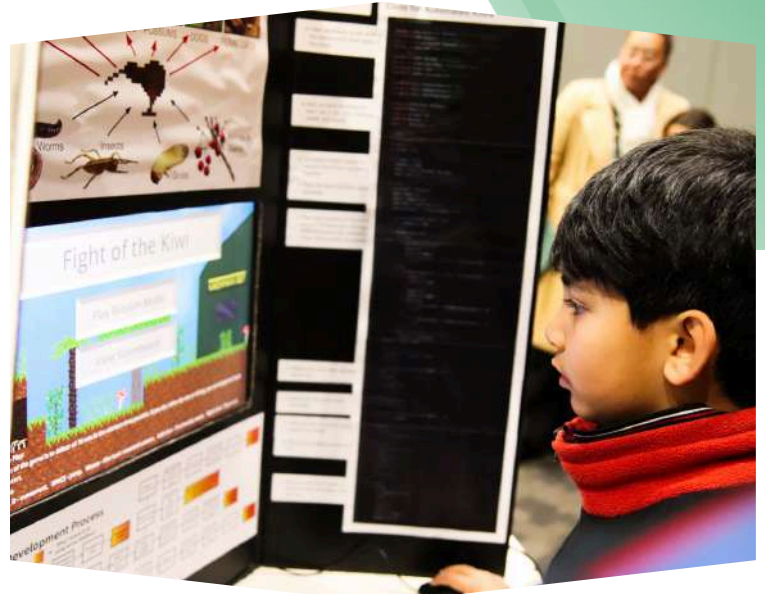
STEMS School Promotion Exhibition

This new addition allows space for schools to set up promotional exhibits showcasing STEM programmes in their kura.

Please note this section is NOT judged or part of the achievement process. It is a promotional opportunity where we encourage students to be at the forefront of sharing their schools' STEM programme, by being able to articulate the prompt...

“This programme helps us learn how to support the future of our taiao because...”

THIS SECTION IS NOT JUDGED.



Environmental Science Photography Section

Open category photography section, where students submit a photograph captured by them that encapsulates the following whakatauki:

*“Toitū te wai, Toitū a Papatuanuku,
Toitū te Tangata | If the water is
healthy, Mother Earth will be
healthy,
and the people will be healthy”.*

6. Category Information



Biodiversity and Conservation

Focus: the protection and restoration of Aotearoa's unique biodiversity, blending Māori principles with conservation science.

Exhibit ideas: Displaying Māori strategies for preserving native species (e.g., using rāhui to protect areas) and modern conservation efforts.

Biosecurity

Focus: Protecting Aotearoa's environment and ecosystems from harmful pests, diseases, and invasive species; drawing upon both Māori and scientific methods. Students can investigate the impact of invasive species on our ecosystems.

Exhibit ideas: Showcasing Māori strategies for pest control, such as traditional trapping methods and the relationship with native species, alongside modern biosecurity practices.



Mātauranga Māori

Focus: emphasizing Māori knowledge systems, including values, practices, and principles that can contribute to science and design in the taiao space.

Exhibit ideas: presenting various areas of Mātauranga Māori, such as traditional navigation, land management, plant/animal knowledge, kōrero of history.

Water Environments (Marine and Freshwater)

Focus: Understanding and protecting Aotearoa's freshwater and marine ecosystems, particularly from a Māori perspective.

Exhibit ideas: Display Māori water management practices (such as traditional river or wetland management) alongside modern water quality monitoring and conservation efforts.

Sustainability

Promoting sustainable practices through the lens of Mātauranga Māori and modern sustainable design.

Exhibit ideas: show innovative projects that integrate Māori values (e.g. kaitiakitanga) with modern sustainable technologies, like renewable energy, sustainable farming, eco-friendly building designs.

Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience

Focus: Addressing the impacts of climate change on Aotearoa and how Māori knowledge and practices can support adaptation and resilience.

Exhibit ideas: show how Māori communities are adapting to climate change, integrating traditional knowledge with modern solutions.



7. Health & Safety – rules for exhibits and experiments

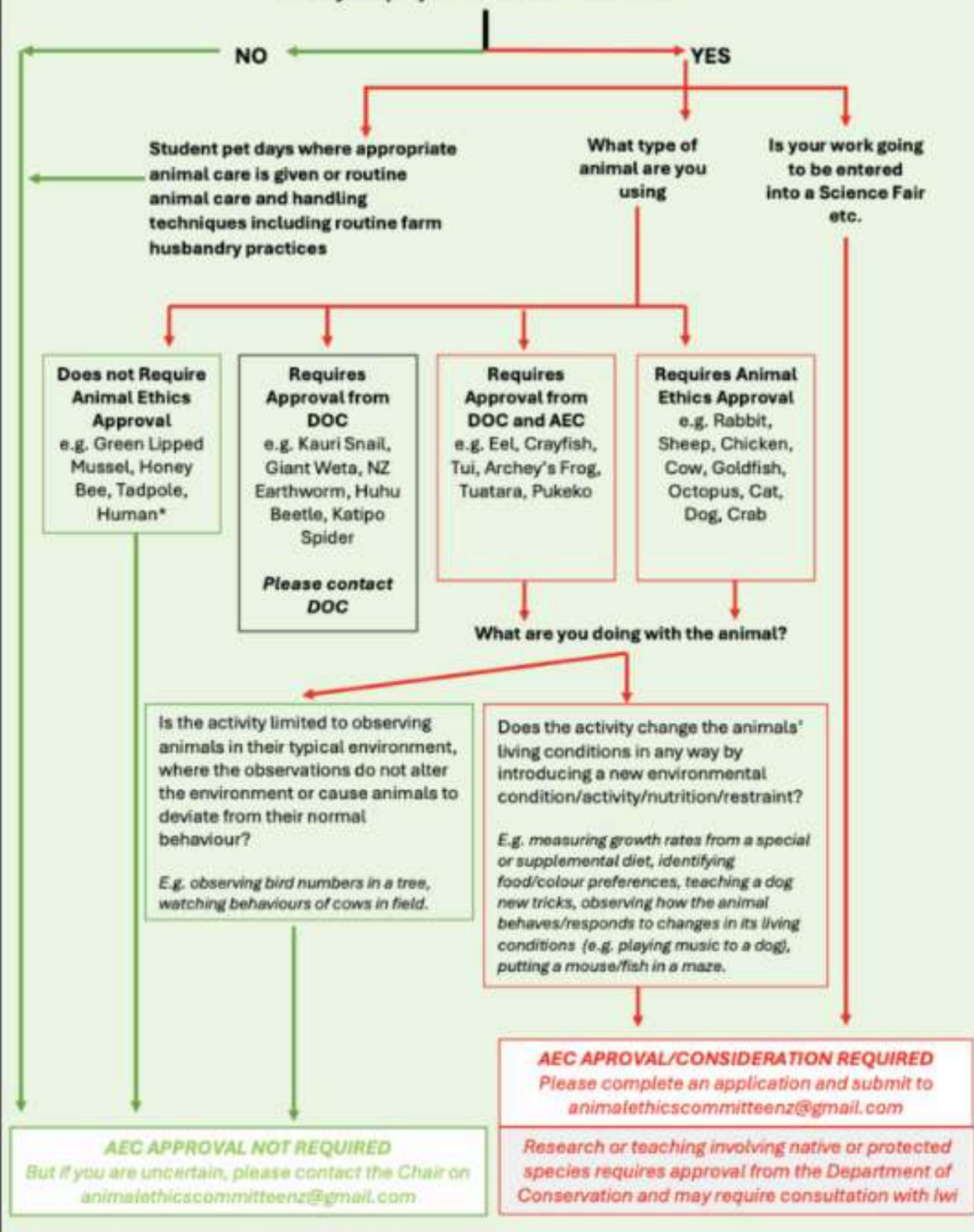
- Students must have parental/guardian consent to enter the Science Fair. This will be included in the student's individual registration process
 - Photographic consent will also be required in the registration process.
- Schools must register first - exhibit registrations must be completed after school has registered with the organisation committee.
- **Exhibits/artwork needs to be set up prior to judging which will occur on Wednesday, 26th August**
 - Exhibits can be on a table or as a separate unit. Please keep to a modest size.
- We take a very strong health and safety approach in our event. The safety and wellbeing of all students, teachers and staff is paramount. If there are any questions about the following rules, please contact Te Arawa Lakes Trust event committee on *sciencefair@tearawa.iwi.nz*
- The use of dangerous and harmful substances, chemicals and gases are strictly **prohibited**.
 - This includes any gases, open flames, explosive/radioactive materials, strong alkalis and acids, moulds and other bacteria.
- Experiments containing electricity are limited at 12V. High voltage electricity components are strictly **prohibited**.
- Food must be contained, however please do not use any foods which may trigger allergic reactions or cause allergic/anaphylactic reactions (e.g. nuts, dairy).
- If your project involves animals, you must not make any changes to their normal routine, otherwise you need ethics approval. (See <https://nzase.org.nz/animal-ethics/do-i-need-ethics-approval/>) for more information.
 - If you are simply observing behaviour, you do not need ethics approval. If you are altering behaviour, such as teaching a dog tricks, you may need ethics approval. Please see flow chart below, and contact animalthicscommmitteenz@gmail.com if you are uncertain.

7. Health & Safety – rules for exhibits and experiments

Do I need animal ethics approval?

- Under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, any project or teaching that might affect the animal's normal physiology, behaviour or anatomy requires ethics approval.
- *Research or teaching involving native or protected species requires approval from the Department of Conservation and may require consultation with Iwi*

Does your project involve a live animal?



7. Health & Safety – rules for exhibits and experiments continued

- Insects may be used (providing they are not native or endangered, please ask if you are unsure).
 - They must be well looked after in well-ventilated areas, given the appropriate food, water and habitat. They must not be kept as pets.
 - They must not be subject to any type of abuse, exposure to harmful substances or extreme conditions. Care of species will be judged.
- Non-harmful liquids are allowed. Equipment to clean any spills must be included and any spill-prone items must be placed in a spill tray. Exhibitors must ensure the area they have their display in is always kept dry and tidy.
- Human subjects may be used (if they give you their permission)
 - They must not undergo any sort of medical testing/procedures or be required to take any medicines
 - No biological samples are to be taken
 - You must also not obtain any confidential information from the subjects.
- Plant matter may be used, however if you are dealing with a noxious plant, please dispose of this in a way that limits its spread into areas where it would cause damage. Check out the Weedbusters website (<https://www.weedbusters.org.nz/what-are-weeds/weed-list/>) if you are unsure whether the plant is considered a pest. Do **NOT** use any plant with an endangered species status.
- We reserve the right to turn down any project which is deemed unsafe or hazardous. This includes judging day.

7. a) Health & Safety – Our Responsibilities, and Your Responsibilities

Te Arawa Lakes Trust has the responsibility to identify hazards and assess risks, apply control measures to eliminate or minimise risks, and review these control measures over time across the duration of the event. This is in accordance to the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 .

Te Arawa Lakes Trust requires your group to complete your own risk assessment (RAMs) getting your group to and from the event, including:

- Permission slips/vetting
- Any school documentation
- Planning and logistics
- Transport
- Supervision of students



Hazard and risk management:

If you will be requiring electricity for your stall please let us know as soon as possible so we can organise appropriate placement of your set-up.

If you require more than two power outlets you will need to bring your own multi plug.

If you are bringing any electrical items please ensure they are in good condition and safe for use.

If you have any questions regarding the health and safety of your project, please contact our Health and Safety Consultant Karen at karen@worksi.co.nz.



8. Achievements



Category Awards:

- Each Category:
 - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Placings
- Art Competition:
 - 1st, 2nd & 3rd Placings
- Photography Section (TBC)

Supreme Awards

- **Te Arawa Lakes Trust Ngā Karu Atua Supreme Award**

This award is the Prize for the overall winner. This award celebrates the core values of the Te Arawa Lakes Trust as set out in Te Tuāpapa o ngā Wai o Te Arawa.

- Ka Rongo te Ao i te mana o Te Arawa – The authority of Te Arawa is readily recognised by all.
- Te mā o te wai e rite ana kia kite i ngā tapuwae a te koura – The quality of the water is such that you can see the footsteps of the koura.
- Whakapakari ake i te waka o Te Waka kia pae ki uta – we are equipped for the future.

- **Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand Award** for Excellence in a project focused on the whenua.

- **Scion Ngā Huarahi ki Te Ao Award** for embodying Scion mahi and the potential of the next generations to harness research, science and innovation in the ngāhere and environmental space.

- **Bay of Plenty Regional Council Te Mana o te Wai Enhancement Supreme Award** awarded to an exhibit that demonstrates innovation and excellence on the subject of enhancing and improving Te Wai Māori/ freshwater environments.



- **Te Puni Kōkiri Kaitiakitanga Award** for excellence in environmental stewardship through a Māori Lens. Presented to the project that best demonstrates kaitiakitanga and the protection of te taiao through traditional Māori practices.
- **Bay Conservation Alliance Conservation Award** to a school or project exhibit showing excellence in Conservation.
- **Te Anamata - Inquisitive Minds Award:** a primary school exhibit that highlights commitment and enthusiasm in learning, with a focus on caring for the taiao.
- **WaterNZ - Student Award**
 - All student projects that include an element of investigation of wai/water are eligible.
- **WaterNZ - Teacher Award**
 - All teachers who support a student to attend the science fair are eligible.

9. Frequently Asked Questions

Can students work in groups?

Yes. Students can enter projects individually or in groups.

My child/student wishes to participate but their school does not want to register them. Can they still enter?

This will be considered on a case by case basis. Generally schools need to register to account for student participation and authority to be off school site

Is there a cost to enter?

No, this is a free event to attend.

Is this only for Māori students?

No, this event is encouraged for all students to enter.

My student wants to submit multiple projects in different submission areas, is this possible?

Absolutely! Students can enter multiple projects across the different areas if they wish (e.g. a science project and an art project) however an individual project registration sheet must be completed for all projects submitted,

Does the project have to be all in Te Reo Māori?

While the use of Te Reo Māori where possible is encouraged, it is not compulsory. What is more important is evidence that the students display respect and acknowledgement of te ao Māori in their projects.





“Te mā o te wai e rite ana kia kite i ngā tapuwae a te
kōura.”

*“The quality of the water is such that you can see the
footsteps of the kōura.”*

