2026

SA'S LARGEST SCIENCE COMPETITION

SASTA OLIPHANT SCIENCE AWARDS

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

ENTRY INFORMATION

Information correct as at 1 December 2025

Contents

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Sir Mark Oliphant

The South Australian Science Teachers Association has been privileged to have had Sir Mark Oliphant as our Patron for the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards since their inception in 1981.

Like many of the recipients of these awards, Sir Mark was born in South Australia and received his primary and secondary education in state schools here. An outstanding student, Sir Mark investigated a number of career pathways and eventually settled on the pursuit of science at the University of Adelaide. Sir Mark showed a love of tinkering and invention from an early age, and it was in the science laboratories in Adelaide that he started to make his own scientific apparatus. He was to become one of the leaders in the design and construction of revolutionary apparatus, including particle accelerators used to investigate the structure and interactions of the nuclei of atoms.

In 1927 a scholarship took Sir Mark to the famous Cavendish Laboratories in Cambridge, UK where he worked with Lord Rutherford, who was a pioneer in atomic physics. Together with other great scientists including Fermi, Lawrence and Oppenheimer, Sir Mark created the brave new world of nuclear physics. His expertise in this area was to lead Sir Mark to the Manhattan Project in America and to his participation in the development of the first atomic bomb. Sir Mark was always a champion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and in 1937 accepted his first professorship as head of the Physics Department at Birmingham University where he was to continue to push the boundaries of knowledge of nuclear physics. In this year he was elected as a 'Fellow of the Royal Society'.

In 1955 Sir Mark's reputation as scientist, research director and administrator were well established in the scientific community. This, together with his declared interest in establishing world class educational research facilities in Australia, led Sir Mark back to Australia at the request of the Government. In this year he founded the Research School of Physical Sciences at the newly established Australian National University in Canberra.

A clear demonstration of his ongoing support of science and science education was provided to the science community in our state when Sir Mark agreed, in 1981, to lend his name as patron of the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards. Sir Mark's legacy will live on in many ways, not least through the thousands of students and teachers who participate in these awards annually. Of special significance is that Sir Mark, through his love of tinkering and invention, made the perpetual Oliphant Trophy himself.

Monica Oliphant, AO

Monica Oliphant is the current Patron of the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards. She has had a distinguished career as an energy research scientist and consultant specialising in residential renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Monica worked 18 years for the electricity utility ETSA as a Research Scientist in the areas of renewable energy and energy efficiency and was involved in the South Australian Government's wind resource assessment program in the late 1980s which put South Australia in a prime position for wind energy investment in the State that started about 15 years ago.

Monica is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of South Australia and a University Fellow at Charles Darwin University. She also runs her own Consultancy, Monica Oliphant Research Scientist. In presentations she has been unashamedly proud of the status of renewable energy in South Australia and the work being done at the University of South Australia in this area.

She received an AO in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours List in recognition of her work in Renewable Energy and was named 2016 Senior South Australian of the Year.

Monica attends the Oliphant Science Awards Presentation Ceremony each year to speak about Sir Mark Oliphant's legacy and to present the Oliphant Trophy.

Introducing the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards

The South Australian Science Teachers Association (SASTA) has conducted the Oliphant Science Awards every year since 1981.

Aim

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards will stimulate students and enable them to:

- Undertake and report on scientific investigations in real life settings
- Explore their interests, skills, talents and creativity
- Develop their science knowledge and understanding
- Show their work to a broader audience
- Motivate themselves to conceive and complete an independent project
- Involve themselves in scientific and technological discovery and the application of these processes and knowledge to themselves and their world.

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards

- Raise the profile and understanding of science in schools
- Attract thousands of entries from over one hundred schools each year
- Allow students and teachers to explore how curricular science can be extended as part of the greater scientific enterprise
- Support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Science
- Support inquiry-based learning and teaching practices
- Promote teamwork and communication among entrants and among the many teachers and parents who volunteer their time to encourage their students
- Raise awareness of the many careers made possible by studies in science
- Support the view that science promotes innovation in thinking and acting, and the development of novel questions and solutions
- Encourage students to become involved in science in creative and exciting ways extending their skills and expertise in science
- Support the use of digital technologies and emerging tools in science learning
- Foster a greater awareness and appreciation of the role played by science and technology in our daily lives
- Offer prizes in cash or in kind to a value in excess of $20 000.

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards enable students to explore science and technology through

- Inquiry and investigation
- Innovation
- New technologies
- Writing
- Art and photography

The wide spread of categories encourages participation by all students, irrespective of gender, culture, socioeconomic group or school location.

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards are open to primary and secondary students in South Australia.

Information in this booklet was correct at the time of publishing, please check the website regularly for updated information.

General information for teachers and students

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards are a wonderful opportunity for school students from Reception to Year 12 to develop their interests in science through a range of categories to suit a wide variety of abilities and interests.

Only the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Coordinator at a school (a teacher or other staff member) can register students for the competition. Only one Coordinator can register for a school, but multi-campus schools can register a Coordinator for each campus.

Students must enter in the appropriate year level but may enter any category (or in multiple categories) as many times as they wish. (Please note that all entries are judged on their individual merits, so students should be advised that two brief projects are not as good as a single comprehensive one.)

Year levels

R–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, 9–10, 11–12

Categories

- Crystal Investigation
- Games
- Models & Inventions (sponsored by the Australian Institute of Energy)
- Multimedia
- Photography (sponsored by SA Museum)
- Posters
- Programming, Apps & Robotics (including electronic games)
- Science Investigation *(previously Scientific Inquiry)* (sponsored by Wine Australia)
- Science Writing (sponsored by Flinders University)

Individual or group

Only individual students can enter Posters or Science Writing.

Students may enter all other categories as individuals or in groups of 2 or 3 students (maximum).

Registration

By registering, all entrants agree to the conditions of entry (see page 7).

Students must register their entries through their school's SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Coordinator.

The OSA Coordinator will enter the details of the entries from their school on the OSA website: www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au.

Further details on the registration process are on page 33.

All registrations are due by close of business Sunday 17 May (Week 3).

Participating schools will be invoiced based on the number of entries that have been registered by 5pm on Wednesday 3 June 2026. This invoice will be emailed directly to the school coordinator to be forwarded onto the school's finance department for prompt payment.

Please be aware that there will be no credit or refund should any of your students fail to submit their project(s). However, should one (or more) student fail to enter, another student / project may be entered in its place.

If you need assistance registering entries, please contact the SASTA office:
8354 0006 or office@sasta.asn.au.

Entry fees

Individual entries: $16.00 per entry

- $3.00 discount per entry for SASTA members
- $5.00 discount per entry for Department for Education schools or Catholic Education schools

Group Entries*: $24.00 per entry

- $5.00 discount per entry for SASTA members
- $5.00 discount per entry for Department for Education schools or Catholic Education schools

** no more than 3 students per group*

NB: it is possible to qualify for both discounts for individual and group entries. The discounts will be reflected when your school is invoiced.

Prizes

- The overall winner receives the Oliphant Trophy, which was made by Sir Mark Oliphant. The trophy is engraved with their name and kept for one year. The trophy is replaced in the following year with the Oliphant Medal, which is the student's to keep.
- Prizes are awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each year level group for every category. There are also sponsors' prizes for individuals and schools.
- All students who submit a project receive either a Certificate of Participation, a Highly Commended certificate (outstanding entries) or a prize certificate (winners).

Key dates

- **November 2025:** New Schools Incentive applications open
- **November 2025:** Country Schools Bursary applications open
- **November 2025:** Regional Student Travel Fund applications open
- **Tuesday 13 January:** Coordinator & student registrations open
- **Monday 16 February:** Navigating the Oliphant Science Awards in your School Webinar
- **Monday 2 March:** Judges registrations open
- **Sunday 22 March:** New Schools Incentive & Country Schools Bursary applications close
- **Sunday 17 May:** Student registrations close
- **Sunday 17 May:** Judges registrations close
- **Friday 5 June:** Regional Student Travel Fund applications close
- **Friday 5 June – Sunday 28 June:** Multimedia, Science Writing and Science Investigations entries and Reports for Programming, Apps and Robotics MUST be submitted online.
- **Friday 3 July - Sunday 26 July:** Round 1 judging (Multimedia, Science Writing and Science Investigations)
- **Monday 27 July – Sunday 2 August:** Models & Inventions reports / risk assessments can be submitted online. Supporting documents for Games may also be submitted.
- **Saturday 25 July:** Programming, Apps & Robotics Judging Day (by appointment only)
- **Wednesday 5 August:** Crystal Investigation, Games, Models & Inventions, Photography and Poster entries to be delivered.
- **Thursday 6 August:** Round 2 judging (Crystal Investigation, Games, Models & Inventions, Photography and Posters)
- **Friday 7 – Sunday 9 August:** Open Day at Science Alive!
- **Monday 10 August:** Project Collection
- **Friday 16 October:** Presentation Ceremony

Conditions of entry

- Appropriate acknowledgment of assistance. It is anticipated that students may receive assistance in planning and developing their projects. Each entry is to clearly identify which aspects of the project were devised and carried out by the student alone and which aspects received assistance. The type and degree of any assistance should also be clearly noted. If the details of such assistance are not clearly stated, then the judges, in judging the entry, will use their discretion and experience of working with students in making judgments. **Refer to the Supporting Students in the Oliphant Science Awards document in this booklet on page 36 or on the website for more information.**
- The Oliphant Science Awards has developed an AI policy to clearly outline how AI tools may be used in the competition entries. **You can find this document in this Information Booklet on page 35, as well as a Student AI checklist to assist with correct use of AI on page 37.**
- It is essential that all entries are suitably packaged for delivery, and that all parts of entries are clearly marked using your registration number (see Identification Label or Cover Sheet), name and School. SASTA cannot accept responsibility for goods damaged due to inadequate packing, or for any damage, loss or theft of goods. Therefore, SASTA discourages the use of valuable materials / equipment as their safety cannot be guaranteed.
- There will be no space to store project packaging at the new Open Day venue. We ask that projects are set up and packaging taken with you after delivery.
- Live animals may be used in Science Investigations to obtain results provided that the experiment meets with the Animal Ethics Committee requirements as they apply to schools. SASTA cannot care for live animals or plants so will not accept these as part of any entry delivered for judging.
- All research activities, individual or group, in the classroom or outside the classroom, must be conducted in an ethical manner. Please refer to SASTA's Ethical Conduct of Research Policy.
- An entry will remain the property of the entrant. SASTA reserves the right, beginning with the submission of the entry and continuing until 31 December five calendar years later, to use all or a portion of the entry or images of an entry, for the publicity or promotion of SASTA or of the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards unless a patent exists or has been applied for. SASTA may also allow a sponsor to use such material for the sponsor's promotional purposes. Where a patent exists or has been applied for, the use of the entry or images of the entry may be negotiated with the entrant.
- By submitting your entry you agree that your entry or a copy of your entry can be used and/or displayed by SASTA to promote the Oliphant Science Awards at events, on SASTA websites and social media along with your name, school and year level, and used in part or full within the SASTA Journal or Newsletter publications.
- Photos taken of winners may be used, without seeking further permission, by SASTA and the relevant sponsors, but only in their publicity of the event.
- SASTA shall have the right, but no obligation, to take any action it deems appropriate to prevent the misuse of an entry. Entrants and their parents and guardians may take reasonable steps or actions, as they deem appropriate to prevent misuse of a submitted entry.
- Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information published, neither SASTA nor the sponsors may be held responsible for any errors or omissions.
- SASTA and the sponsors reserve the right to change any awards, prizes or conditions as may in their opinion, be necessary.
- If entries are not collected, SASTA reserves the right to courier them back to your school at your expense or dispose of them if alternative arrangements are not made. SASTA cannot store uncollected entries.
- If you wish to submit your entry into another competition it is your responsibility to make duplicate copies.
- All information and entry forms are available in PDF format and can be downloaded from www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au

Information for students

How to get started

- Your own inspirations, interests and skills are the best starting point.
- Check out the many different categories in the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards. You may enter different projects into one or more categories.
- Check out previous entries in the Virtual Open Day.
- Choose a category that motivates you and will be the best at showcasing your skills and knowledge. Think about how you could capture the judges' attention in an innovative and original way.
- Look for reliable sources of information. Your school library will have many science books and magazines. There are many science and environmental organisations that have useful websites. Your science teacher may also be able to recommend places, websites or people that you could contact.
- Read the rules and the dot points about successful entries for the category you choose. These are the features that the judges are looking for in your entry. There are also valuable sponsors' prizes that are awarded if the entry meets both the category requirements and the criteria outlined by our sponsors.

How to enter

- Obtain a Registration Form from your School Coordinator, or download the Registration Form from the website.
- Return your completed Registration Form and any necessary fees to your School Coordinator.
- For group entries, only ONE Registration Form is to be completed. All group members must be named on the same Registration Form. (Note: maximum of three students per group entry; group entries are not allowed for Science Writing and Posters).
- Your School Coordinator will need to register students online (in their login area) at www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au by **Sunday 17 May**. Entries may only be submitted through your School Coordinator.
- Ask your School Coordinator about the date that they need your completed entry and who will deliver and collect it from the judging location. It is recommended that schools and parents try to organise a whole school delivery and collection method.

When your entry is finished

- **Electronic submissions:** Please be sure to save your project in a recommended format (Word, pdf, ppt, link to a YouTube video) with your ID number and surname. We recommend you include your ID number and surname when saving/naming the file. You will need to include your cover sheet in your submission.
- **Physical projects:** Securely attach your Identification Label (your Coordinator will give you this) in a clearly visable position **(labels must be put on the back of Photography and Poster entries)**. Please ensure that all parts are labelled with your ID number and surname.
- Make sure you have followed all the rules and presentation instructions for your category. Please be aware that any entries that do not adhere to the size and/or weight requirements where indicated may not be accepted for judging.
- Give your completed entry to your School Coordinator in time to be delivered for judging (unless your Coordinator has made different arrangements with you).

Open Day

We're excited to partner with Science Alive! for our Open Day event again in 2026! Models & Inventions entries and winning entries from all other categories will be on display from Friday 7 - Sunday 9 August at the Adelaide Showgrounds. There will also be a range of come and try activities as well as a full program of exhibitions and science shows on offer from Science Alive! You can check out information about Science Alive! here.

All students who enter the Oliphant Science Awards will be eligible to apply for discounted entry tickets. More information will be available closer to the date.

Presentation ceremony

Your School Coordinator will tell you before the Presentation Ceremony if you have won an award. Please speak to your School Coordinator before contacting SASTA for information.

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Presentation Ceremony will include all the 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed entrants and the sponsor prize winners. Attendance at this event is by invitation only. Unfortunately, recipients of Highly Commended are not invited to this ceremony.

Crystal Investigation

The beautiful symmetry of crystals has charmed and delighted people for centuries. Here is your chance to investigate how beautiful crystals are formed.

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Crystal Investigation entry:

- **HAS A STRONG SCIENCE MESSAGE AND ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Will answer an investigation question or investigate a hypothesis (prediction).
- Will include at least one crystal that shows sharpness of edges, smoothness of faces and has good clarity (transparency).

Rules for Crystal Investigation:

- A group of up to 3 students can complete a Crystal Investigation entry. The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry.
- Growing the crystals must be the student's own work.
- The crystals must be made from potash alum (common alum, potassium aluminium sulphate).
- **New for 2026: A Risk Assessment form for Crystal Investigation must be completed and signed by a teacher before you start your entry.**
- **You must keep a journal or logbook of your investigation, which will include details of:**
    - The investigation question or hypothesis.
    - Details of equipment and method used, including the quantities of alum and water used.
    - Dates and times of carrying out procedures.
    - Observations each time the crystals are inspected. This should include a written description as well as drawings or photographs of the crystals.
    - A discussion of any problems encountered and how you overcame them. Evaluate your method and make suggestions for improvements that could be made to it.
    - A summary of your findings including an answer to your investigation question or a statement stating if the hypothesis was supported or not supported by the results.
    - **Acknowledgement of any AI tools used in preparing your entry, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**

In presenting your Crystal Investigation entry:

- You must package your best crystal(s) in a labelled, separate, small press-seal bag. This bag should then be placed into a padded Post Pak envelope for protection Be sure to also label the small press-seal bag with your ID Number (listed on your Identification Label).
- You must securely attach your Identification Label (your Coordinator will give you this label) to the front of your padded Post Pak envelope
- **A hard copy of your logbook and risk assessment MUST be submitted with your crystal entry.**

Important information:

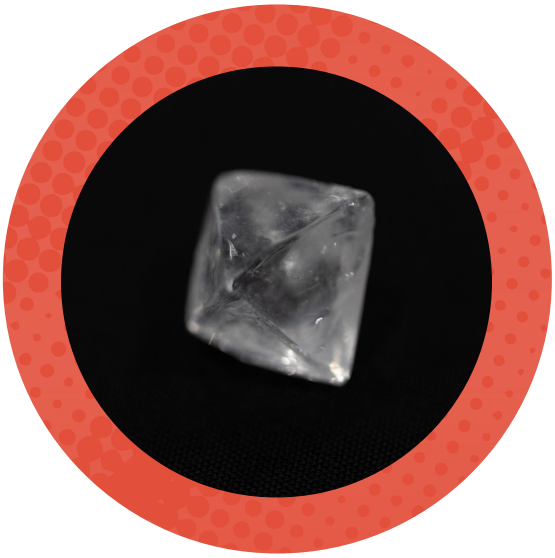
- You need at least 10 weeks to grow a good crystal.
- The following information can be found on the Crystal Investigation page on the Oliphant Science Awards website:
    - Information and advice on growing crystals
    - Logbook checklist (pdf)
    - Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for alum (potassium aluminium sulfate).

A good source of alum is needed to grow a clear crystal. Ask your teacher or head to the RACI website to find out where to obtain alum.

Alum obtained from hardware stores or garden centres is likely to contain impurities and is not suitable without extensive extra preparation.

KEY DATES:

- **Wednesday 5 August:** project delivered onsite



Crystal Investigation Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- [ ] A completed and signed risk assessment
- [ ] At least one crystal that shows sharpness of edges, smoothness of faces and has good clarity (transparency).
- [ ] Journal or logbook including:
- [ ] · The investigation question or hypothesis
- [ ] · Details of equipment and method used
- [ ] · Dates and times of carrying out the procedures
- [ ] · Observations each time the crystals are inspected
- [ ] · A discussion of any problems encountered
- [ ] · A summary of your findings
- [ ] Acknowledgement of any assistance received
- [ ] Acknowledgement of any AI tools used

Onsite delivery

- [ ] Attach your Identification Label to the front of your padded Post Pak envelope containing your crystal(s) (given to you by your coordinator)
- [ ] Ensure the the press-seal bag / container with your crystal is labelled with your ID number
- [ ] Hard copy of your logbook **and risk assessment**

Project delivered onsite: Wednesday 5 August

Games

Games are fun to play and fun to make, but they can have a serious point too. Create some fun and tell the world about science by making an award-winning game.

Tabletop games will be accepted in this category.

If you have an electronic game, please enter it in the Programming, Apps & Robotics category.

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Games entry:

- **HAS A STRONG SCIENCE MESSAGE AND ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Is original, visually appealing, interesting and fun to play.
- Will involve players in learning about the scientific content, not just winning by chance or good luck.

Rules for Games:

- A group of up to 3 students can complete a Games entry. The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry.
- The game must be the student's own work.
- The rules of the game must be clear and easy to follow.
- You must identify the age group the game is intended for.
- Your board game must be no larger than 60cm x 40cm x 20cm high (this includes any packaging) and must weigh less than 8kg, including the box.
- New for 2026: **You must include a short written statement (around 100 words) outlining:**
  - The scientific principle demonstrated in your game
  - How the entry was made, including any adult help needed in its construction
  - **Acknowledgement of any AI tools used, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**

In presenting your Games entry:

- You must package your game in a strong box, making sure to strictly adhere to the dimensions previously listed.
- You must clearly label all the parts of your game, because parts may become separated when the judges play your game or during transport.
- You must securely attach your Identification Label (your Coordinator will give you this label) to the outside of the box. **Do not put your label on the bottom of the box.**
- Students are asked to consider recording a short video of their game being played to support their submission. This must be uploaded as an unlisted video on YouTube and shared via URL or QR code on your instructions.
- Supporting videos may be **uploaded to the Oliphant Science Awards website between 27 July - 2 August.** Details can be found here: https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission

KEY DATES:

- **Monday 27 July – Sunday 2 August:** supporting documents for Games can be submitted online
- **Wednesday 5 August:** project delivered onsite

Games Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- [ ] Your board game is no larger than 60cm x 40cm x 20cm high, and less than 8kg
- [ ] The game involves learning about science content
- [ ] The intended age group is identified
- [ ] Rules of the game are clear and easy to follow
- [ ] Short written statement (around 100 words)
  - the scientific principle demonstrated
  - how the entry of was made, including any assistance received
  - Acknowledgement of any AI tools used.

Online submission

- [ ] **(OPTIONAL)** A short video of the game being played – must be uploaded as an unlisted video on YouTube and shared via URL or QR code on your rules

Project submitted online: between Monday 27 July - Sunday 2 August

Onsite delivery

- [ ] Game is packaged in a strong box adhering to dimensions listed above
- [ ] All parts of the game are clearly labelled
- [ ] Your Identification Label is **attached to the outside of the box, but not on the bottom!** (given to you by your coordinator)

Project delivered onsite: Wednesday 5 August

Models & Inventions

Proudly sponsored by the Australian Institute of Energy

If a picture paints a thousand words a good model must be worth a million. Necessity is the mother of invention; look around - what do we need?

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ENERGY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Models & Inventions entry:

- **HAS A STRONG SCIENCE MESSAGE AND ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Will be interactive allowing the viewer to manipulate it in some way.
- Will communicate ideas clearly.
- Will show creativity and originality.
- Will show skill in construction and design.

Rules for Models & Inventions:

- A group of up to 3 students can complete a Models & Inventions entry. The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry.
- The Risk Assessment for Models & Inventions form must be completed and **signed by a teacher** before you start your entry.
- The ideas demonstrated in the model or invention must be your own work.
- **Your model or invention must be no larger than 75cm in height x 75cm in width x 75cm in length.**
- Your model or invention must not weigh more than 8 kg.
- Your model or invention cannot be built from a kit without additional original input.
- Your model or invention must not include live animals or plants.
- **Your model must not require the use of mains power.** Battery-powered models are permitted; however, organisers will not provide, replace, or recharge batteries, nor will access be allowed for the entrant to replace batteries once delivered.
- Although the **use of liquids is not encouraged**, if using liquids for hydraulics or to replicate venom (for example), the liquid must be contained in a container & clearly labelled with what kind of liquid it is in case of leaks.
- Your model or invention must not include any items of value – SASTA cannot accept responsibility for any loss or theft of goods.
- All parts must be clearly labelled with your ID number (see Identification Label), because parts may become separated during judging or transport.
- Your model or invention will be displayed at Science Alive!, where it may be viewed and handled by the public. While every effort will be made to look after projects, some minor damage may occur.
- **A short written report must include:**
    - The completed and signed Risk Assessment for Models & Inventions form.
    - The scientific principle demonstrated by your model or used in your invention.
    - How the entry was made, including any adult help needed in its construction.
    - Any problems that occurred and how you overcame the problems.
    - How to operate your model or invention.
    - **Acknowledgement of any AI tools used in preparing your entry, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**

      The report length depends on your year level:
        - Year R–2: less than 100 words;
        - Year 3–4 and 5–6: approximately 250 words;
        - Year 7–8, 9–10, 11–12: do not exceed 500 words.

If there is any special reason for someone other than the entrants to edit or type the report this must be acknowledged in the report. You must also acknowledge any other assistance that you receive (see earlier Conditions of Entry).

In presenting your Models & Inventions entry:

- **New for 2026: An electronic copy of your report and risk assessment MUST be either uploaded to the Oliphant Science Awards website between 27 July - 2 August or attached when delivering your project. Please include a photo of your model in your report.** Details can be found here: https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission
- **If the risk assessment and report are not submitted, your project will not be considered for judging.**
- You must attach your Identification Details as sent to you from your School Coordinator (ID Label or Electronic Cover Sheet). **Do not put your label on the bottom of your project.**
- Students are asked to consider recording a short video of their project to support their submission. This could be uploaded as an unlisted video on YouTube and shared via URL or QR code on your report!
- **Special consideration for country schools:** Because of the difficulty and possible damage to models and inventions, students may send in a video of their entry working instead of their actual entry. Details can be found here: https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission

KEY DATES:

- **Monday 27 July – Sunday 2 August:** report & risk assessment may be submitted online
- **Wednesday 5 August:** project delivered onsite

Models & Inventions Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- ☐ **Completed and signed Risk Assessment form**
- ☐ Model or invention is no larger than **75cm x 75cm x 75cm** and does not weigh more than 8kg
- ☐ Must not require the use of mains power or include live animals or plants
- ☐ Although the use of liquids is not encouraged, if using liquids, the liquid must be contained in a container which is clearly labelled with what kind of liquid is in the container in case of leaks.
- ☐ Short written report including:
  - The scientific principle demonstrated by your model or used in your invention
  - How the entry was made
  - Any problems that occurred and how you overcame the problems
  - How to operate your model or invention
  - Adheres to the report length requirements
    - Year R–2: less than 100 words
    - Year 3–4 and 5–6: approximately 250 words;
    - Year 7–8, 9–10, 11–12: do not exceed 500 words.
- ☐ Acknowledgment of assistance received.
- ☐ Acknowledgment of AI tools used

You must submit your report or risk assessment in EITHER the Online Submission or the Onsite Delivery

Online submission (optional)

- ☐ Electronic copy of your report (PDF or Word document)
- ☐ Electronic copy of your signed risk assessment
- ☐ Cover sheet (given to you by your coordinator)
- ☐ **(OPTIONAL)** A short video of your project – uploaded as an unlisted video on YouTube and shared via URL or QR code on your report

Project submitted online: between Monday 27 July - Sunday 2 August

Onsite delivery

- ☐ Identification Label attached to your entry (given to you by your coordinator)
- ☐ Hard copy of your report
- ☐ Hard copy of your signed risk assessment
- ☐ All loose parts labelled.
- ☐ No valuables attached.

Project delivered onsite: Wednesday 5 August

SASTA OLIPHANT SCIENCE AWARDS

Multimedia

The information super highway includes video, computer interactives and web pages.

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Multimedia entry:

- **HAS A STRONG SCIENCE MESSAGE AND ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Has an impact on viewers and communicates ideas clearly.
- Will show creativity, originality and resourcefulness.
- Demonstrates good technique and quality of production.

Rules for Multimedia:

- A group of up to 3 students can complete a Multimedia entry. The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry.
- The multimedia production must be the student's own work.
- **A written report must include (dependant on which type of entry you have):**
  - The URL for the website. Please do not make any changes to your pages between submitting your entry and the Presentation Ceremony.
  - A list of any software you used to create your video, interactive or web page
  - A bibliography that contains all the sources of information you researched in creating your multimedia project. This includes all the books, websites, magazines and any people you have interviewed. If you quote directly from a source, you must use quotation marks and include a reference to the source of the quote.
  - A discussion of any problems you had and how you overcame the problems.
  - Acknowledgment of any assistance you had with editing, graphics, design or technical help with equipment or software used. (Students may get help with filming their video, but the core of the creation of the video must be the student's own work.)
  - **Acknowledgement of any AI tools used in preparing your entry, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**
  - The report length depends on your year level:
    - Year R–2: less than 100 words;
    - Year 3–4 and 5–6: approximately 250 words;
    - Year 7–8, 9–10, 11–12: do not exceed 500 words.
  - **New for 2026:** If your project includes any copyrighted material, it must be properly referenced in your report. Projects containing copyrighted material will not be displayed on the OSA website.
- Technical specifications:
  - A video must be uploaded to YouTube as an unlisted video - link provided on a word document and submitted via the online submission process.
  - Videos should run for no longer than 3 minutes.
  - Web pages must be readable by current web browsers available on PC and Mac and include NO plug-ins other than those normally distributed with the browser.
  - Web pages must be online - link provided on a word document and submitted online.
  - PowerPoint and interactives must be submitted via the online submission process.
  - Any program or platform used to create your project must not require an account or log in to view it.
  - Projects will be viewed through Google Slides. Please note that some PowerPoint features may not work correctly in this format.
  - Where possible, include a PDF version of your presentation as a backup to ensure judges can access the content if formatting issues occur.

In presenting your Multimedia entry (online submission ONLY):

- Cover sheet with your Student ID details (your Coordinator will give you this)
- Multimedia Formats: video **(via a URL to an unlisted YouTube video)** or PowerPoint (ppt).
  - **mp4 video files will NOT be accepted** (due to the size and difficulty uploading to the website)
  - Videos uploaded to YouTube must be set to unlisted or public otherwise judges are unable to view them.
- Electronic copy of your written report (pdf or Word)

For full details on electronic submission, see https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission

KEY DATES:

- **Friday 5 June - Sunday 28 June:** Multimedia entry submitted online.

Multimedia Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- ☐ Written report including:
  - ☐ URL to website or YouTube video
  - ☐ A list of any software used
  - ☐ A bibliography
  - ☐ A discussion of any problems you had and how you overcame them
  - ☐ Acknowledgment of any assistance received
  - ☐ Acknowledgement of any AI tools used
  - ☐ Adheres to the report length requirements
    - Year R–2: less than 100 words
    - Year 3–4 and 5–6: approximately 250 words;
    - Year 7–8, 9–10, 11–12: do not exceed 500 words.
- ☐ Video is **no longer than 3 minutes**.
- ☐ A video must be uploaded to YouTube as an unlisted video (.mp4 files will not be accepted)
- ☐ Web pages are readable by current web browser available on PC and Mac and includes NO plug-ins other than those normally distributed with the browser
- ☐ Web pages must be published and accessible online

Online submission only

- ☐ Electronic copy of your written report (PDF or Word document)
- ☐ PowerPoint or interactive (if applicable)
- ☐ Website URL link provide on a word document (if applicable) - please ensure the video is unlisted and not private
- ☐ Cover sheet (given to you by your coordinator)

Project submitted online: between Friday 5 June - Sunday 28 June

SASTA OLIPHANT SCIENCE AWARDS

Photography

Proudly sponsored by the South Australian Museum

Government of South Australia

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

Capture the moment forever.
Tell your story through photography.

2026 Photography titles:

- **Animals in Nature** – *Photograph animals in their natural environment, without human interference.*
- **Close Encounters: Macro Photography of Nature's Details** – *Zoom in on nature's tiny textures and patterns–like leaves, bark, or insects.*
- **Carbon Catchers** - *Trees, moss, seaweed-capture nature's carbon catchers.*
- **Against the Odds: Plants in Tough Places** - *Photograph plants growing in surprising or resilient places.*
- **Everyday Climate Solutions** - *Photograph people using or creating ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions–like cycling, composting, using clean energy, or designing something sustainable. Your caption should explain the science behind how this action helps reduce CO_2 or supports a healthier planet.*
- **Nature's Architects** - *Snap webs, nests, shells or hives–nature's own construction.*
- **Water Works** - *Photograph water in motion - rain, rivers, droplets or waves.*
- **Life at Ground Level** - *Explore what's happening at soil level - bugs, fungi, sprouts or roots.*
- **Wind at Work** - *Show the wind in action - moving leaves, flags, or flying kites.*
- **From the Shadows** - *Photograph life in low light, shade, or early morning sun.*

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Photography entry:

- **HAS A STRONG SCIENCE MESSAGE AND ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Will communicate ideas clearly, each photograph expressing a single idea within the topic chosen.
- Will contain good quality photographs.
- Will have the photographs displayed effectively
- Will show creativity and originality.

Rules for Photography:

- The photographs must be inspired by one of the titles listed above.
- A group of up to 3 students can complete a Photography entry. The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry.
- The photography and ideas expressed must be the student's own work.
- The photography can be either black and white or colour.
- A maximum of six photographs / images can be used per entry.
- Each photograph must be no larger than 25 cm × 20 cm.
- The photographs must be mounted on a single sheet of lightweight card no larger than 51 cm × 65 cm. **No corflute, glass, wood or other heavy frame or backing is permitted.**
- The entry must be flat. (No three-dimensional material attached).
- Each photograph must have a caption or short statement, linking it to the title.
- All production work must be done by the student including any special effects or manipulation (Commercial developing may be used).
- Any type of camera may be used.
- You must include a written statement which includes:
    - The make and model of the camera used.
    - The developing/editing/printing process used.
    - Any special effects or manipulations used.
    - Acknowledgment of any help or **any AI tools used, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**.
    - As a guideline, a statement of around 100 words is suggested.

Rules for photographing animals:

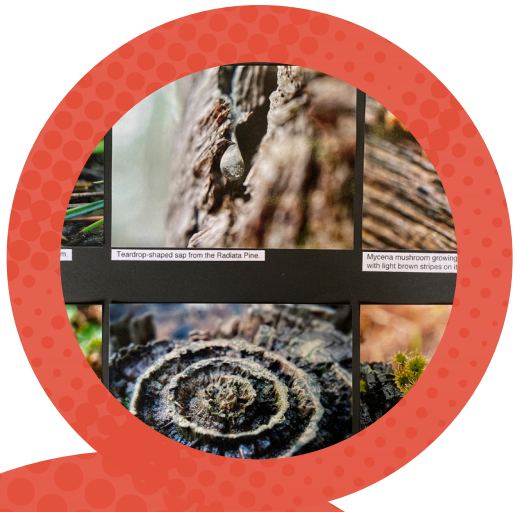
- When photographing in a natural setting, ensure that you eliminate any impact that your presence has on the subject and its surrounding environment.
- You must not do anything to injure or distress an animal or damage its habitat in an attempt to secure an image.

In presenting your photography entry:

- You must attach your written statement about the camera and processing **to the back of the entry.**
- You must securely attach your Identification Label (your Coordinator will give you this label) **to the back of your entry.**

KEY DATES:

- **Wednesday 5 August:** Photography entry delivered onsite



Photography Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- ☐ Project is inspired by one of the topic titles listed – **clearly identified**
- ☐ No more than six photographs / images included
- ☐ Each photograph is no larger than 25cm x 20cm
- ☐ The photographs are mounted on a single sheet of lightweight card no larger than 51cm x 65cm. **No corflute, glass, wood or other heavy frame or backing is permitted.**
- ☐ Each photograph has a caption or short statement, linking it to the title
- ☐ Written statement attached to the back of the entry, of around 100 words which includes:
  - The make and model of the camera used.
  - The developing / editing / printing process used.
  - Any special effects or manipulations used.
  - Acknowledgment of any help or any AI tools used, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy.

Onsite delivery only

- ☐ Identification label stuck to the **back of your entry** (given to you by your coordinator)

Project delivered onsite: Wednesday 5 August

Posters

A picture tells a thousand words, so have your say.

2026 Poster titles:

- **Natural History Illustration** (hand drawn only) - *Draw and label a detailed plant, animal or fossil like a scientific illustrator.*
- **Clues from Ancient Life** - *How do fossils help us understand what life was like millions of years ago? What they reveal about Earth's history, climate and evolution?*
- **Everyday Chemistry: Good or Gross?** - *Explore the chemistry of everyday substances—some helpful, some harmful.*
- **Algae Alert: When Blooms Become Dangerous** - *Show how toxic algae blooms form, and why they matter for ecosystems and health.*
- **Space Watchers: How We Use Satellites to Study Earth** - *Visualise how satellites track weather, climate and disasters from space.*
- **Waste Not** - *Show creative science solutions for reusing, recycling or reducing waste.*
- **Pollinators in Action** - *Show how pollinators like bees, birds and insects help plants grow—and why we need to protect them to keep ecosystems and food systems healthy*
- **Harvesting Tomorrow** - *Explore how science is helping us design smarter farms—using less water, protecting soil, reducing emissions, and producing food in new ways.*
- **Carbon in Balance** - *Show how carbon moves through plants, animals, air and soil—and explain how greenhouse gases are disrupting the balance and warming the planet.*
- **Under the Surface** - *Explore soil, roots, fungi and life below ground.*

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Poster entry:

- **HAS A STRONG SCIENCE MESSAGE AND ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Communicates a single idea clearly.
- Shows good quality artistic skills and imagination, giving the poster visual appeal.
- Uses minimal words (try using fewer than 25 words). The judges will favour entries that give a visual message without the use of a lot of text.
- Can be easily read from a distance.

Rules for Posters:

- The poster must be on one of the titles listed above. Please ensure this title is clearly identified on your entry.
- The poster must be the work of one person (No group entries or unacknowledged assistance by an adult).
- **New for 2026:** The poster must be original and the student's own work. Students may use reference materials for inspiration, but copying text, images, or graphics directly from other sources is not permitted.
- The poster must be original.
- The poster must be on lightweight card no larger than 51cm x 65cm.
- **No corflute, glass, wood or other heavy frame or backing permitted.**
- The poster must not weigh more than 200g.
- The poster may be a collage of other pictures or made using computer assisted graphics. **All images and graphics need to be attributed.**
- The poster must be flat. (No three-dimensional material attached).
- **New for 2026: You must include a short written statement (around 100 words) outlining:**
  - The message the poster is intended to convey
  - Acknowledgement of reference materials
  - **Any AI prompts used, as per the Oliphant Science Awards AI policy**

In presenting your poster entry:

- You must securely attach your Identification Label (your Coordinator will give you this label) **to the back of your entry.**

KEY DATES:

- **Wednesday 5 August:** Poster entry delivered onsite

Posters Project Checklist

Individual project only

Elements of your project

- ☐ Project has used one of the topic titles listed and that topic is **clearly identified** on your poster.
- ☐ Is on a lightweight card no larger than 51cm x 65cm and weighs no more than 200g. **No corflute, glass, wood or other heavy frame or backing permitted.**
- ☐ A short written statement (around 100 words) outlining:
  - The message the poster is intended to convey
  - Acknowledgement of reference materials
  - Any AI prompts used

Onsite delivery only

- ☐ Identification label stuck to the **back of your entry** (given to you by your coordinator)
- ☐ Written statement stuck to the **back of your entry**

Project delivered onsite: Wednesday 5 August

Programming, Apps & Robotics (including electronic games)

Write the instructions; be in control.

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Programming, Apps & Robotics entry:

- **HAS ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT, AND USES SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES TO GET RESULTS.**
- Serves a scientific purpose.
- Is engaging and interesting to use.
- Is user friendly and almost impossible to crash.

Computers are programmed to help scientists with their work. Programs can:

- *Simulate behaviour using scientific understanding of interactions*
  Predicting the effects from a change is often difficult. Scientists might write mathematical equations of the many parts involved. They can then enter a virtual world where they can change some parts and the computer will work out the effect. The computer will also show the results in tables or graphs. Simulations are used instead of very long, difficult or dangerous experiments.
- *Control robots*
  Robots use sensors to get information and then respond to a change. For example a robot could sense the temperature in a glasshouse and open or close vents to suit the growing plants. Some robots move around and can sense their surroundings. They might change their behaviour depending on what they sense. Robots could be used in search and rescue situations to locate people and send a signal of where they are.
- *Model or help to demonstrate a scientific idea or principle*
  Programs can be written to show scientific concepts, or to model or simulate real life situations that are difficult to measure directly. Also, seeing interactive graphics can often make things easier to understand.
- A successful entry must do more than just follow a fixed sequence of steps. It should be innovative, and should show how the application could be applied to a practical application, or help solve a problem.

Rules for Programming, Apps & Robotics:

- Entries for all year levels may program either a robot, a computer program, app or electronic game.
- A group of up to three students can complete a Programming, Apps & Robotics entry. (The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry)
- All entries will be judged on the elements that are the students' own work, and not on the robot itself, or the computer language that has been applied. The judges will place high value on the originality of the entry and the potential wider practical applications that it may address.
- Programming, Apps & Robotics entries may use a wide range of programming tools or languages. Common tools include Scratch, Blockly, Microsoft MakeCode, micro:bit, Python, Arduino, MIT App Inventor, Unity, LEGO robotics, Sphero, Kookaberry, or similar. Programming and Apps entries may use recognised programming languages such as Java, C++, Fortran, or Visual Basic.
- Your entry must include a written report that includes the following:
  - The aim of the entry, and its scientific purpose and potential applications
  - The type of robot or computer/device required to run the program
  - Clear instructions on loading or using the entry
  - A hard copy of the program and an explanation of what the sections of the program do
  - Acknowledgment of any external support provided to the entry
  - A bibliography that acknowledges relevant sources of information.
  - **Acknowledgement of any AI tools used in preparing your entry, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**

In presenting your Programming, Apps & Robotics entry:

- **An electronic copy of your report / programming details MUST be uploaded to the Oliphant Science Awards website between 5 - 28 June.** Details can be found here: https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission
  - Please be sure to include any links to your program / app or videos / photos of your robot in your report for judges to review. Students are asked to include an email address where they can be contacted directly by the judges should they require any further information.
- You will need to book an appointment time online for **Saturday 25 July** (booking available in June)
- **You are required to bring your own entry with you for judging - this includes your own device / laptop and WiFi** to demonstrate your entry to the judges and discuss its features and uses.
- *If you're unable to attend judging day, there is no other opportunity for your project to be judged.*

KEY DATES:

- **Friday 5 - 28 June:** report submitted online
- **Saturday 25 July:** judging day

Programming, Apps & Robotics Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- [ ] Written report including:
- [ ] · The aim of the entry, and its scientific purpose and potential applications
- [ ] · The type of robot or computer/device required to run the program
- [ ] · Clear instructions on loading or using the entry
- [ ] · A hard copy of the program and an explanation of what the sections of the program do
- [ ] · Acknowledgment of any external support provided to the entry
- [ ] · Acknowledgment of any AI tools used
- [ ] · A bibliography that acknowledges relevant sources of information.

Online submission (required)

- [ ] Electronic copy of your report / programming details (PDF, Word document or .jpeg) – including links to your program/app or videos/photos of your robot in action
- [ ] Cover sheet (given to you by your coordinator)

Project submitted online: between Friday 5 June - Sunday 28 June

Appointment (required)

- [ ] Book an appointment for judging online when they open from 5 June - 22 July
- [ ] At the appointment **you are required to bring your own entry with you for judging** – this includes your own device / laptop to demonstrate your project and you need to ensure you have internet access if needed – *WIFI access will not be provided for you.*

Judging day: Saturday 25 July

- If you have not submitted any documents for your project when required to do so, you will not be required to make an appointment for judging.
- **Note, if you are not able to make it to judging day, there is no other opportunity to have your project judged.** We recommend you enter the same project the following year.

Science Writing

Proudly sponsored by Flinders University

Budding journalists and science writers, here is your chance to inspire, impress and inform your readers.

2026 Science Writing titles:

- **Seeds of Science: How Plants Shape Our Lives** - *What if the next big breakthrough came from something growing in your garden? Explore how seeds and plants feed us, heal us, and inspire technology that's changing our world.*
- **Science for Peace: Small Discoveries, Big Changes** - *Can a simple invention change the course of a community—or a country? Investigate how science is helping build a more peaceful, fair and sustainable world.*
- **Inventing Tomorrow: Climate Solutions for a Cooler Planet** - *From cutting-edge farming to student-led inventions—how can we reduce CO_2 and fight climate change? Research bold ideas and share your own vision for a cooler, greener future.*
- **Next Giant Leaps: From NASA to Life Beyond Earth** - *How has space science—from NASA's past missions to future Mars plans—changed our world? Investigate key milestones in space exploration and what we're learning to help humans live beyond Earth.*
- **From Trash to Treasure** - *Can rubbish really power homes, build furniture or grow food? Investigate how science is turning waste into valuable new solutions—and what the future of waste could look like.*
- **If We Could Cure It: The Promise and Ethics of Stem Cells** - *Twenty years after the first breakthroughs in stem cell science, how close are we to curing paralysis, blindness or heart disease? Explore how stem cells work, what they could fix, and the ethical questions they raise about access, limits and the future of medicine.*
- **Chemical Reactions That Changed the World** - *How did a handful of molecules lead to life-saving vaccines, cleaner air—or explosions in the sky? Discover the chemistry behind world-changing breakthroughs.*
- **Bloom Trouble: What Toxic Algae Tells Us About Water Health** - *When do algae become dangerous? Investigate South Australia's own algal bloom crisis and what science reveals about water quality, climate, and keeping ecosystems safe.*
- **Listening to Country: What First Nations Science Can Teach Us** - *How do First Nations peoples read land, water, stars and seasons? Explore the deep science behind Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and how they guide sustainable living today.*
- **My Backyard Biosphere** - *You don't have to go far to find wild science—sometimes it's under a log or in a schoolyard pond. Explore your own small habitat and describe what lives there, what it needs, and how it all fits together.*
- **Science as a Human Endeavour** (YEAR 11–12 LEVEL ONLY)

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Science Writing entry:

- **IS WELL RESEARCHED AND HAS ACCURATE SCIENCE CONTENT.**
- Will communicate ideas clearly.
- Will be original, innovative and your own work.
- Will have accurate punctuation and spelling.
- Will have a References section that acknowledges all sources of information (for students in Years 7–8, 9–10 and 11–12, this will include in-text referencing).

Rules for Science Writing Entries:

- You must write on one of the titles listed above. Please ensure the title is clearly identified on your entry.
- The Science Writing entry must be the work of one person (no group entries).
- You must include a reference list that contains all the sources of information that you used. This includes all books, websites, magazines, and any people you have interviewed.
- Appropriate "in-text" referencing is expected for students in Years 7–8, 9–10 and 11–12.

- If you quote directly from a source, you must use quotation marks and include a reference to the source of the quote.
- ***AI Tools are not permitted for any aspect of science writing.***
- Science Writing can be in a number of different genres:
    - Recount
    - Narrative
    - Explanation
    - Discussion
    - Response
    - Information Report
    - Procedure
    - Persuasion/Exposition
    - Description
    - Comic (graphic writing)
    - Infographic
- You may include pictures and graphic illustrations. However, if illustrations or pictures are copied you must include a reference next to the illustration or picture.
- Write or word-process your entry yourself. If there are special reasons for using help in typing or editing, then this help must be acknowledged after your reference list.
- The length of your Science Writing entry depends on your year level:
    - Year R–2: do not exceed 200 words;
    - Year 3–4 and 5–6: do not exceed 800 words;
    - Year 7–8, 9–10, 11–12: do not exceed 1500 words.
    - **A word count must be included on your entry** (please note: titles, labels and referencing are not included in the word count). *There can be up to 10% tolerance of the word limit*

In presenting your Science Writing entry (online submission ONLY):

The following documents will need to be uploaded for your project:

- Cover sheet with your Student ID details (your Coordinator will give you this)
- Electronic copy of your science writing entry.
- Entries will be accepted as PDF or Word documents only. We cannot guarantee judges will be able to access any other file types.

For full details on electronic submission, see: https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission

KEY DATES:

- **Friday 5 June - 28 June:** entry submitted online

Commemorative Science Writing Topic

80 years since the discovery of Spriggina

The Oliphant Science Awards, in partnership with the Flinders Ranges Ediacara Foundation, present a special commemorative Science Writing Topic celebrating 80 years since one of South Australia's most extraordinary scientific discoveries.

FLINDERS RANGES EDIACARA FOUNDATION

2026 Commemorative Science Writing Topic

Discovering Spriggina: South Australia's Window into Life's Beginnings

Back in 1946, Spriggina was uncovered in the Flinders Ranges. Imagine the excitement of that moment. Why was this discovery such a big deal for South Australia, and how did it change what scientists know about the first animals on Earth?

In the rugged hills of the Flinders Ranges, geologist Reg Sprigg discovered Spriggina, a tiny fossil that would transform our understanding of life's earliest beginnings. This ancient creature, preserved in rocks over half a billion years old, provided the first evidence of complex animal life from the Ediacaran Period—long before dinosaurs walked the Earth.

Through this topic, students are invited to explore the science behind fossils, geology, and evolution, while reflecting on how one South Australian discovery reshaped the global story of life on Earth.

Our Partner in Discovery

The Flinders Ranges Ediacara Foundation works to protect and share the story of the Ediacaran fossils found across the Flinders Ranges. By supporting education, research, and conservation, the Foundation helps ensure these remarkable windows into our planet's ancient past are preserved for generations to come. Learn more at https://ediacarafoundation.org/

Science Writing Project Checklist

Individual project only

Elements of your project

- ☐ Project has been written on one of the topic titles listed
- ☐ Reference list is included
- ☐ Appropriate “in-text” referencing (Years 7-12)
- ☐ If there are special reasons for using help in typing or editing, they are acknowledged after your reference list
- ☐ Word count **must** be included
- ☐ Adheres to length requirements
  - Year R–2: do not exceed 200 words
  - Year 3–4 and 5–6: do not exceed 800 words;
  - Year 7–8, 9–10, 11–12: do not exceed 1500 words.
- ☐ No AI tools have been used in any aspect of the entry

Online submission only

- ☐ Cover sheet (given to you by your coordinator)
- ☐ Electronic copy of your science writing entry (PDF or Word document)

Project submitted online: between Friday 5 June - Sunday 28 June

SASTA OLIPHANT SCIENCE AWARDS

Science Investigations *(formerly Scientific Inquiry)*

Proudly sponsored by Wine Australia

Wine Australia

Science Investigations build our understanding of how the world works, and how science makes a difference to our everyday lives. Wow – your investigation could change the world!

A successful SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Science Investigation entry:

- Will follow a scientific method of investigation.
- Will communicate ideas clearly.
- Will be an original investigation.
- Will include evidence of reading on the topic.
- Science Investigations that show a hypothesis is not supported are just as likely to win as Science Investigations that show a hypothesis is supported. (You will not know the answer until you do the work!).

Rules for SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Science Investigation:

- A group of up to 3 students can complete a Science Investigations entry. The highest year level in the group will determine the year category of the entry.
- The investigation must be your own work.
- If you plan to use animals in your investigation, then you must comply with animal ethics requirements. Check with your science teacher before you start.
- You must keep a science journal or logbook containing dates for your on-going ideas, raw data, notes and a **completed** Risk Assessment for Science Investigations Form (remember your science teacher needs to sign this form).
- **Your scientific report should include the following sections:**
  - Questioning and predicting: What is the question that you are investigating? What do you predict will happen?
  - Planning and conducting: Explain why you chose the particular method for your investigation. What are the possible variables in your investigation? Which variable will you change? Which variable will you measure? Is your investigation a 'fair test'? Describe all the steps of your investigation so that someone else could do it again exactly as you did it.
  - Equipment and materials: List all the equipment and materials that you used in your investigation. List any possible risks that may result from the investigation, and describe how they were controlled.
  - Processing and analysing data and information: Present the measurements or observations from your investigation in suitable ways. Depending on the year level, these may include tables, graphs and photographs or sketches. Analyse your results. What patterns and relationships can be seen in the data? What conclusions can be made? Do your results support your predictions?
  - Evaluating: How could your investigation be improved? How could your findings be useful to others? What other related questions could be further investigated?
  - Communicating: Present your science investigation using scientific terms where this is appropriate. Represent your findings in a number of ways. These may include various texts, charts, graphs, tables, and may include the use of digital technologies. Relate your investigation to any research that you have done from other sources. Your report must include a References section containing all the sources of information you researched (all the books, websites, magazines and any people you have talked to). If you quote directly from a source, you must use quotation marks and include a reference to the source of the quote.
  - **Acknowledgement of any AI tools used in preparing your entry, in line with the Oliphant Science Awards AI Policy**
- The expected detail in addressing the above criteria depends on your year level.
- A word count **must** be included on your report (please note: headings, titles, figure captions, tables, references and logbook / journal are not included in the word count).
  - Year R–6: do not exceed 1000 words;
  - Year 7–12: do not exceed 2000 words.

There can be up to 10% tolerance of the word limit

In presenting your Science Investigation entry (online submission ONLY):

The following documents will need to be uploaded for your project:

- Cover sheet with your Student ID details (your Coordinator will give you this)
- Electronic copy of your scientific report in either A4 'scientific article' style, or maximum size A2 'scientific poster' style
  - Entries will be accepted as PDF, Word documents or an image (.jpg or .png) only. We cannot guarantee judges will be able to access any other file types.
- **Completed & signed** risk assessment form
- **If the risk assessment, science journal/logbook and report are not submitted, your project will not be considered for judging.**
- Electronic copy of your journal / logbook

For full details on electronic submission, see https://bit.ly/OSAOnlineSubmission

KEY DATES:

- **Friday 5 June - 28 June:** entry submitted online

Science Investigations Project Checklist

Elements of your project

- [ ] Scientific report including the following sections:
- [ ] · Questioning and predicting
- [ ] · Planning and conducting
- [ ] · Equipment and materials
- [ ] · Processing and analysing data and information
- [ ] · Evaluating
- [ ] · Communicating using scientific terms and methods
- [ ] · Word count included
- [ ] · Adheres to length requirements
  - Year R–6: do not exceed 1000 words
  - Year 7-12: do not exceed 2000 words
- [ ] Journal / Logbook
- [ ] · dates for your on-going ideas
- [ ] · raw data
- [ ] · notes
- [ ] · completed risk assessment (signed by your science teacher or Oliphant coordinator)
- [ ] · Acknowledgement of any AI tools used

Online submission only

- [ ] Cover sheet (given to you by your coordinator)
- [ ] Electronic copy of your scientific report in either A4 'scientific article' style, or maximum size A2 'scientific poster' style (PDF, Word document or image (.jpeg or .png))
- [ ] Risk Assessment (must be signed by your science teacher or Oliphant coordinator)
- [ ] Journal/Logbook (PDF or Word document)

Project submitted online: between Friday 5 June - Sunday 28 June

SASTA OLIPHANT SCIENCE AWARDS

Sponsor Prizes

Platinum Sponsor Prizes (more details on pages 31-32)

Department for Education South Australian Young Scientist Awards (R–4, 5–8, 9–12)

Rowe Scientific Emerging Talent Awards

Rowe Scientific Regional Science & Engineering Awards

Category Naming Rights Sponsor Prizes

Australian Institute of Energy Prizes (R–12)
For the best entry at each year level with a sustainable generation and uses of energy theme.

Flinders University Sustainability Prize (7–12)
For the most outstanding entry covering a sustainability issue in South Australia.

Flinders University Fearless Science Prize (7–12)
For the most outstanding entry looking at a big problem we face, especially in South Australia.

Flinders University Regional Student Prize (R–12)
For the most outstanding entry from a student in a regional area.

SA Museum Photography Prizes (R-4, 5-8, 7-12)
For the best Photography entry including natural fauna, flora or natural land/sky formations and must have been taken in the Australia/New Zealand bioregion.

Wine Australia Prizes (R-4, 5-8 & 9-12)

For the most outstanding entries in Models and Inventions or Science Investigations that highlight food chemistry

Gold Sponsor Prizes

CO_2 and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Award (R-6, 7-12)

For the most outstanding student entry in each category where the project directly addresses reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Adelaide University Prizes (R-6, 7-12)

More details to come.

Commemorative Science Writing Prizes

Commemorative Science Writing Award (R-6, 7-12)

For the best Science Writing Project on the commemorative science writing topic: *Discovering Spriggina: South Australia's Window into Life's Beginnings*

Silver Sponsor Prizes

Catholic Education SA Primary Schools Prize
Awarded to two primary schools that have the highest number of winning entries.

Bronze Sponsor Prizes

Australian Institute of Physics Prize (R–12)
For the best student project with a physics theme.

Robinson Aerospace Prize for Student Projects in Space Science & Technology (7-12)
For the most outstanding student projects demonstrating creativity, innovation, and the application of engineering or design principles in space technology.

Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI) Prize (R–8)
For the most outstanding entry with a chemistry theme.

All Sponsor Prizes listed are correct at time of publishing but may be subject to change.

Government of South Australia

Department for Education

Department for Education

proudly sponsor

South Australian Young Scientist Awards
R–4, 5–8 and 9–12

1st prize	$500 cash
2nd prize	$250 cash
3rd prize	$100 cash
4th prize	$50 cash

The Department for Education has been a sponsor of the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards since their inception in 1981, and is delighted to continue this arrangement as a Platinum Sponsor in 2026.

The SASTA Oliphant Science Awards exemplify the inquiry based approach to the teaching and learning of Science that is so important in engaging our students, and in supporting the development of their scientific understanding and processes that leads to improved scientific literacy.

For many young people their experience of science at school sets a pattern that lasts throughout life. The Department for Education is strongly committed to each and every student having the opportunity to experience the joy of scientific discovery, and to apply their natural curiosity to their world. All students are supported in developing the scientific knowledge, understandings and skills to make informed decisions about local, national, global issues, and to participate, if they so wish, in science related careers.

The Department for Education has a major role in the South Australian Government Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Skills strategy. Through our own Department for Education STEM Strategy we are ensuring all educators connect with the latest in teaching practices and the wide range of programs available to support their work.

The Department for Education acknowledges the role that SASTA, through its many volunteers, plays in engaging so many students in Science inquiry and in the promotion of scientific literacy, and is proud to sponsor and support this important project.

All Sponsor Prizes listed are correct at time of publishing but may be subject to change.

Rowe Scientific

Rowe Scientific are proud sponsors of the Oliphant Science Awards and are keen to promote greater interest by students in all aspects of science, with a view to that interest influencing students' future career choices. The Rowe Scientific Regional Science & Engineering Awards are a new initiative and further information and criteria can be found below.

Rowe Scientific Emerging Talent Awards

Awarded to the two best Primary and two best Secondary entries from regional or disadvantaged schools*. Each recipient will be awarded $500 cash.

Rowe Scientific Regional Science & Engineering Awards

- **Entry is open to students in remote and regional schools** (students from metro disadvantaged schools* may also enter)
- **Entry in Models & Inventions and Science Investigations categories only**
  - Entries will be judged in both the overall competition and the Regional Science & Engineering Awards.
- **Entries must be submitted electronically** (see Models & Inventions and Science Investigations category pages for more information about rules and electronic submission)
- **Please ensure you include a photo of your Models & Inventions entry in your report**

**Category 1 & 2 schools (Index of Educational Disadvantage by school) or ICSEA less than 1000 (Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage - search school name for ICSEA value)*

All Sponsor Prizes listed are correct at time of publishing but may be subject to change.

Important Registration Information for School Coordinators

- Distribute the relevant information to students; Registration Form, Student Information, Conditions of Entry, Project Checklists, Category Information & Rules and Risk Assessment Forms if submitting Science Investigations or Models & Inventions.
- Set a date for Registration Forms to be completed and returned to you (**prior to Sunday 17 May**).
- Completed Registration Forms can be submitted:
    - Online; Registration details can be submitted online using your email and unique login password in your members section at www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au For further information or login details please contact SASTA on 8354 0006 prior to the closing date, Sunday 17 May. Please ensure that you have registered / re-registered as a coordinator prior to trying to enter your registrations.
- **Please note:** by submitting each student entry, the student(s) agree that a copy of their entry can be displayed at Open Day, on the SASTA websites or social media, or used in SASTA publications (see conditions of entry).
- Schools will be invoiced based on the number of entries that have been registered by 5pm on Wednesday 3 June using the fee schedule listed on Page 6. There will be no credit or refund should any of your students fail to submit their projects. However, should one (or more) student / project fail to enter, another student / project can be entered in its place.
- Cover sheets or identification labels must be securely attached to each entry (see Category Information for label positions). Ensure all parts are labelled clearly and include the Registration ID # (found on the Identification Label). Please contact SASTA before making any amendments to the label.
- Make note of the Key Dates for Registration, Delivery and Collection of entries.
- Schools who are registering more than 10 entries are asked to allocate one or more judges for one or multiple categories.

New Schools Incentive

Schools who have not participated in the past five years needing assistance for participation in the Oliphant Science Awards are eligible to apply for support.

Recipients of the New School Incentive will have the opportunity to enter the Oliphant Science Awards with the provision of up to $200.00 allocated towards entry project registration fees (this amount will be deducted directly from your school's project registrations and is not a cash prize, therefore any remaining funds will be forfeited). Both primary and secondary schools are eligible to apply for support.

If you meet the above criteria and have students interested in getting involved in SA's largest Science Competition in 2026, applications for the 2026 New Schools Incentive are now open.

Go to www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au to register by Sunday 22 March.

Country Schools Bursary

Country and regional schools needing assistance for participation in the Oliphant Science Awards are eligible to apply for the Country Schools Bursary.

To be eligible to apply for the Country Schools Bursary the school's postcode must fall within the Regional South Australia Definition. Please see the list of postcodes here.

Country Schools can apply for a bursary of up to $500 per school to support the cost of

- Student registration fees
- Courier / Transport costs for the delivery and pick up of projects
- Project materials

The bursary will be administered as a lump sum granted to the school to be spent at the OSA Coordinators discretion in support of student participation in the 2026 Oliphant Science Awards competition.

If you meet the above criteria and have students interested in getting involved in SA's largest Science Competition in 2026, applications for the 2026 Country Schools Bursary are now open!

Go to www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au to register by Sunday 22 March.

Regional Student Travel Fund

To assist the participation of country and regional students in the 2026 OSA Open Days and Presentation Ceremony, OSA Coordinators can apply for funding through the Regional Student Travel Fund.

To be eligible to apply for the Regional Student Travel Fund, the school's postcode must fall within the Regional South Australia Definition. Please see the list of postcodes here.

OSA Coordinators from regional or country schools can apply for up to $300 per school to support the cost of student entrants' travel to and from the OSA Open Days and the OSA Presentation Ceremony (where applicable).

The allocated funding will be administered as a lump sum granted to the school to be spent at the OSA Coordinators discretion in support of student travel only (The funding is not to be used to purchase Open Day tickets as these will already be discounted for OSA families).

If you meet the above criteria and have students interested in getting involved in SA's largest Science Competition in 2026, applications for the 2026 Regional Student Travel Fund are now open!

Go to www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au to register by Friday 5 June.

SASTA
South Australian Science Teachers Association

Oliphant Science Awards – Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Purpose

The Oliphant Science Awards (OSA) encourage creativity, originality and integrity in student work. This policy outlines how Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools may be used in competition entries. It is adapted from the South Australian Department for Education AI policy and the Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools.

Principles

- Student learning and originality must remain at the centre of all OSA entries.
- AI can be a valuable tool when used appropriately and transparently.
- All entries must reflect the student's own thinking, design and effort.
- Coordinators and parents play a role in supporting authenticity.

Acceptable Use of AI in Entries

Students may use AI in the following ways, provided use is acknowledged:

- Spelling and grammar support (e.g. checking a draft).
- Image editing tools for poster layout, design or formatting.
- Data analysis (e.g. handling large datasets in Science Investigations).
- Brainstorming ideas or generating prompts to guide their own work.

Unacceptable Use of AI in Entries

- Submitting AI-generated text, images, graphs or code as the student's own original work without acknowledgment.
- Using AI to complete the majority of the project, replacing the student's own research, design or analysis.
- Using AI in categories where the rules specifically prohibit it (e.g. Science Writing must be entirely student-authored).

Acknowledgement of AI Use

- Students must clearly acknowledge any AI tools used, including:
  - The tool/platform name (e.g. ChatGPT, Canva, DALL-E).
  - The purpose (e.g. "used to check spelling", "used to generate draft graphs", "used to analyse raw data").
- This acknowledgement should be included in the student's written statement or project log.

Coordinator Verification

- Coordinators are required to verify that entries are substantially the student's own work.

Judging Considerations

- Rubrics will be updated to ensure fair assessment of AI-assisted work.
- Judges will consider whether AI has been used transparently and appropriately.
- Over-reliance on AI, or lack of acknowledgement, may reduce a project's score or lead to disqualification.

Guidance to Students

- AI is a tool to support, not replace, your learning.
- Be transparent about your use of AI.
- Focus on demonstrating your own scientific thinking, creativity and problem-solving.

Supporting Students in the Oliphant Science Awards - A guide for parents and teachers

DO...	AVOID...
IDEA DEVELOPMENT	
Encourage your child/student to share and discuss their ideas. Offer open-ended or question-based feedback such as "Have you thought about ...?"	Pressuring your child/student to choose a particular idea or provide closed feedback such as "You need to do this ...".
Help your child/student think through the pros and cons of different options for their project.	Making the decisions for your child/student – encourage them to take the lead on their project.
ACKNOWLEDGING CONTRIBUTIONS	
Encourage your child/student to acknowledge all help and assistance they've received. Recognising the ideas, work and contributions of others is an important part of science.	Forgetting that projects must be the work of the child/student, and encourage them to acknowledge any support they've received
RESEARCH AND LEARNING	
Support your child/student to research and learn the science understandings or skills they need to complete their project.	Being the only source of knowledge or skills – encourage your child/student to explore other resources.
SAFETY AND ETHICS	
Assist your child/student with hazardous activities if necessary, particularly for younger participants.	Completing project activities for your child/student – step in only where safety or supervision is needed.
COMMUNICATION	
Encourage your child/student to present their project in their own words.	Editing or rewriting your child/student's work.
TIME MANAGEMENT	
Encourage your child/student to plan their work in stages and set their own goals.	Taking over their planning or leaving everything to the last minute.
TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES	
Guide your child/student to use reliable sources and appropriate tools.	Downloading or creating resources for them without their involvement.
PERSISTENCE AND RESILIENCE	
Encourage your child/student to keep trying if things don't work the first time.	Rushing to fix problems for them – give them space to try different solutions.
CELEBRATING EFFORT	
Celebrate the effort, learning and creativity shown in completing a project.	Making success only about winning an award – celebrate learning, creativity and effort too.

Appropriate acknowledgment of assistance: *It is anticipated that students may receive assistance in planning and developing their projects. Each entry is to clearly identify which aspects of the project were devised and carried out by the student alone and which aspects received assistance. The type and degree of any assistance should also be clearly noted. If the details of such assistance are not clearly stated, then the judges, in judging the entry, will use their discretion and experience of working with students in making judgments.*

For Students: Using AI in Your Oliphant Science Award Project

AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools like ChatGPT, Canva or image generators can be useful – but your project must always be **your own work.**

You can use AI to:

- Check your spelling or grammar
- Help with poster layout or design ideas
- Sort or analyse large sets of data (e.g. in Science Investigations)
- Brainstorm ideas to get you started

You cannot use AI to:

- Write your project for you
- Create images, text or graphs and claim them as your own
- Replace your own research, design or investigation
- Write entries in categories that must be 100% student-authored (e.g. Science Writing)

If you use AI:

- Say which tool you used (e.g. ChatGPT, Canva, Excel AI)
- Say what you used it for (e.g. "checked spelling", "generated a draft graph")
- Keep your explanation short – just a sentence or two is fine

Remember:

- The judges want to see your ideas and creativity.
- Using AI is okay – but hiding it is not.
- Your coordinator will confirm your work is mostly your own when your entry is submitted.

AI Use Checklist for OSA Entries

Before you submit your project, check the boxes that apply:

How I used AI (tick any that apply)

- ☐ I used AI to check spelling or grammar
- ☐ I used AI to help with layout or design (e.g. Canva, poster templates)
- ☐ I used AI to sort or analyse data (e.g. graphs, spreadsheets)
- ☐ I used AI to brainstorm ideas or prompts
- ☐ I did **NOT** use AI in this project

I did not use AI to...

- ☐ Write my project for me
- ☐ Create images, text or graphs and claim them as my own
- ☐ Replace my own research, design or investigation
- ☐ Write in a category where AI is not allowed (e.g. Science Writing)

My Acknowledgement

In my written statement or project notes I have included

- ☐ The name of the tool(s) I used (e.g. ChatGPT, Canva, Excel AI)
- ☐ A short explanation of what I used it for (e.g. "checked spelling")

OSA PROJECT REGISTRATION FORM

COMPLETE ONE FORM FOR EACH ENTRY. PLEASE ENSURE ALL FIELDS ARE COMPLETED.

Entry Fee $ _____ Date Paid / / 2026

School: _____ School ID #: _____

First name: _____ Surname: _____ ☐ M ☐ F ☐ X

Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do not want to disclose

Is this a Group Entry? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, add names below; maximum of 3 students per group)

First name: _____ Surname: _____ ☐ M ☐ F ☐ X

First name: _____ Surname: _____ ☐ M ☐ F ☐ X

Title of Project: _____

School OSA Coordinator's Name: _____

Year Level: ☐ R–2 ☐ 3–4 ☐ 5–6 ☐ 7–8 ☐ 9–10 ☐ 11–12

Category: ☐ Crystal Investigation ☐ Games ☐ Models & Inventions
☐ Multimedia ☐ Photography ☐ Posters
☐ Programming, Apps & Robotics ☐ Science Investigations ☐ Science Writing

Terms & Conditions

1. Information on how to enter, conditions of entry, category information and rules form part of these Terms and Conditions. Participation in this competition is deemed acceptance of these Terms and Conditions, as listed herein or at www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au.
2. SASTA reserves the right, at any time, to verify the validity of entries and entrants in its sole discretion and to disqualify any entrant who submits an entry that is not in accordance with these Terms and Conditions or who tampers with the entry process.
3. Entry is open only to South Australian School children in years Reception to 12.
4. By entering this competition, eligible entrants and their teachers acknowledge that they have received parental / guardian consent for the eligible entrant's name, school and photograph to be displayed on the SASTA Website and published in other nominated forms of print and media.
5. SASTA's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
6. Prizes, or any unused portion of a prize, are not transferable or exchangeable and cannot be taken as cash.
7. On issuing prizes SASTA and associated sponsors take no responsibility for prizes damaged, delayed, lost or stolen.
8. All entries unless otherwise stated must be collected as advised. Unclaimed entries will be destroyed following final advice of collection dates.
9. Except for any liability that cannot be excluded by law, SASTA (including its officers, employees and volunteers) excludes all liability (including negligence), for any personal injury; or any loss or damage (including loss of opportunity); whether direct, indirect, special or consequential, arising in any way out of the Competition, including, but not limited to, where arising out of the following: (a) any technical difficulties or equipment malfunction (whether or not under SASTA's control); (b) any theft, unauthorised access or third party interference; (c) any entry or prize claim that is late, lost, altered, damaged or misdirected (whether or not after their receipt by SASTA) due to any reason beyond the reasonable control of SASTA; (d) any variation in prize value to that stated in these Terms and Conditions; (e) any tax liability incurred by a winner or entrant; or (f) use of a prize including attendance at events included as part of the prize.
10. By submitting this entry you agree that your entry or a copy of your entry can be used and / or displayed by SASTA to promote the Oliphant Science Awards at events, on SASTA websites and social media, and used in part of full within the SASTA Journal or Newsletter publications.
11. SASTA is the South Australian Science Teachers Association incorporating the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Convenors, Committee and Volunteers.

☐ I / We certify that I / we have read and agree to the Terms & Conditions outlined for entry into the SASTA Oliphant Science Awards Competition. I / we also certify that the completed entry is my / our own work except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in a note attached to the entry.

Signed (Student 1) _____ Signed (Parent / Guardian 1) _____

Signed (Student 2) _____ Signed (Parent / Guardian 2) _____

Signed (Student 3) _____ Signed (Parent / Guardian 3) _____

OSA RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

for all entries in (✓) ☐ Models & Inventions and ☐ Science Investigations

This must be included with your report, logbook or entry. One form per entry.

STUDENT(S) NAME: _____ ID:_____

SCHOOL: _____

Activity: Give a brief outline of what you are planning to do.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are there possible risks? Consider the following:

- Chemical risks: Are you using chemicals? If so, check with your teacher that any chemicals to be used are on the approved list for schools. Check the safety requirements for their use, such as eye protection and eyewash facilities, availability of running water, use of gloves, a well-ventilated area or fume cupboard.
- Thermal risks: Are you heating things? Could you be burnt?
- Biological risks: Are you working with micro-organisms such as mould and bacteria?
- Sharps risks: Are you cutting things, and is there a risk of injury from sharp objects?
- Electrical risks: Are you using mains (240 volt) electricity? How will you make sure that this is safe? Could you use a battery instead? **Only batteries can be used for Models & Inventions entries*
- Radiation risks: Does your entry use potentially harmful radiation such as UV or lasers?
- Other hazards.

Also, if you are using other people as subjects in an investigation you must get them to sign a note consenting to be part of your experiment.

Risks	How I will control / manage the risk

(Attach another sheet if needed.)

Risk Assessment indicates that this activity can be safely carried out

RISK ASSESSMENT COMPLETED BY (student name(s)): _____

_____

SIGNATURE(S): _____

☐ By ticking this box, I/we state that my/our project adheres to the listed criteria for this Category.

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

OSA CRYSTAL INVESTIGATION
RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

This must be included with your report, logbook or entry. One form per entry.

STUDENT(S) NAME: _____ ID:_____

SCHOOL: _____

TEACHER/SUPERVISOR: _____ DATE:_____

Investigation Title: Crystal Investigation

1. Activity Description:

Students will grow crystals using a saturated solution of aluminium potassium sulfate (alum) or another approved salt. The process involves dissolving the salt in warm or hot water, allowing the solution to cool, and leaving it undisturbed over several days or weeks for crystal formation. Students will observe, record data, and handle crystals for analysis and display.

2. Hazards and Risks

Hazard	Possible Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Rating	Control Measures
Handling alum or other salts	Skin or eye irritation	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Wear safety glasses and gloves when preparing or handling solutions. Wash hands after use.
Heating water or solution	Burns or scalds	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Only heat water under teacher supervision. Use a hot water bath or kettle, not an open flame. Allow solutions to cool before handling.
Glassware or containers	Cuts from breakage	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Use plastic or borosilicate containers. Inspect glassware for cracks before use. Dispose of broken glass safely.
Spills and wet surfaces	Slips or falls	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Clean up spills immediately. Work in a dry, clear area.
Ingestion or inhalation of materials	Poisoning or irritation	Rare	Major	Medium	Never taste or inhale powders. Label containers clearly. Store solutions safely away from food areas.
Prolonged experiment duration	Contamination or mould growth	Possible	Minor	Low	Use lids or covers on containers. Dispose of old solutions safely. Moni-tor progress regularly.

3. Risk Evaluation

Overall risk: Low to Medium

Residual risk (after controls): Low

4. Control Measures Summary

- Conduct experiment under supervision.
- Use PPE: safety glasses, gloves, closed-toe shoes.
- Prepare only small quantities of solution.
- Ensure clear labelling of all containers.
- Clean workspace after each session.
- Dispose of leftover materials according to school chemical disposal guidelines.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Name	Responsibilities
Teacher/Supervisor	_____	Oversee preparation and safety, approve student plans.
Student/s	_____	Follow instructions, use PPE, report spills or incidents.