PROJECT RECOMMENDATION

INSTRUCTIONAL DOCUMENT
REGENERON SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH 2025

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Who should complete the Project Recommendation?
- The person who is most familiar with the research and the work you did on a daily basis. In many cases that is a graduate student in a lab rather than the head of the lab.
- If your parent/guardian or any relative is the person closest to your research and completes your Project Recommendation, we recommend requesting an additional Project Recommendation from someone who has experience with you in a lab or research setting, making it clear that they did not mentor this particular research.
- If there is no adult who provided guidance to you, please have a parent or teacher complete this recommendation, stating that is the case.
- If you worked tangentially with a scientific advisor (did not work in their lab, but sought their advisement), this person should complete the recommendation form to share their level of involvement.

When is the Project Recommendation due?
- The deadline for your Recommender to submit this form is Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 8:00 pm Eastern Time. This deadline is the same date and time as the student application deadline. We will be unable to accept materials, including recommendations, after this deadline.

How do I request my Project Recommendation?
- Talk to or email your recommenders to ask them if they would be willing to complete a recommendation on your behalf. Let them know that they should anticipate an automated email from our online system — the sender name will be "Regeneron Science Talent Search." Then request your Project Recommendation through the online application system.
- We recommend that you request your recommendations the day you open your application to allow your recommenders plenty of time.
- It is your responsibility to remind your recommenders to submit their recommendations before the deadline. We cannot accept any portions of the application, including recommendations, after the application deadline.

How many Project Recommendations should I request?
- Each applicant must request one Project Recommendation, but may request up to two.
- If you worked closely with more than one mentor, you may request one additional Project Recommendation.

Other things to know about the Project Recommendation:
- The Society no longer accepts PDF letters of recommendations. Recommenders are now required to answer specific questions within the online form.
- Exact questions and word limits stated on the next page may vary slightly in the online application.
- Mentors and applicants are required to disclose any familial or personal relationships. They are also required to disclose any known or perceived conflicts of interest. This means, if your parent/guardian/relative/neighbor/long-time family friend/etc. is writing your recommendation, you must tell us about this pre-existing relationship. This also includes any employer/employee or mentor relationships between your parents/guardians and your mentor, real or perceived.

RULES QUESTIONS

The online form will lead recommenders through a series of questions about the student's research to determine what type of approvals and paperwork were needed, and will ask mentors to upload or verify specific information on a case-by-case basis.

PROJECT QUESTIONS

1. Do you, or does anyone in your lab, have a familial, long-term or pre-existing relationship to the student? Please acknowledge any type of employer, mentor, donor and/or family, connections between you, members of your lab and the student and their family. Such a relationship is not disallowed under Regeneron STS rules, however it is important that it be disclosed. Examples include: parent of entrant mentored the recommender; mentor is a graduate student in a parental figure's lab; recommender is employed by the same university as the entrant's parent; parent is the mentor; mentor is the entrant's neighbor, etc. If so, please describe the relationship.

2. Were you paid for your services as a mentor or coach to this student, and/or did you work with this student through a program that charges tuition or fees? This type of program and mentoring relationship is permitted but must be disclosed. High school teachers who supported mentees directly through classroom or school club activities, and were not separately compensated, should select "no". If yes, describe and explain the fees/tuition.

3. In what capacity did you work with the student? Select all that apply: I worked with the student through my primary employer; I worked with the student outside of my primary means of employment; I was paid for my mentorship services; I volunteered my services; the student joined my lab; I mentored the student mostly in a virtual setting; other.

4. To the best of your knowledge, did you mentor the student on the project they have submitted in their Regeneron STS application package? Yes or no.

5. Briefly explain how the student became known to you. (75 words max) (e.g. personal relationship, summer program, high school partnership, direct communication from student, required or elective high school course)

6. Please describe the nature of your involvement with the student's research. (150 words max) What role did you serve for the student? What type of guidance did you provide? Did you meet in person or in a virtual setting?

7. How did the student get the idea for the project? (200 words max) Was the project assigned; picked from a list of possible research topics; result from discussion with a scientist; arise from work in which the student was engaged; suggested by student?

8. What was the duration and intensity of the student's research experience at your institution?

    a. Number of weeks, months or years
    b. Approx. start and end dates

9. Provide a brief description of your laboratory/research environment and what the student's role was within this group. (150 words max) Size, # of scientists/students and their research levels (post-doc, doctoral, undergrad, high school)

10. If there were other high school students in your research group please name them and explain in detail the difference between this student's work and the work of other high school students in your group.

    a. Are there other high school students in your research group?
    b. Have you mentored any other students who are entering Regeneron STS this year?
    c. If so, list their names.
    d. Name any students who performed research that was similar to this student (this year or in a previous year) and explain how this student's work was different and independent from others.

11. For what aspects of the research can you give credit to the student as being their own unique contribution: Research Question, Procedural Design, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Drawing Conclusions (200 words each)

12. Students may submit published research to Regeneron STS (this is not required), though it is often difficult to determine student contribution to published paper when the student is not the sole or primary author. To your knowledge, how much of the paper that the student is submitting to Regeneron STS is their own contribution, vs. that of your lab group or larger research project? (200 words max)

13. What did the student do that showed creativity and ingenuity? Please provide examples of how this student demonstrates potential as a scientist. Were they creative in their science, or creative for a high school student? What is your impression of their knowledge of experimental design, construction or use of equipment, evaluation of data, etc.? (250 words max)

14. Based on your knowledge, would you hire this student again in the future to work in your lab? Why or why not? In 5 to 10 years, do you believe this student could have a career as a working scientist, engineer or mathematician? How do they rank against other students you have worked with in the past? (200 words max)

15. Does the student have permission to share this research project with the Regeneron Science Talent Search? If selected as a finalist (top 40) or scholar (top 300), our science writers will compose short summaries of the research project to share with the public. The student might be interviewed in the media. Through these processes, results might be shared. The Society for Science does not share student applications, which includes the full research report, with the public or the sponsoring organization.

16. Is there anything else you would like to share about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted your lab and/or this particular student? (250 words max)

17. Is there anything else we should know about this student? (100 words max)

ETHICS AGREEMENT

I certify that I have presented the full truth regarding the student researcher's experience in my classroom and have not presented false information. I understand that mentors of Regeneron STS entrants may not benefit financially based on the overall placement of entrants in the competition.

TROUBLESHOOTING ISSUES

Should your Recommender experience any issues with our online process, please encourage them to review the Recommender FAQ on the applicatioin website and to email **sts@societyforscience.org** with any other concerns. Once you request a recommendation from them through the online system, the Recommender should receive an email with instructions. Occasionally these messages are caught in junk mail or strict school email filters, or a recommender could receive requests from multiple students under different email addresses, causing confusion. We are happy to investigate any issues.