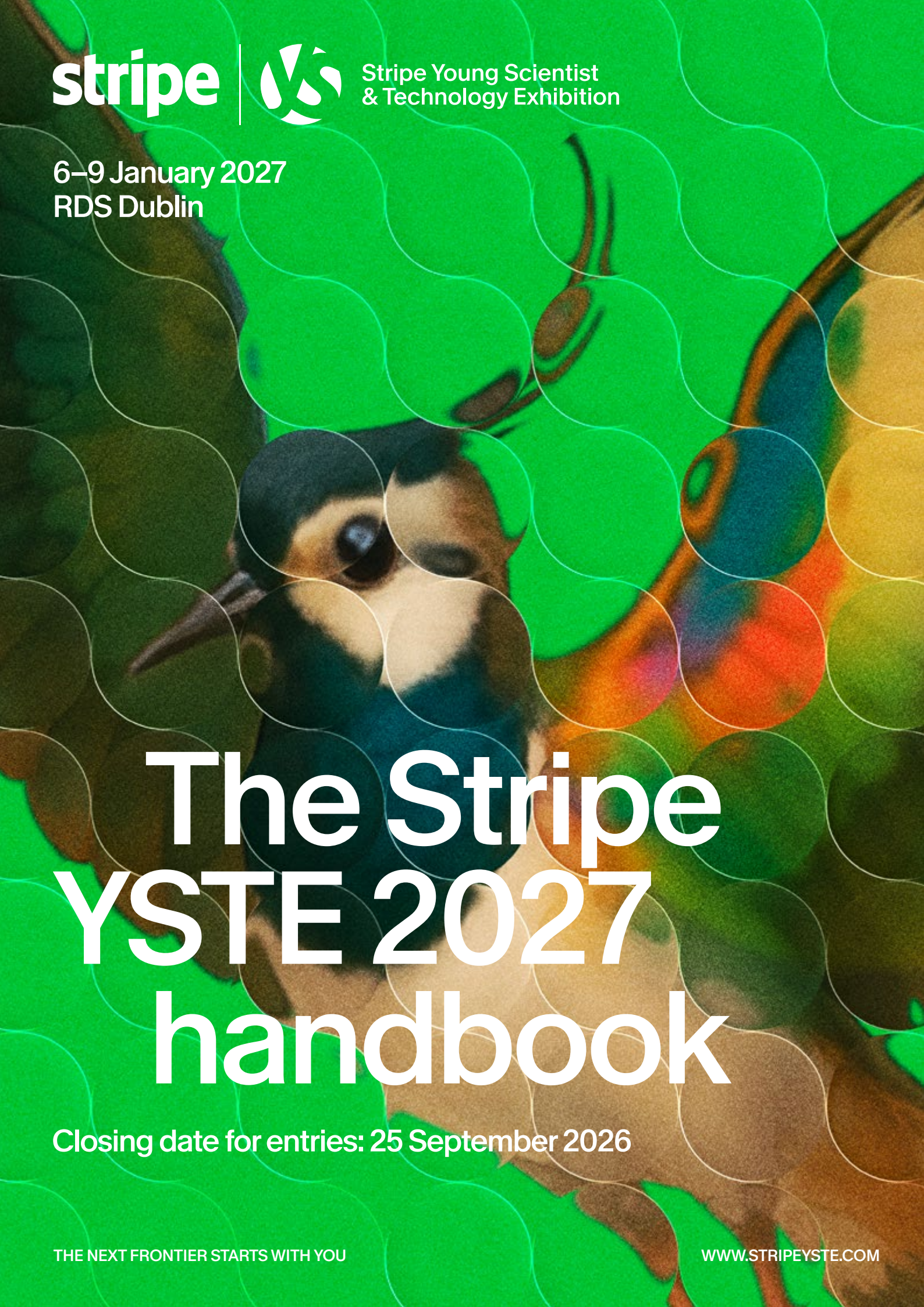
stripe | Stripe Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition

6–9 January 2027
RDS Dublin



The Stripe YSTE 2027 handbook

Closing date for entries: 25 September 2026

THE NEXT FRONTIER STARTS WITH YOU

WWW.STRIPEYSTE.COM

Contents

stripe

Introduction

About Stripe YSTE

Making progress since 1965.

The Stripe Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition was created by two UCD physics researchers: Rev. Dr. Tom Burke and Dr. Tony Scott. What began as their shared vision has evolved into one of Ireland's most celebrated stages for young scientific talent.

In 1963, while conducting research in Socorro, New Mexico in the US, Rev. Dr. Burke and Dr. Scott discovered the concept of student science fairs. These grassroots exhibitions encouraged hands-on scientific exploration and culminated in state fairs and national-level competitions. Inspired by this immersive, real-world approach, they envisioned something similar for Ireland: an event that would take science beyond textbooks and classrooms, showing students that it's exciting, it's within reach, and it's all around us.

They made their vision a reality in 1965, and the very first Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition was held in the Round Room of the Mansion House in Dublin. The first competition attracted 230 entries, with John Monahan from Kildare taking home the top prize. The following year, due to overwhelming interest, it moved to its now long-standing home at the RDS.

Over the decades, YSTE has grown in both size and scope. Early events involved individual student competitors, but in 1976, groups were introduced for the first time—one of many key milestones over the event's fascinating 60+ year history. However, what has remained the same is the YSTE spirit: a celebration of curiosity, a launchpad for young innovators, and a gathering place where teachers and students can discover a community united by a common passion.

Key milestones

1960

1963
The concept was born at a science fair in New Mexico

1965
First Young Scientist Exhibition was held at the Mansion House

1970

1972
Schools from Northern Ireland participated for the first time

1976
Group projects were introduced

1977
New range of categories introduced for projects

1980

1983
Participatedv in the International Science and Engineering Fair for the first time

1989
First year of the European Union Contest for Young Scientists, which Ireland has won 17 times (up to August 2024)

1990

1998
Aer Lingus stands down as sponsor after 33 years

1999
Sarah Flannery becomes first ESAT Young Scientist

2000

2001
First year of the Primary Science Fair

2010
BT Business Bootcamp launched

2014
50th anniversary of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition

2020

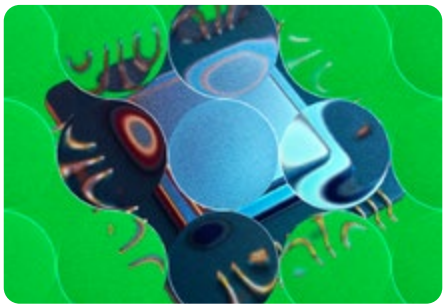
2021
First ever virtual exhibition, 7M+ views from 77 countries

2024
60th anniversary of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition

2026
Stripe becomes new sponsor

Why should I get involved with Stripe YSTE?

Explore the opportunities that await you:



Indulge your curiosity

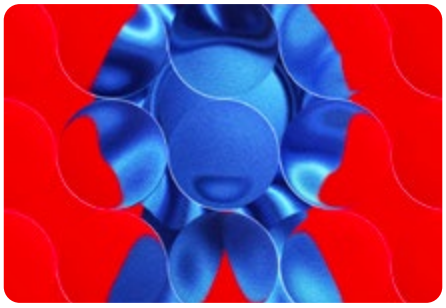
Run that big experiment. Prototype, fail fast, learn faster. Get real hands-on R&D experience, outside the classroom.

Show your pride

Carry your school's crest on the national stage, and maybe beyond. The winner will be the face of Ireland at the European Union Contest for Young Scientists.

Grow your tribe

The Stripe YSTE is an opportunity to swap notes with fellow coders, chemists, and thinkers—and to make new friendships that could last a lifetime



Take home big prizes

There are hundreds of awards to win and the overall winner will walk away with a €10,000 / £8,627 cash prize.

Stand out early

Get a great story for your CV or university application. Participation shows your dedication to STEM and independent, innovative thinking.

Earn academic accolades

Participation could pave the way to prestigious honours such as the Gaisce – The President's Award or The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.


stripe
Awards
and grants

Compete to take home hundreds of awards

Main awards

Stripe Young Scientist & Technologist(s) of the Year 2026

Individual or Group

- Stripe Young Scientist(s) of the Year Trophy (perpetual)
- Cheque for €10,000 / £8,627
- The chance to represent Ireland at the European Union Contest for Young Scientists

Best Individual or Best Group

- Stripe Trophy (perpetual)
- Cheque for €3,000 / £2,589

Runner-up Individual and Runner-up Group

- Stripe Trophy (perpetual)
- Cheque for €1,500 / £1,295

Please note: If the Stripe Young Scientist & Technologist of the Year is awarded to an Individual, a Best Group award will also be made. If the Stripe Young Scientist & Technologist(s) of the Year is awarded to a Group, a Best Individual award will also be made.

Compete to take home hundreds of awards

Category awards

There are 45 prizes for individuals and 45 prizes for group projects. The prizes take the form of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in Junior, Intermediate, and Senior sections of each of the 5 categories:

Prizes for individuals and groups in each category:

1st place

€500 / £432 for both individual and group projects

2nd place

€350 / £302 for both individual and group projects

3rd place

€250 / £216 for both individual and group projects

In the event of a tie in any category, the prize money will be split equally. **A number of highly commended special awards will also be awarded in each category by the panel of judges.**

Rev. Dr. Tom Burke Bursary

Fr. Tom was one of the cofounders of the project and sadly passed away in 2008. In memory of his contribution to the project, a €1,000 bursary is awarded in his name to an individual participant who is deemed by the judges to be the best communicator. This will be paid on application to a student to help them in their second- or third-level education.

This bursary will be open to participants of all categories across all age groups, but the winner cannot be either the overall Individual winner or Runner-up.

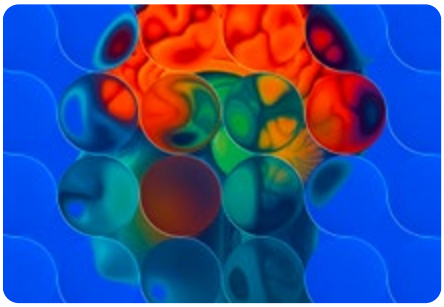
Gold Partners Awards

Gold Partners Awards will be presented to the best placed group or individual for outstanding work in each category. Students will have a chance to win **€2,500 and a trophy** in the 5 award categories. The overall winner(s) of Young Scientist & Technologist(s) of the Year are exempt from winning Gold Partners awards.

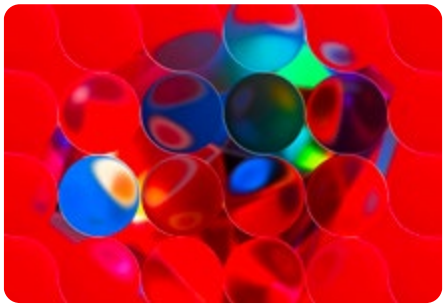
Gold Partners Awards categories:

Technology

Biological & Ecological Sciences



Social & Behavioural Sciences



Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences

Health & Wellbeing Sciences

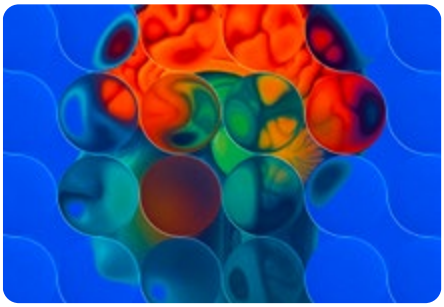
Educator of excellence awards

Teachers will have a chance to win **€2,500 and a trophy** in 5 Educator of excellence award categories. These awards will be presented to the teachers whose commitment and encouragement have consistently enabled their students to participate successfully in all categories of the exhibition.

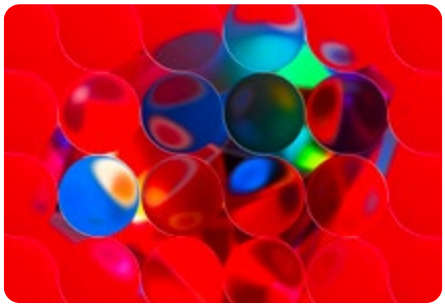
Educator of excellence award categories:

Technology

Biological & Ecological Sciences



Social & Behavioural Sciences



Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences

Health & Wellbeing Sciences

Gaisce and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Gaisce - The President's Award

If you're over 15 and participating in Stripe YSTE, consider using your project work for the Personal Skill Challenge Area in the Gaisce program. For further information, visit www.gaisce.ie/ or consult your school's President's Award Leader (PAL).

Duke of Edinburgh's Award (NI)

Young people ages 14–24 planning Stripe YSTE projects can count their participation toward the Skills section of the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. In Northern Ireland, participants meeting The Duke of Edinburgh's Award standards can choose certification from options including the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, Gaisce – The President's Award, or a Duke of Edinburgh's Award certificate.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Accommodation Grant Scheme

The Accommodation Grant Scheme is available to schools; we will follow up with more details on this later in the year.

How to participate

Know these important dates

Often, teachers and students worry they won't have enough time to prepare for the exhibition, but that's a misconception. Below, we'll lay out the steps to get your project ready for the exhibition in January.

September 2026

Students: 17:00 IST, Friday, 25 September:

One-page proposal, entry form for projects, and project details form (completed by the student).

Teachers: 17:00 IST, Monday 28 September:

Teacher assessment form (completed by the teacher), €20 / £18 entry fee due.

23 October 2026

Results will be made available online to teachers.

5 November 2026

Deadline to return completed confirmation forms.

11 December 2026

Upload your three-minute video.

6 January 2027

Upload a PDF of your report book to **projectbook@yste.ie** prior to attending on-site and put your stand number (e.g., 'Stand 123') in the subject line.

Bring two printed copies of your report book with you to the exhibition.

Set up your project diary, report book, and poster on stand prior to the first round of judging.

6–9 January 2027

The exhibition:
showcase your project.

Who can enter?

You can participate in the exhibition individually or as part of a group of up to three people from your school. Entries are organised into three age groups.

Age groups:

Junior:
- 1st and 2nd Year (Republic of Ireland) | Year 8, 9, and 10 (Northern Ireland)

Intermediate:
- 3rd and 4th Year (Republic of Ireland) | Year 11 and 12 (Northern Ireland)

Senior:
- 5th and 6th Year (Republic of Ireland) | Year 13 and 14 (Northern Ireland)

Team types:

Individual

Groups:
- Groups may consist of no more than three people. If you want to collaborate with fellow innovators from different age categories, you should enter in the group of the oldest participant.

Enter here:

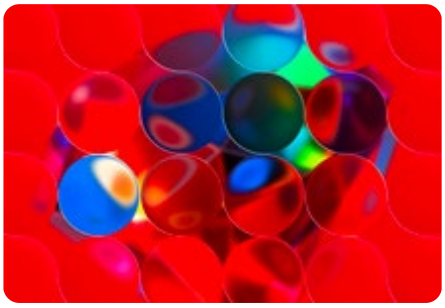
enter.yste.ie

Which category should I enter?

Students can enter projects in one of five categories. Check the How to Enter page on our website for full definitions. An incorrect choice might result in a project not being accepted.

Biological & Ecological Sciences

Areas such as agriculture, biodiversity, conservation, environmental science, medical science, microbiology, sustainability, and veterinary science

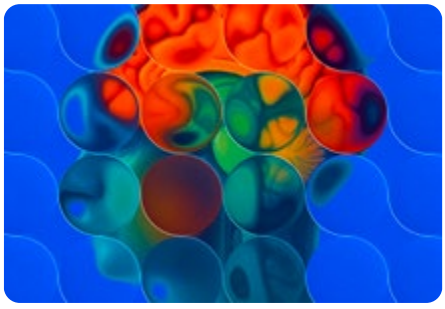


Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences

Areas such as chemistry, physics, mathematics, applied mathematics, geology, engineering, computer programming, meteorology, and astronomy

Health & Wellbeing Sciences

Areas such as health, nutrition, work, leisure, living habits, culture, civil engagement, community, economic development, environmental quality, and social connections



Social & Behavioural Sciences

Areas such as economic, geographical, psychological or sociological studies of human behaviour, nutrition, social anthropology, or political science

Technology

Areas such as the internet, cybersecurity, communications, robotics, biotechnology, machine learning, artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, and automation

Your project

Step 1: Plan your project

Take a look at the world around you. What changes would you like to see, and what positive impact would you like to have? What's a problem that you face in your life? What are you curious about? Get creative with your project idea.

Choose a topic
Begin by identifying a broad concept or pressing issue that sparks your interest, and narrow it down to a specific, testable question. Use the Project Finder for ideas at **yste.ie/project-finder.**

Ask yourself:
- Why does this topic matter to me?
- How does it relate to current events, scientific discoveries, or societal needs?
- What specific angle or perspective do I want to investigate? A well-defined big idea not only provides direction, but it also engages your audience and sets the stage for your project.

Plan your time
Choose a topic that is manageable within your available time. Include time for your report and poster.

Ask yourself:
- What's my goal?
- How will I achieve it?
- Can I finish on time?

Plan your research timeline, considering the competition's deadlines and any other commitments. Break down your tasks into smaller, manageable steps.

Track everything in your project diary
Keep detailed notes about your project every step of the way. Think about how you will collect and log your data before you start. Maintain a detailed record of your research process, including procedures, observations, and results.

Define your research question
Clearly define a research question that outlines the problem you aim to address or investigate.Ensure the question is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

Consider what type of data you plan to collect
Think about the types of data that will best support your inquiry. What evidence or information do you need to answer your big question? Consider the following types of data:

- Qualitative data: This could involve interviews, surveys, or observations to gather insights about behaviours, opinions, or experiences related to your topic.

- Quantitative data: Look for numerical data that can be statistically analysed, such as measurements, survey results, or existing datasets relevant to your project.

- Experimental data: If applicable, outline the experiments you plan to conduct, including how you will set them up, what variables you will measure, and how you will ensure accurate results.

Step 1: Plan your project

Do preliminary research
Conduct thorough background research to understand the existing knowledge and previous work related to your topic. Consult reputable sources such as scientific journals, books, and reliable websites. Take detailed notes in your project diary and cite your sources.

Formulate a hypothesis
Make an educated guess about what will happen based on your research.

Design and conduct your experiments
Plan a procedure to test your hypothesis, and collect data through observation or measurement. Record all observations in your project diary. Identify the variables involved (independent, dependent, and controlled variables). Determine the materials, equipment, and procedures needed to conduct the experiment.

Organise and analyse your data
Compile your results, look for patterns, and determine whether they support your hypothesis. Be open to any result, and if needed, plan additional experiments. Analyse your data, looking for patterns, trends, and relationships. Use graphs, charts, or tables to present your findings.

Ask yourself:
- Are my results clear?
- Did I get useful information?
- Are my results relevant?
- Did my results line up with what I guessed at the start?
- How will I present my findings?

Draw conclusions:
State what you learned, noting any changes to your hypothesis. Summarise your findings based on your data analysis. Interpret your results and draw meaningful conclusions that directly address your research question and hypothesis. Discuss any limitations or uncertainties in your findings.

Ask yourself:
- Can I explain my findings?
- What's the next step?
- What can I recommend based on my findings?
- Has my work taught me or others something new?

Share your findings
Prepare a clear and concise project report or research paper, following appropriate formatting guidelines. Create a presentation that highlights the key aspects of your research and gets others excited about what you discovered.

Ethical considerations
Adhere to ethical guidelines (see page 23 of Handbook) and consider any ethical implications of your research. Obtain necessary permissions or approvals if working with human subjects, animals, or sensitive materials. Ensure the safety of yourself and others throughout the research process.

Common mistakes to avoid in projects

Judges say some mistakes could stop your project from getting into the January exhibition. Here's what you can do to avoid them:

1 **Plan well**
Jumping into a project without a plan can lead to chaos. Avoid this by setting clear goals, breaking down the steps, and sticking to deadlines.

2 **Do your research**
Conducting too little research can hurt your project. You might miss key information or what others have learned. Avoid this by digging deep to understand and improve your ideas.

3 **Design good experiments**
Design your experiment to match your project goals. Consider which experimentation methods will yield the results you hope to achieve. Use enough samples, and collect data carefully for trustworthy results.

4 **Analyse data correctly**
Mistakes in handling data can mess up your findings. Enter data carefully, use the right stats methods, and understand your results to avoid errors.

5 **Manage time wisely**
Poor time management can make you rush and miss deadlines. Research how long tasks might take before you start, and plan accordingly for a quality project.

6 **Communicate clearly**
It's important to share what you're doing and finding. If you're not clear, others won't see why your project matters. Practice presenting your work well.

7 **Solve problems effectively**
Projects can hit snags, and you'll need to come up with creative solutions to fix them. Use your critical thinking skills and problem-solving to overcome challenges.

8 **Work together**
Teaming up can improve your project. Collaborating, working well with others, and valuing different ideas will make your project stronger and will also aid you in your future career.

Common mistakes to avoid in projects

Important information: Please read carefully

Work used in other competitions
Already competed? If your project was in a contest before, just let us know on your entry form and in your report.

Previously published work
Shared before? If any part of your project was published, make sure to tell us about it in your report.

Hazardous materials
Are you using potentially dangerous chemicals, organisms, or equipment in your project? Talk to your teacher if you're using anything that could be dangerous to make sure it's allowed.

Plagiarism guidelines
Plagiarism involves using someone else's ideas or words without proper acknowledgment.

When using external sources, remember the following:

- **Credit sources**
  Whether it's an idea, opinion, quotation, or statistical data, always give credit to the original author.
- **Avoid paraphrasing without attribution**
  Even if you rephrase content, acknowledge the source.
- **Consequences**
  Plagiarism can lead to disqualification (see rule 1.14 on page 51).
- **AI tools**
  Using AI tools for project documentation is not allowed.
- **External help**
  Seek advice from experts, but ensure most work is done under supervision. If external research is conducted, acknowledge it in your project report.

Ethical considerations in scientific investigations and applications

Involvement of individuals

- **Justification:** When involving individuals in research, provide clear reasons for their participation. Explain how their contribution is essential to the study.
- **Privacy and consent:** Obtain informed consent from participants. Respect their privacy by safeguarding personal information.
- **Attribution:** When using someone else's work, give proper credit. Acknowledge sources and avoid plagiarism.

Human and animal subjects

- **Ethics committees:** If your project involves people or animals, seek approval from ethics committees or the review board within your school. These bodies ensure that research adheres to ethical standards.
- **Respect and care:** Treat human subjects with kindness and respect. Prioritise their well-being. Similarly, handle animals ethically and consider their welfare.

Safety first

- **Risk assessment:** Identify potential risks in your project. Evaluate hazards related to materials, equipment, or procedures.
- **Protective measures:** Wear appropriate safety gear. Seek guidance from teachers or mentors when dealing with risky tasks.

Responsible technology use

- **Data and privacy:** Be responsible with technology. Respect people's work and privacy. Acknowledge sources and avoid plagiarism.
- **Ethical handling:** Use data and software ethically. Don't misuse or harm others through technology.

Environmental awareness

- **Eco-friendly practices:** Consider the environment. Dispose of waste properly. Opt for eco-friendly approaches.
- **Minimise impact:** If your project involves natural environments, strive to minimise adverse effects.

Honest reporting

- **Accuracy:** Report findings truthfully. Avoid data manipulation.
- **Transparency:** Acknowledge limitations or uncertainties. Be open about any challenges faced during the research.

Ethical conduct ensures not only robust projects, but also responsible contributions to science and technology. Teachers and mentors are valuable resources—don't hesitate to seek their guidance.

Data collection, sampling, and analysis

Data collection methods

- **Surveys:** Use questionnaires or interviews to ask clear and direct questions that will help you analyse the results later. Surveys to be signed off by the school's ethics board prior to use.
- **Tests and experiments:** Only conduct tests and experiments if they are necessary for your study and you can perform them safely and understand the results.
- **Document analysis:** Use existing documents such as census data, personal records, photos, and maps to provide historical context or as the main focus of your study.
- **Observations:** Collect data by observing carefully, but make sure your presence doesn't influence the behaviour of those you're observing.

Data analysis methods

- **Summarise data:** Reduce the amount of data to see emerging patterns.
- **Draw comparison:** Use methods to compare different sets of data.
- **Conduct significance testing (e.g., t-test):** Confirm that the patterns you see aren't just due to chance.

Always use a representative sample for accurate results and to ensure your methods are safe and ethical.

Sampling methods

- **Random sampling:** Everyone has an equal chance to be selected, like drawing numbers from a hat.
- **Case studies:** Examine a few individuals or situations in detail to understand a process better.
- **Stratified sampling:** Divide the population into groups and analyse within these categories.
- **Quota sampling:** Choose a specific location to find a group of people to interview, like shoppers in a mall.
- **Systematic sampling:** Select every nth person from a group for your sample.

Step 2: Submit your online application

If you've been waiting for an opportunity to make your mark, this is it. Just complete all the forms, and submit them by the specified deadlines. Good luck!

1 **Project entry form**

- Choose a project title that accurately reflects your project's scientific content.
- Avoid overly clever or misleading titles. Double check your project title for spelling mistakes to ensure they don't get printed on the project title board for your stand
- The selected title will be displayed at your stand during the exhibition if your project progresses.

2 **Project details form**

- Provide a comprehensive overview of your project. Explain your intended approach and share the progress you've made so far.

3 **One-page proposal**

- Write a clear and concise one-page project proposal (maximum 500 words). This key document helps screening judges evaluate your project.
- Clearly explain your project's essence and showcase any research you've conducted.
- Submit all your materials through the online portal by the student deadline of 17:00 IST on 25 September 2026.

4 **Teacher assessment form**

- Teachers must complete the assessment form online by 28 September at 17:00 IST.
- Late entries will not be accepted.

5 **Entry fee**

- Each student must pay an entry fee of €20 / £18.
- Preferably use online payment (credit or debit cards), or use a bank transfer EFT.
- Cash and cheque payments are not accepted.
- Results of the project screening phase will only be released if full payment has been made.

Your one-page proposal

Your one-page proposal should clearly explain what your project is all about. This proposal will help the judges to decide whether to accept your project into this year's exhibition. It should be as concise as possible, with a maximum of 500 words in UK English spelling.

Below are some guidelines to help you with your entry and one-page proposal. It should include the following:

1. **Title:** Choose a concise and informative title that captures the essence of your project.

2. **Overview:** Provide a brief introduction to your project, including the background and motivation behind it. Clearly state the problem or question you aim to address.

3. **Objective:** Clearly define the objective of your project. State what you aim to achieve or the specific research question you plan to answer.

4. **Methodology:** Describe the methods and procedures you will use to conduct your project. Provide an overview of the experimental design, data collection methods, or analytical techniques you will employ.

5. **Significance and innovation:** Explain why your project is important and how it contributes to the existing body of knowledge. Highlight any unique or innovative aspects of your approach.

6. **Expected results:** Discuss the anticipated results or outcomes of your project. State what you expect to discover, prove, or demonstrate through your research.

7. **Timeline:** Outline a timeline for your project, including key milestones and deadlines. Briefly mention the major tasks or experiments you plan to complete within specific time frames. If your project is going to take a long time period and you already have some work completed, please mention this as the judges might think the project is too large for the normal 14-week time frame methods. Refer to the appendix for the detailed procedures.

Below are optional items that you may include if you have the word count available:

8. **Resources and budget:** Mention the resources you will need to complete your project, such as equipment, materials, or software. If applicable, include a budget estimate or any funding sources you have secured.

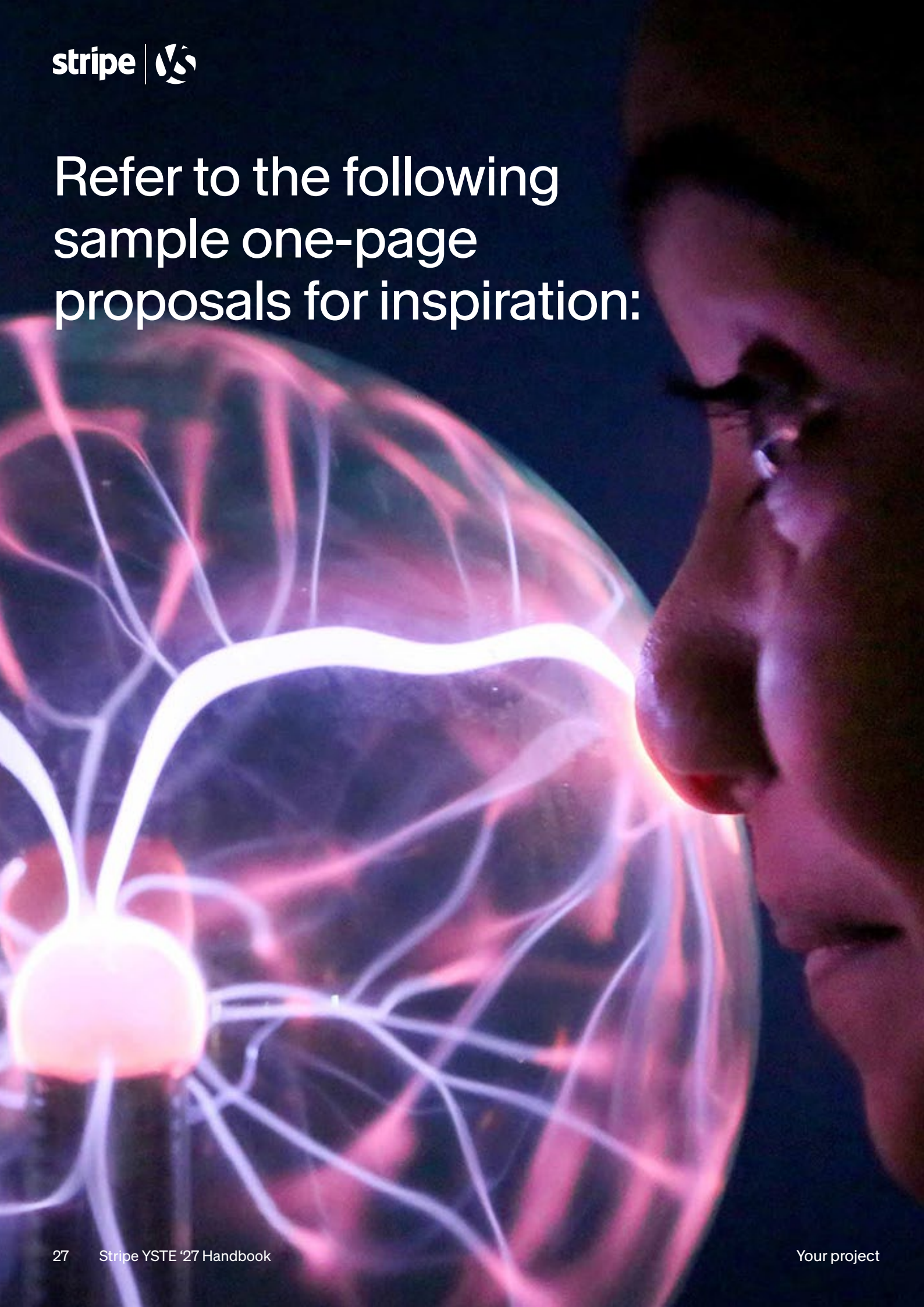
9. **Potential impact:** Discuss the potential impact of your project on the scientific community, society, or a specific field. Explain how your findings or technological advancements might benefit others.

10. **Conclusion:** Summarise the main points of your proposal and reiterate the importance of your project. Emphasise its feasibility and the potential for success.

Proofread your proposal for clarity, conciseness, and adherence to the word count and font size requirements. Entries that exceed the word count for the one-page proposal might not upload correctly to the entry form.

stripe

Refer to the following sample one-page proposals for inspiration:



Sample 1: Social & Behavioural Sciences
Age group: Intermediate
Title: Cancer Awareness and Prevention

Overview
This project aims to find out what people know about cancer and how it can be prevented. It also hopes to improve awareness so that people can recognise early signs of cancer and know when to seek medical advice.

Background Information
This project was inspired by a personal experience where a relative passed away from cancer. Although they had open wounds on their back and breast and often complained about them, they were thought to be bedsores. At the time, the family did not know these could be early signs of cancer. This showed a gap in awareness about symptoms. The project aims to find out how aware people are of what signs to look for and what they can do to reduce their risk of cancer. The goal is also to raise awareness so people can act quickly if they notice symptoms. A study from Victoria, Australia (Ref 1) found that while 88% of people agreed early detection of cancer is important, many could not identify key symptoms. The same study also showed that 70% of people said they would want to be tested for cancer even if there was no treatment available.

Approach
To get accurate results, the project will involve over 200 volunteers who will complete a survey about their knowledge of cancer and how it can be prevented. The survey will be designed with advice from the Irish Cancer Society and the Marie Keating Foundation. Medical professionals, including Dr. E. Moylan (an oncologist at ANY TOWN University Hospital) and local healthcare staff, have also provided input on the survey content.

The survey will first be tested with a small group in the local area. The bigger survey (more than 200 volunteers) I hope to split between male and female across the ages: Younger than 18 / 18–30 / 30–50 / 50+.

I wish to determine if knowledge of the subject varies by age and gender. This may assist future population-specific advertising and information campaigns. I may try and get information on the education level and economic background of the volunteers, but this may be more difficult. If I get a large enough population (advice from Mori, an opinion poll company, is that I should get at least 30 results per population), I will enter my results in Microsoft Excel and then statistically analyse them using the student t-test and chi-square test. Furthermore, I will use Excel again to graph and present my results.

Reference
(Ref 1) Livingston, Patricia; Wakefield, Melanie; Elwood, J. Mark – Community attitudes towards the early detection of cancer in Victoria, Australia

Sample 2: Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences
Age group: Senior
Title: Alleviating Tinnitus with Low-Frequency Tones

Overview
This project looks at using low frequency tones to help with ear ringing, also called tinnitus, which affects millions of people worldwide.

Background Information
While developing our idea, we began to think of problems that we experience in daily life. We found that ringing in our ears, especially after a concert or disco, was a major discomfort for us and many others. We researched this ailment and its physical effect on the ear. After reflecting and hypothesising, we felt that low frequency tones may alleviate this problem, as biologically it made sense. We carried out our preliminary testing after consulting with the Audiology department in ANY TOWN General Hospital, to adhere to all relevant health and safety guidelines. We discovered that, after exposure to loud noise, the discomfort was alleviated by the tones and, in fact, that hearing ability had increased around 100 times back to its original capacity.

We have now completed our testing and analysed our results. One element of our conclusion is that after exposure to loud noise, the hearing ability of candidates improved drastically after a few minutes of our low frequency therapy.

We think this is an important project to show how tinnitus can be improved at social events. For example, these tones could be played after a concert to soothe the discomfort of the audience before they leave the venue and, thus, aid health and safety measures for departing premises. It could also be a new way to help people with tinnitus feel more comfortable in certain noisy environments, such as the workplace and recreational activities, which would help with their daily life. We think that our project would appeal to many and arouse interest in physics and illustrate the applicability of basic physics principles in everyday life to tackle a real-life problem experienced by many.

Sample 3: Technology
Age group: Intermediate
Title: Is There a Better Way to Stop Floods Than Sandbags?

Sandbag walls take 2–3 days to build, and if they aren't built properly, they don't work at all. Since flooding happens a lot in this country, we wanted to find out if there's a cheaper, easier, and more effective way to stop flood damage.

Aim
The aim of this project is to test different materials to see if they can do a better job than sandbags at stopping water. We want to come up with something that's not only better at absorbing water, but is also easy to carry, quick to use, and reusable.

Alternatives
We decided to test two materials as possible replacements for sand: Peat moss as our natural material and memory foam as our synthetic material. These might change as we go, depending on how our tests go. We're trying to find materials that are easy to get and not too expensive.

Our tests will include:
Water Soaking Test
Soaking each material of the same volume in the same amount of water for the same length of time, checking each material's absorbency after each minute. By doing this a number of times, we will have an accurate idea of which material retains the most water and can plot this on a trend graph.

Drying Time
As another part of the experiment, we will see how long it takes the materials to dry, and their state when dry. This will help us determine how long and how difficult it will be to remove the bags when the flooding has stopped as this is one of the major problems with sandbags. It will also tell us whether the material can be used again, as with sandbags, they cannot.

Water Force Test
Another big part of our test will be to find how our materials can withstand the force of the water being pushed against it. This can be found by such experiments as using a hose on different strengths.

Math Equation
A particular equation used for the required number of sandbags can be drawn up. This will greatly help us when determining how much of each product would be needed in a disaster:

$N=(3 \times H + 9 \times H \times H)/2$

H= required dyke height in feet. For a 35-pound bag of sand, each foot requires 1 bag in width, 3 in height; and for every 2.5 feet in width, 3 bags are required.

Results and Conclusions
Once we do our tests, we'll compare everything to regular sandbags. If one of our materials works better, we'll try to create a simple prototype to show how it could be used in real floods. We hope this could help people protect their homes and businesses in a quicker, easier way.

Sample 4: Biological & Ecological Sciences
Age group: Junior
Title: Researching and Developing a "Home-Grown" Somatic Cell Count (SCC) Test for Dairy Farmers

Overview
Our project aims to examine somatic cell count (SCC), and how it is analysed. We also aim to develop our own method to test for SCC.

Project Development/Background
We come from farming backgrounds, and we are very interested in agriculture, particularly milk production. We recognise the importance of the agricultural sector to the Irish economy. Irish farmers during the past decade have had to cope with massive increases in EU directives and restrictions. The paper trail associated with agriculture is growing all the time. Specific requirements related to SCC have been introduced by the EU. Somatic cells are the epithelial cells shed by the secretory tissue of the udder and leucocytes from the bloodstream (Ref 1). Our dads monitor SCC; they check their milk recording figures and try to keep informed about the quality of the milk produced. Dairies penalise the price of milk paid to the farmers based on the SCC. The higher the SCC levels in milk, the higher the penalties. Additionally, we have experienced that stray electric currents have impacted cows during milking and increased SCC levels.

Approach
In our study, we will examine SCC, the factors affecting it, and consider the origins of the SCC test. We want to know how much SCC affects the quality of the milk, how pasteurisation affects SCC, and what impact, if any, SCC has on the human population. This is especially important as high SCC milk is still used for human consumption. We will investigate how common our experience with electric currents is and propose ways to reduce the phenomenon (e.g., earthing of equipment; use of conductive mats under cows during milking, etc). While most of the SCC testing is done commercially, we will investigate developing our own test. A practise used by farmers is to use a surfactant (such as washing up liquid) and combine it with a sample of milk. Milk with a high SCC curdles quickly when exposed to the surfactant. Using multiple samples of milk at different SCC levels, we will repeat and hopefully develop this home-grown test such that it can reliably predict SCC levels, helping farmers check milk quality more easily and improve safety.

Reference 1
Jim Flynn, Laboratory Technician, Teagasc.

Sample 5: Health & Wellbeing
Age group: Intermediate
Title: Food is Fuel: A statistical analysis into the impact of hunger on performance, behaviour, and productivity in school

Background

My project aims to study the impact of being hungry on students' concentration and productivity. I came up with the project idea when speaking to my cousin in school, and she told me that she hadn't eaten breakfast. This surprised me. I asked more of my classmates if they had eaten breakfast to find that 6 of the 25 that morning hadn't. Knowing how much I need my food, I started researching the effects of hunger on behaviour and concentration in school. I found one study from the University of Leeds, which monitored students' behaviour in the classroom over 11 studies. Results showed that 7 of 11 studies demonstrated a positive effect of breakfast on on-task behaviour. This was apparent in children who were either well-nourished, undernourished, or from deprived backgrounds. Or to put it another way, it didn't matter what your background was—"Food is Fuel." To gain a greater understanding of the topic, I spoke with a dietitian, and they agreed that numerous studies show food influences your behaviour and performance. I will show how "Food is Fuel" under three categories:

1. Impact on results
2. Impact on reaction time
3. Impact on mood

Approach

I plan to get over 200 volunteers to get a statistically significant result, split into groups of approximately 15 people. In the morning, I will gather a group who have eaten breakfast and ask them to complete a wordsearch, timing them. I have used AI technology to create 2 wordsearches of the same difficulty to ensure the ultimate results will be accurate. To gauge their reaction time, I will also ask each to take an online red-light-green-light reaction time test, 3 times, and get an average of their results. I will also ask them to complete a survey explaining their mood using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) model. In the afternoon when students are hungry, I will ask them to complete another wordsearch of the same difficulty, along with the 2 other tests. To ensure my results are accurate, I will create a survey asking the students their gender, the type of food they had eaten, and when they ate it. I have also investigated noninvasive glucose monitors to measure the student's glucose levels and link these to my results. I will have students of different ages from both primary and secondary schools, and I will also target students who have been reported for bad behaviour throughout the day and investigate when the behaviour was reported and if this is linked with their food intake. I intend on getting a sample of at least 200 people across a range of demographics (advice from Mori is that I should get at least 30 results per population). I will use Microsoft Excel to analyse data using the student t-test and chi-square test. Furthermore, I will graph and present my results.

Step 3: What happens next?

Application and screening process overview:

Preparing for the Stripe Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition is exciting, and it involves several steps. The process of reviewing all projects and getting results to schools will take approximately four weeks.

Application stage Submit your entry by 25 September, 17:00 IST.	**Screening stage (four weeks)** A panel of screening judges carefully evaluates every project.	**Results stage** Judges complete their review, and results are announced on 23 October 2026.	**Acceptance stage** Participation confirmation forms are due to be returned by 5 November 2026.

Application stage

- Submit your entry by 25 September, 17:00 IST.
- Students: Register for an account (teachers can reuse their accounts).
- Write your one-page project proposal.
- Fill out the main entry form and project details form.
- Teachers will complete the teacher assessment form.
- Submit all your materials through the online portal by the student deadline.
- Pay the €20 / £18 entry fee.

Screening stage

- Projects with a “Completed” status are sent to judges for review.
- A panel of screening judges carefully evaluates every project, and they might request additional information during this stage.
- The process of reviewing all projects and getting results to schools will take approximately four weeks.

Results stage

- Judges complete their review and results are announced on Saturday, 23 October 2026.
- Projects can be:
- Qualified: Teachers receive an email with the results, and students are emailed a confirmation form to accept their place.
- Nonqualified: Students are informed their project didn’t qualify. Teachers will be able to view the reason for nonqualification when viewing the results.
- Queried: If your project is queried, judges will send an email. Work with your teacher to promptly address the query.
- Submitting a project doesn’t automatically guarantee qualification. The judges’ decisions are final, and neither Stripe nor its employees influence the outcome.

Acceptance stage

- Accepted students receive a confirmation card via email.
- If accepted, you will be required to accept your place by 5 November 2026.

Qualified projects

I qualified. What do I do next?

Complete your confirmation card by 5 November 2026

After qualifying, your teacher will confirm you have been advised of the screening results for your project, and you will be sent a link to a confirmation form. Complete this form as soon as you get it. As most entrants are under 18, we need parental consent for you to compete at the event in January, so this form requires a parent/guardian's signature and a teacher's signature. For a group entry, all members must complete the confirmation card.

Upload your video and project report

There are two items to be submitted prior to arriving on-site in January:

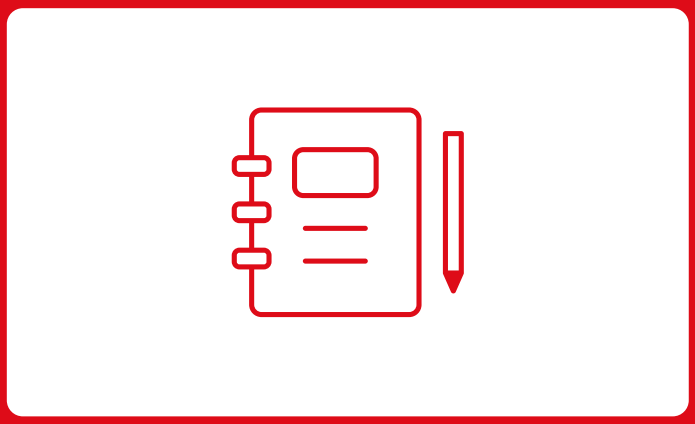
- By 11 December, you will need to upload a three-minute video. The link for this will be sent out in early December.
- A PDF copy of your project report will need to be emailed to Projectbook@yste.ie prior to arriving on-site on 6 January. The subject line in the email should have your stand number only.

Key dates

- **5 November:** Complete confirmation card.
- **11 December:** Upload three-minute video.
- **6 January, 12:00 GMT:** Set up your project diary and two physical copies of your report book (attach one to the stand) and poster on stand prior to the first round of judging. Email a copy of the report book to Projectbook@yste.ie before the first round of judging commences.
- **6 January, 15:00–18:00 GMT:** Round 1 judging
- **7 January, 09:00–13:00 GMT:** Round 2 judging
- **7 January, 14:00–18:00 GMT:** Round 3 judging
- **8 January, 09:00–12:00 GMT:** Round 4 judging (if needed)
- **8 January:** Showcase your project and explore the exhibition awards ceremony.
- **9 January:** Showcase your project and explore the exhibition.

Your project: Four elements

While waiting to hear if your project has qualified, continue working on your project. Your final project will require the following four items:



01: Project report book

02: Project diary

03: Three-minute video

04: Visual display

01: Project report book

Please print two copies of your report book and bring them with you to the exhibition. The round 1 judge will take one copy, and it will not be returned to you until Saturday.

1. **Title page**
   Include the title of your project, your name, the date, and any other necessary details.

2. **Table of contents**
   Provide a clear and comprehensive list of sections and subsections in your report with corresponding page numbers.

3. **Abstract/Executive summary**
   Write a concise summary of your project, including the objectives, methods, major findings, and conclusions. Keep it within one page.

4. **Introduction**
   Introduce your project and its background. Clearly state the problem or research question you aimed to address.

5. **Literature review**
   Summarise the relevant literature and studies that support your project. Provide context and establish the significance of your work.

6. **Methodology**
   Briefly describe the experimental design, measurements, and data collection methods. Refer to the appendix for the detailed procedures.

7. **Results**
   Present the key results of your project, highlighting the most important findings. Use tables, graphs, or charts to illustrate your data.

8. **Discussion**
   Interpret your results and discuss their implications. Analyse any patterns, trends, or discrepancies. Compare your findings with previous studies and explain any inconsistencies.

9. **Conclusion**
   Summarise your project and its outcomes. Emphasise the significance of your findings and their potential impact. Discuss any limitations or areas for further research.

10. **References**
    Cite all the sources you referred to in your report using a standardised referencing style (e.g., APA, MLA).

11. **Appendices**
    Include detailed information that supports your project, such as the full experimental methods, measurements, or calculations. Place surveys or questionnaires in the appendix as well.

Ensure that the main body of your report, excluding the appendices, does not exceed 50 pages. Use clear and concise language, proper formatting, and appropriate headings and subheadings to enhance readability. Proofread your report for clarity, coherence, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and adherence to the given guidelines.

02: Project diary

Keeping a project diary helps you document your project, and it's extremely useful when you're putting together your final report and showing off to the judges. Keep your diary up-to-date, whether you write in it every day or once a week.

1. **Kickoff**
   Introduce yourself, and give a quick rundown of what your project is all about. Talk about why you jumped into this adventure and what you hope to pull off.

2. **Brainstorming**
   Write down all the project ideas (no matter how wild) you had, the information you looked up, and chats with friends or mentors that got you thinking. Explain how you picked your project topic.

3. **Your game plan**
   Talk about how your project went from "just an idea" to "the plan." Jot down any changes you made after people gave you their two cents.

4. **Lab work**
   Get into the nitty-gritty of how you planned to test your idea or gather information. Doodle your setup or make some diagrams—whatever feels right to you. Note down any roadblocks you hit and how you tweaked things to work better.

5. **Crunching numbers**
   Dive into how you made sense of all the data you collected. Mention the tools or math you used and document any patterns or surprises you found. Graphs or charts can help you make your point.

6. **Trial and error**
   Keep track of the tweaks and fixes you made along the way. If something went sideways, write about how you fixed it.

7. **Looking back**
   Take a moment to think about how far you've come. Write about the new things you've learned, the skills you've picked up, and any unexpected twists.

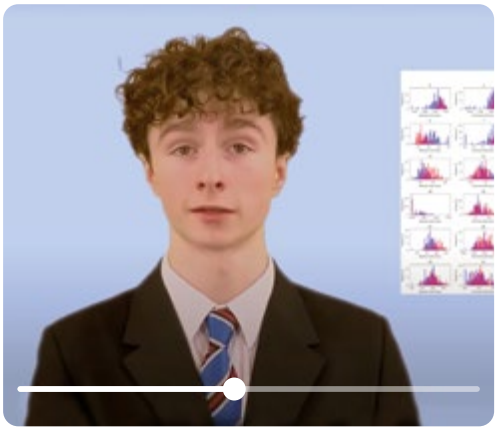
8. **The big write-up**
   Document how you're putting together your final presentation. Talk about how you organised your thoughts, handled feedback, and polished your work.

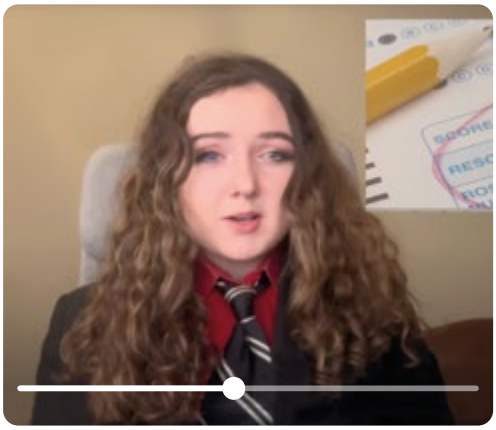
9. **Wrapping up**
   Finish off by looking back at the whole experience. Make notes about why your findings matter, the difference your project could make, and where you could take it next.

10. **Extras**
    Tack on any extra supporting materials such as articles, data, or pictures that back up your story.

03: Three-minute video

Video requirements:





1. **Length**
   Keep your video under three minutes.
2. **Content**
   Show your project in action or describe it well.
3. **Communication**
   Be clear and brief. Explain your project's goals, methods, and results simply.
4. **Language**
   Use easy-to-understand language. If you use special terms, explain them.
5. **Visuals**
   Use clear graphs, charts, or images to help explain your project.
6. **Audio**
   Make sure your voice is clear. Use a good mic and speak confidently.
7. **Music**
   Don't add music to your video.
8. **Appropriateness**
   No swearing or offensive content. Keep it professional.
9. **Promotions**
   Don't promote any products or brands.
10. **Format**
    Submit your video in formats such as MP4, AVI, or MOV. Make sure it's good quality.
11. **Submission**
    Upload your video by 11 December 2026 via the provided link after your project is accepted and you've filled out your confirmation card.

04: Visual display

Follow these guidelines for help creating an effective A0 poster for your project exhibition:

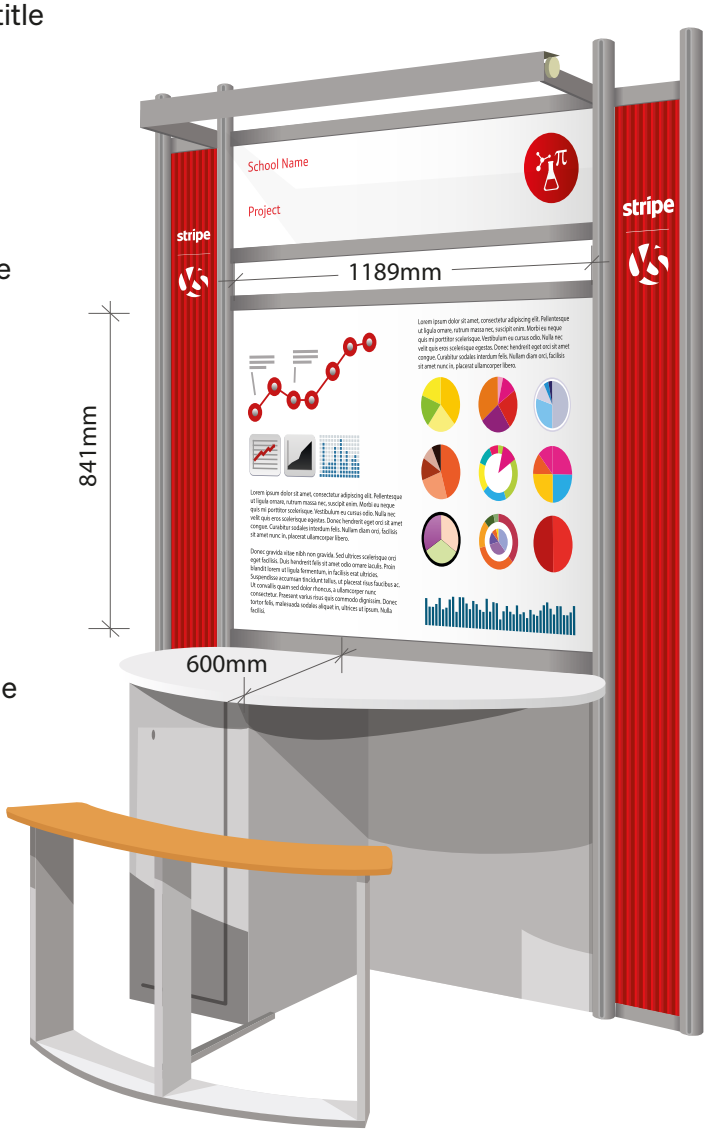
1. **Overall layout:**
   - Use a landscape orientation.
   - Divide the poster logically into sections (Introduction, Methodology, Results, Conclusion).
   - Ensure a clear flow from one section to another.

2. **Title and author information**
   - The header board will display the project title and school name.
   - Consider adding additional detail to your display.

3. **Introduction**
   - Briefly introduce the project, capturing the reader's attention.
   - Clearly state the research question or problem.

4. **Methodology**
   - Describe the experimental design or methodology used.
   - Include sufficient detail so others can understand your process.
   - Use diagrams or flowcharts to illustrate the procedure.

5. **Results and data presentation**
   - Present findings and data clearly.
   - Use graphs, charts, tables, and diagrams.
   - Provide labels, legends, and units of measurement.
   - Highlight any trends or significant observations.



04: Visual display

6 Analysis and discussion

- Interpret the results and discuss their implications.
- Explain any patterns or relationships observed.
- Relate findings back to your original research question.

7 Conclusion

- Summarise main outcomes and conclusions.
- Emphasise significance and potential impact.
- Mention future research possibilities.

8 Visuals and illustrations

- Use high-quality images, diagrams, or illustrations.
- Ensure clear labels and relevance.
- Maintain visual balance.

9 Text and font

- Use a legible font consistently.
- Keep text concise with bullet points or short paragraphs.

10 Colour and design

- Choose an appealing colour scheme.
- Use colours strategically for emphasis.
- Ensure readable contrast.

11 Captions and citations

- Include brief captions for figures or tables.
- Cite external sources appropriately.

12 Proofreading and editing

- Check for errors and consistency.
- Seek feedback from mentors or teachers.

13 Stand layout

- Exhibits must be within the limits of the stand dimension: back display panel is 1,189mm wide by 841mm high, and the worktop is 1,200mm wide by 600mm deep.
- Follow the provided stand layout.
- Keep display material within the tabletop area.
- Any items placed on the floor in front of your stand will be removed.

Exhibition details

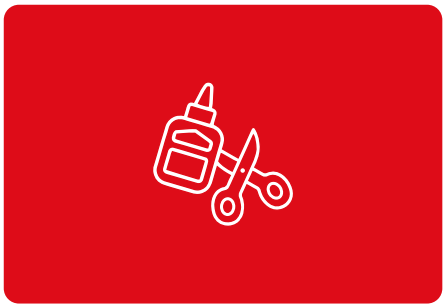
The exhibition

What to expect

Once you arrive at the RDS Main Hall in Dublin and register for the exhibition, you will receive your exhibition pass and student pack.

After registration, security will allow you to bring bulky projects into the exhibition.

Security will not allow anyone to gain entrance without an exhibition ID pass.



Set up your project in the space provided. Make sure you bring everything you need to display your project (sticky tape, scissors, stapler, etc.).

If you have any questions, there will be a whole team supporting you there to help. They will do whatever they can to assist you.

Get more information in December on our website to have the best on-site experience.

The judging process

Your project will be judged at least three times by three different judges.

Before each judging session, you will be given an appointment card that will indicate the approximate time the judge will arrive at your stand. Please be patient as your judge might be delayed while judging another project. The judges can only spend approximately 15 minutes at your stand, so be prepared when they arrive. They will ask you to tell them about your project and then move on to more specific questions. Make sure any mobile phones are turned off during the judging times. Supervisors or teachers are not allowed to remain at the stand during judging, and no video recording of judging is permitted.

If you are part of a group entry, make sure that each person from your team does some of the talking. The group leader should introduce all members and explain what sections each team member will be talking about. Teachers, parents, or other students should not be at your stand during judging.

The judges have the right, should they see fit, to reassign your project to another category during assessment at the exhibition.

How to ace your judge interviews

1

Practice your pitch

- You know your project inside out, but it's important to practice how you explain it—aka, "your pitch."
- Rehearse talking about your big question, your process, and the details of your results with a teacher, mentor, or friend to get ready for the real deal.
- Be ready to explain your project to the judges in a way that's easy to understand in just a few minutes.

2

Prep for the questions

- Think about what questions the judges might ask and prepare your answers.
- Get comfortable talking about how you did your research, gathered data, and what you discovered.

3

Act the part

- You're the expert on your project, so don't be afraid to speak up about it. Showing your enthusiasm will impress the judges.
- Dress sharp. If you feel good about your outfit, it will boost your confidence.

4

Ace your presentation

- Show your enthusiasm while presenting your project. You'll have more fun, and listeners will find it more interesting.
- Use your poster or other interesting visuals to back up what you're saying.

5

Know your terminology

- When you're speaking to the judges about your project, try to use scientific terms that apply to your project.

6

Tell your story

- Tell the judges why your project matters to the world. What problem does it solve? How's it pushing science forward?
- Walk them through your project. How did you come up with your question and set up your experiment? What did you discover?
- If you hit a snag, share how you dealt with it.

7

Be open to any feedback

- Listen actively, stay positive, and thank the judges for their time and tips.
- Try to be open to whatever the judges have to say: critical feedback is also useful because it can help you improve your work.

Information for teachers

Behind every breakthrough project stands a teacher who sparked curiosity, provided guidance, and helped transform abstract ideas into tangible discoveries. Stripe is excited to support teachers as they shape the next generation of scientists and technologists.

Visit **https://stripeyste.com/how-to-enter** to learn more.

Withdrawal of projects

- Confirm ongoing participation with students before the winter holidays.
- Notify us immediately in writing if a project needs to be withdrawn.

School visits

- Encourage colleagues to bring their classes to experience the event.
- If not participating, consider bringing your students along to experience the buzz around the event and encourage them to enter the 2028 competition.
- Booking school visits will be available in October and November.

Project removal and substitutes

- Students must not take down their projects before 17:00 GMT on Saturday, 9 January 2027.
- If you, as the designated project supervising teacher, are unable to attend and your school has confirmed a substitute supervisor in writing, please email yste@yste.ie by 10 December 2026 to ensure your replacement's name is added to the teacher registration desk list.

Teacher facilities

- Register at the Teachers' Desk upon arrival to receive your exhibition ID pass.
- Wear the pass at all times for security reasons.
- Enjoy tea and coffee in the designated teachers' area.
- Complimentary lunch vouchers are provided.
- Parents and students are not allowed in the teacher area.
- A designated dining area is provided, which everyone needs to share appropriately.

Judging

- Judging starts on Wednesday, 6 January 2027, and continues through Thursday.
- Final judging concludes on Friday morning.

New teachers

- Welcome! Get in touch by email at yste@yste.ie or by our freephone help desk for assistance, and we can also put you in touch with experienced teachers who can give you help and advice.

For any questions

Email **yste@yste.ie** or call Freephone **1800 924 362** from the Republic of Ireland.

Information for parents and guardians

Support your student over the coming months, and set them up for future success as they plan and prepare their project. We've included key facts for parents and guardians below, and you can find more information on our website.

Where
Royal Dublin Society (RDS), Merrion Rd, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, D04 AK83

When
- 6–9 January 2027
- Non-Dublin-based schools will need to register by 12:00 GMT on 6 January

Closing dates
- Student entries are due by 25 September
- Teacher assessment and entry fee payments must be completed by 17:00 IST on 28 September

We count on parents and guardians to be our partners in supporting students during Stripe YSTE. The best ways you can help include:

- Overseeing your student's project setup.
- Being available to assist students with any complications that might arise.
- Covering or arranging cover for students to be given breaks from their stands, especially those entered in the Individual section.

Entry fees
The cost to enter online is €20 / £18 per student. Entry is open online at enter.yste.ie
Projects will not be notified about qualification or receive their ticket code if fees have not been paid in full.

Money
Provide enough pocket money for your student to pay for meals, drinks, and other expenses throughout the week. There are food facilities as part of the exhibition where they can buy food and drink and food vouchers are provided.

Main awards ceremony
The award ceremony will be held on Friday 8 January 2027 starting at 17:30 GMT, and it will be attended by special guests. Seats will not be available for parents in the Mainstage for this ceremony, but we will stream it live in another part of the RDS. There will be entertainment for the students following the ceremony.

Accommodation
There are several hotels and B&Bs in close proximity to the RDS. Sites such as Hotels.com and Booking.com are a good resource when trying to find accommodation.

Acknowledgement
Stripe will acknowledge your child's entry upon receipt. It will then be forwarded to the screening judges who will decide which projects will qualify for the exhibition in the RDS.

Tickets
Each student entering the exhibition will be sent a complimentary code for the event that must be redeemed at **stripeyste.com**. This will allow admission for two people during one of the public days of the exhibition, 6–9 January 2027.

Stripe Young Scientist Business Bootcamp

Stripe YSTE is excited to support students with various opportunities beyond the exhibit. A number of the exhibiting intermediate and senior students from the 2027 Stripe Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition will be invited to take part in a Stripe Young Scientist Business Bootcamp, where they will experience the world of technology commercialisation and entrepreneurship.

"The Bootcamp experience has been life changing. I feel it has really opened up doors for me in regards to career options, developing my project and communicating better with people. I have met and heard from some amazing and inspiring people and I feel I have become more creative and innovative in the way I think."

—Former participant

in association with NovaUCD

Rules

Student conduct

The use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs/substances is prohibited.

Neat dress is required. School uniforms must be worn during the week of the exhibition and at the awards ceremony.

All mobile phones must be switched off while judging is taking place at your stand.

Stripe takes no responsibility for mobile phones or any other property that is lost or stolen during the week of the exhibition.

Exhibiting students, or a nominated representative from the school, should be at their stand during the exhibition: Wednesday, 6 January through Saturday, 9 January from 09:30 - 17:30 GMT.

The exhibiting students must be at their stand for judging on:

- Wednesday, 6 January starting at 15:00 GMT until their project has been judged.
- Thursday, 7 January starting at 09:00 GMT until their project has been judged (each project will be judged twice on Thursday).
- Friday, 8 January starting at 9:00 GMT until their project has been judged.

All participating students must attend the awards ceremony in the Stripe Mainstage at 17:30 GMT on Friday, 8 January.

Be respectful and considerate to others at all times. Remember that you have been selected to represent your school and your region.

The judges' decisions are final. Participating students, teachers, and parents and guardians should be aware of the rules and also the statements pertaining to plagiarism and ethics.

Rules of Entry

The following Rules of Entry are applicable to the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2026 (the "Exhibition"). Rules are correct at time of print. Final rules in relation to the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2027 will be updated later in the year and can be found at **www.stripeyste.com.**

The following rules are designed to ensure that the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition ("YSTE") is conducted as fairly and as efficiently as possible, and they are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of YSTE. Infringement of any of the rules listed below may lead to exclusion, at any time, of individuals or schools from present and/or future participation in the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition.

General rules

1.1 YSTE decisions on all Exhibition matters are final.

1.2 A nonrefundable entry fee of €20 / £18 per student is required. Entries and all associated paperwork must be submitted online. A project will not be considered for judging unless payment has been made in full.

1.3 Postal entries will not be considered.

1.4 The closing date for receipt of completed online entries is by 17:00 IST on Monday, 29 September 2025, including teachers' assessment. Under no circumstances will late entries be accepted.

1.5 Second-level students between the ages of 12–19 years old on 31 October 2025, resident in any part of Ireland, are eligible to enter.

1.6 Students can only win the title Young Scientist(s) & Technologist(s) of the Year once. Previous winners of the title are not eligible to reenter the competition in subsequent years.

1.7 Projects that have been entered in other competitions can be accepted as entries to the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition, provided that this information is stated in the relevant area on the entry form and provided there is no third-party restriction on entry.

1.8 Submission of an entry will not ensure the acceptance of a project for the Exhibition. A panel of screening judges will select the projects to go forward for the Exhibition, and their decisions are final. The Exhibition will take place in person from 7–10 January 2026. Candidates must accept and comply with the Exhibition Rules, which will be made available on notification of acceptance.

1.9 Students educated at home in the Republic of Ireland (i.e., not attending a registered school or college) are eligible to enter, provided that they are registered with the National Education Welfare Board (Republic of Ireland) and supply a copy of the registration certificate with their entry form. Students from Northern Ireland in similar circumstances should email for guidance.

1.10 Entries can be made in the following three age

groups: Junior, Intermediate, Senior

Age group is determined by the year in which the student(s) is studying at the time of the Exhibition (January 2026) and as specified in page 17 of the Handbook.

1.11 Students attending primary schools or third-level colleges are **not** eligible to enter.

1.12 Projects can be submitted in one of the following five categories by 29 September 2025:

- Biological & Ecological Sciences
- Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences
- Social & Behavioural Sciences
- Technology
- Health & Wellbeing Sciences

1.13 Notwithstanding the classification a student(s) assigns to their project, the judges will have the right to decide a project's appropriate classification.

1.14 Plagiarism is prohibited. Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as a student's own without appropriate attribution. Whether done deliberately or inadvertently, it is unacceptable and applies not just to text, but to graphics, tables, formulae, or any representation of ideas in print, electronic, or any other media, in addition to computer software and algorithms, which could be implied as being the work of the student. As part of the application, students are required to sign a declaration that the project is wholly their own work, except where there is clear acknowledgment and appropriate reference to the work of others. To maintain the integrity of the competition, where the judges suspect plagiarism, they are entitled to exclude a project at any stage of the competition, and the student(s), the student(s)'s parents, and/or the student(s)'s school may be notified.

Individual / group projects

Projects must be submitted as either an Individual or Group Project

1.15 A student may only participate in and enter one project into the competition, whether they are entering as an individual or as part of a group. If a student, having entered a project, has not qualified, they cannot be added to a qualified group project at any time.

1.16 Individual projects may be submitted in any one of the five categories specified in 1.12 above (see also Handbook page 18 section "Which category should I enter?") and once submitted, it cannot be reclassified as a group project. In addition, if a student enters an individual project that fails to qualify, they are not eligible to transfer to a qualified group project at any time.

1.17 Group projects may be submitted in any one of the five categories specified in 1.12 above. Groups will consist of either two or three members, in the same age group (Junior, Intermediate, or Senior) where possible, and **who must be from the same school.** Once a project has been accepted as a group project and has qualified to compete in the RDS, it cannot be reclassified as an individual project. In cases where groups are constructed from students who are not in the same age group, the age category in which the project is entered must align with the age group of the oldest student.

1.18 Each group must appoint a group leader who will direct the work and act as a spokesperson. All group members must be in attendance at the Exhibition and fully participate in the judging interviews.

1.19 All members of a group should be fully involved, share the work and be familiar with everything that is presented in the report book and poster. The final work should reflect the coordinated efforts of all group members.

1.20 In exceptional circumstances, groups may wish to decrease or increase the number of people participating in their accepted group project team. Any such proposed changes

need to be submitted by email to **yste@yste.ie** before 1 December 2025, detailing the proposed change(s) and the exceptional circumstances necessitating them. Failure to do so will lead to the proposed changes being rejected and the project being judged in the original grouping in which it was entered. YSTE's decision as to whether such changes are acceptable will be final. The total group size cannot exceed three students.

1.21 Students whose projects involve studies of live animals must ensure that such studies are carried out in accordance with the statutory regulations. Further information can be found at: https://www.hpra.ie/regulation/scientific-animal-protection
or
https://www.hpra.ie/regulation/scientific-animal-protection/guidance-documents

YSTE reserves the right at its sole discretion to exclude any such projects from the Exhibition.

1.22 The nature of a project will determine the equipment used in the project. The merit of a project will lie in the use made of scientific apparatus and in an exhibitor's understanding of its functions, not in the equipment itself.

1.23 Before a project involving potentially dangerous, pathogenic, toxigenic, or allergenic organisms (animals, insects, plants, or microorganisms) is undertaken/entered, students must consult a competent expert to advise on health and safety issues. The potential use of any such organisms must be clearly identified on the project details form, and the advice of the competent expert who has been consulted made available for review by YSTE on request. YSTE reserves the right at its sole discretion to exclude any such projects from the Exhibition.

1.24 Projects involving the use of chemicals must list those to be used as part of the exhibit in the RDS in the project details form. YSTE reserves the right at its sole discretion to exclude any such projects from the Exhibition.

1.25 It is expected that all or the majority of the work for a project will be conducted either in the school, home, or the outside environment. However, we understand that some projects may require visiting distant locations. Students may seek advice or information about their project from sources beyond their school, such as on the "web" or from government organisations, or from universities, institutes of technology, or other experts.

However, the majority of students' work should be conducted under the supervision of their relevant teachers, with—where appropriate—suitable levels of involvement by parents, guardians, or other responsible adults. Where experimental and research work is conducted by the students themselves, or on their behalf, in a laboratory that is external to their school (e.g., in a local university, a hospital, or an industry), then that work should be clearly identified and acknowledged within the project report book and presentation.

In addition, it is a requirement that a cover letter from the external facility, describing the extent of the assistance provided and the work done by the students within that facility or undertaken on behalf of the student(s), must be included in the project report book.

1.26 A student may be part of only one project. If a student, having entered a project, has not qualified, they cannot be added to a qualified group project at any time.

Qualified projects
Applicable only to projects qualifying to exhibit at the Exhibition.

2.1 Some students who have had their project accepted for exhibition may find themselves unable to complete it. It is very important that the organisers are immediately notified of this. If a project has to be withdrawn, the organisers must be notified immediately by email to **yste@yste.ie**

Schools failing to notify the organisers of a withdrawal in writing, a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the Exhibition, will be liable to a charge of €100 to cover administration costs.

2.2 Project content and material remains the property of the exhibitors but may be used by YSTE for exhibition or publication and will be exhibited at the Exhibition. If students have a project with elements that have commercial potential, it is recommended that they consider patent protection. Please see the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition website and Factfile for further information on patents.

2.3 Projects shown at previous Young Scientist & Technology Exhibitions will not be accepted unless the project has undergone significant further development. Projects that represent a continuation of previously entered work in the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition should have a significant amount of new material. Previously presented data must be clearly indicated as such in the report books and in the display.

2.4 The judges reserve the right to withhold awards in the event of projects not reaching a satisfactory standard.

2.5 If a project has not adhered to all the rules and regulations of this competition, the judges have the right to withhold awards or exclude the project at any stage during the judging process.

2.6 The judges' decision in all matters relating to the award of prizes will be final. No sponsors will have any input into the judges' decisions.

Display of exhibits at the RDS and online on www.stripeyste.com

Refers only to projects that qualify to participate at the Exhibition

The 2026 YSTE will take place in person at the RDS, and exhibitors should be prepared to be physically present between 7–10 January (inclusive). If exceptional circumstances require changes to be made to these arrangements, exhibitors will be notified as soon as possible and amended Exhibition rules may be issued accordingly.

3.1 Stripe (as the title sponsor) provides exhibition stands of uniform size and design. Exhibits must be within the limits of the stand dimension. The back display panel is 1,189mm wide by 841mm high, and the worktop is

1,200mm wide by 600mm deep. Projects not conforming to this regulation size may be disqualified.

3.2 Exhibitors will be responsible for transporting their projects to and from the Exhibition Hall within the time allocated and to supply all ancillary 1,189mm wide by 841mm high, and the worktop is 1,200mm wide by 600mm deep. Projects not conforming to this regulation size may be disqualified.

3.3 Exhibitors will be required to assemble their own projects in the RDS Main Hall within the time allocated.

3.4 YSTE and Stripe will **not** accept responsibility for damage to, or loss of, exhibits or personal belongings. Exhibitors are advised to remove valuable equipment from unattended stands.

3.5 Exhibits **must** be safely designed and constructed and **must not** use, as part of the display, any dangerous equipment or open flames; any toxic, flammable, explosive, or irritant chemicals; or any pathogenic, toxigenic, or allergenic organism (animals or insects, plants or microorganisms). Live mammals, birds, amphibians, or reptiles **may not** be presented in exhibits.

3.6 Exhibitors are asked to refrain from using brand names of firms or sponsors in their display or in the title of their project. Reference to brands or firms must be confined to report books.

3.7 Exhibiting students must be present at their stands during all rounds of judging of projects at the RDS.

3.8 Exhibiting students must remain at their stands during the Exhibition to speak with the visiting public about their projects. They must not leave the Exhibition venue before 17:00 GMT on any day of the Exhibition without prior arrangement with the organisers.

3.9 YSTE or Stripe will **not** be responsible for any expenses incurred by the exhibitors in traveling to or from the Exhibition, or during their stay outside those offered in the Accommodation Grant Scheme.

3.10 Each exhibitor should write their name on all equipment, charts, and report books. Students should bring two copies of their report book with them, as judges will take one copy during the first round of judging, and it will not be returned until Saturday morning.

3.11 Stripe will provide wireless internet access.

3.12 Students will be required to submit a short video (no longer than three minutes) summarising their project. This video will be used by the judges in initial reviews and will also be available in nondownloadable format online on www.stripeyste.com as part of the public exhibition and publicity.

Grant scheme

4.1 The Accommodation Grant Scheme ("Grant Scheme") provides grants of €150 / £135 for each individual pupil project entry and €300 / £270 for each group project entry, subject to a maximum aggregate grant payment of €1,500 / £1,350 per school (and subject to section 4.8 below). If the fund is exceeded, YSTE may make payments on a pro rata basis. Participants must comply with all general rules governing the Exhibition to be eligible for the Grant Scheme.

For DEIS schools, an extra grant payment of €30 for individual projects (€180) and €60 for group projects (€360) will be made to a maximum aggregate of €1,800 per DEIS school. DEIS schools that do not qualify for an accommodation grant, as they are under 70 km from the RDS, will be paid €35 for an individual project and €75 for a group project to a maximum aggregate of €500 per school.

4.2 In order to be eligible for any grant under the Grant Scheme, a school must be located (i) in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland, and (ii) more than 70 km from the RDS showgrounds in Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 (measured in accordance with the service on www.theaa.com/route-planner/route

4.3 An application for a grant under the Grant Scheme from a school in respect of a project must be submitted by the teacher on behalf of the school (in the online teacher registration) at the same time as submission of the application for entry of that project. In accordance with the general rules for submission of projects, application for all project entries must be received by YSTE on or before Monday, 29 September 2025. Late applications for grants will not be processed (save at the absolute discretion of Stripe). It is important, therefore, that all grant applications be returned by Monday, 29 September 2025.

4.4 The Grant Scheme only applies to the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2026.

4.5 A school's eligibility for Grant Scheme consideration for a project is dependent on that project successfully progressing through the Exhibition screening process and qualifying for the Exhibition finals.

4.6 Any grant(s) paid to a school hereunder must be used entirely by the school to fund, in whole or in part, the travel and/or accommodation expenses only of those pupils in respect of whose project(s) the grant(s) was paid.

4.7 YSTE shall endeavour to pay grants awarded to schools in accordance with and subject to these rules on or before 19 January 2026, but YSTE shall have no liability for failure to pay any such grant on or before such date.

In the event that a school has not received a grant payment that it has been awarded by YSTE under these rules by such date, it should contact the Young Scientist Organisers' Office during the Exhibition by emailing a request to **yste@yste.ie** for payment.

4.8 Notwithstanding anything else stated herein, the Grant Scheme is subject always to a total limit on the amount of grants payable under the Grant Scheme of €100,000 (the "Fund"), and the Fund will be allocated on a pro rata basis to qualifying applicants of the scheme.

4.9 If a project for which YSTE has paid or confirmed a grant does not subsequently participate in the Exhibition for any reason, the school must reimburse the grant to YSTE within 30 days of YSTE's request if already paid, and the grant will be deemed not payable

where it has not yet been paid.

4.10 YSTE's decision on eligibility of a school or a project entry for a grant is final.

Young Scientist Business Bootcamp

5.1 If a project is to be considered for inclusion in this programme, then the student must indicate this by ticking the opt-in box on the project details form. Failure to do this will mean exclusion of the projects for consideration from the Business Bootcamp programmes.

Prize money

6.1 Prize money will be paid by bank transfer to the successful individual or to the team leader. YSTE will request bank account details within seven days of the event finishing. YSTE shall endeavour to pay prize money in accordance with and subject to these rules on or before 30 March 2026, but YSTE shall have no liability for failure to pay prize money on or before such date. All bank details will be deleted once payments have been made.

Privacy
(Content, photography, and film)

7.1 YSTE will comply with its obligations as a data controller in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') and the Data Protection Act 2018. YSTE will use your personal information only as set out in our privacy notice which you can find here www.stripeyste.com/privacy-policy. If you have any further questions or comments concerning your privacy, wish to access your personal data held about you, delete, or update information we hold about you, please contact **yste@stripe.com**.

7.2 The Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition will commission a photographer to take photographs of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition. Stripe retains the right to use any photograph taken of participants in the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition in accordance with our privacy notice.

7.3 Such content may be used on the YSTE website and for Stripe marketing purposes in accordance with our privacy notice.

NB Stripe is under no obligation to make use of any content provided.

7.4 Stripe also retains the right to publish information in regard to all projects entered into the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition, in accordance with our privacy notice.

7.5 As media partner of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition, RTÉ will be at the event interviewing and filming footage for use on its broadcast channels, online, in social media and for marketing purposes. All successful candidates must complete an RTÉ release form prior to the event, with parental consent required in respect of minors under the age of 18.

Intellectual property rights

8.1 If your project comprises functional or technical elements, it may qualify for patent protection. In order to be granted a patent, an invention must be:

- New
- Something that can be made and used in industry, including agriculture
- Have an inventive step—an invention is considered as involving an inventive step if it is not obvious to a person skilled in that area of technology, having regard to the state of the art

8.2 All intellectual property rights either preexisting or created in relation to or as part of the Exhibition shall remain the absolute property of that party or its licensors.

European Union Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS)

9.1 The host country for EUCYS will pay the travel and accommodation expenses of qualified contestants.

9.2 The host country for EUCYS will pay travel and accommodation expenses of one adult escorting a person per country. For the Irish delegation, this will be the Irish National Organiser, who is under the direct employment of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition. Any others that wish to travel to EUCYS will travel solely and fully at their own expense.

Other international competitions

Rule: Prize winners of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition (YSTE) may be asked to represent the exhibition at another science fair, including international ones as part of their prize.

The following rules outline the process and conditions for winning a prize to represent YSTE at another science fair:

Eligibility: Only specific winners at YSTE, as determined by the judging panel, will be considered for representing the Exhibition at another science fair. The winners may include individual students or student teams.

Expenses: YSTE will notify the winners about the expenses that will be covered. These may include transportation costs, accommodation, meals, and other necessary expenses directly related to participating in the selected science fair. The specific details and arrangements will be communicated to the winners within one month of being awarded the relevant prize and is based on the grant that has been received by the company making the award.

Accompanying adults: Whenever possible, a representative of YSTE will accompany the students to the selected science fair. The representative will provide support, guidance, and assistance to the winners during their participation—ensuring a smooth experience and representing YSTE effectively.

Commitment: Prize winners selected to represent YSTE at another science fair must commit to attending the fair and actively participating in all required activities, including presenting their project, engaging with other participants, and representing YSTE in a professional and respectful manner.

Compliance: Winners must comply with any additional rules, regulations, and requirements set by the selected science fair, as well as any instructions provided by the YSTE organising committee and accompanying representative.

Discretion: YSTE reserves the right to make final decisions regarding travel arrangements, expense coverage, and accompanying representatives—taking into consideration the availability of resources and any unforeseen circumstances.

By participating in the YSTE and expressing interest in representing the Exhibition at another science fair, winners agree to comply with these rules and any additional terms and conditions set forth by YSTE.

Overall winners of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition (Young Scientists & Technologists)

10.1 Overall winner(s) of the Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition may not represent any other country or organisation in respect of this science/technology project until the following year's prize winner(s) are announced. The Young Scientist(s) & Technologist(s) of the Year may not represent themselves as Young Scientists & Technologists at any time without the prior written consent of YSTE.

10.2 The Overall Young Scientist(s) & Technologist(s) of the Year will be the only project that will be eligible to be entered by the National Organiser for Ireland in the European Union Contest for Young Scientists competition each year.

Past winners (1965–2025)

1965
John Monahan

1966
Máire Caitríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Mary Finn

1967
Walter Hayes, RIP

1968
George Andrew Reynolds

1969
Luke Drury

1970
Maria Edgeworth

1971
Peter Short

1972
Seán Mac Fheorais

1973
Tadhg Begley

1974
Richard Elliott

1975
Noel Boyle

1976
Mary Kelly-Quinn

1977
Micheal Og O'Briain

1978
Donald P. McDonnell

1979
Jervis Good

1980
Karen Ruddock

1981
Catherine Conlon

1982
Martynn Sheehan

1983
William Murphy, Gareth Clarke, Turan Mirza

1984
Eoin Walsh

1985
Ronan McNulty

1986
Breda Maguire, Niamh Mulvany

1987
Emma Donnellan, Henry Byrne

1988
Siobhan Lanigan O'Keeffe

1989
Grace O'Connor, Sinead Finn

1990
Anna Minchin-Dalton

1991
Barry O'Doherty, Daniel Dundas

1992
Elizabeth Dowling, Jean Byrne, RIP

1993
Donal Keane, Rodger Toner

1994
Jane Feehan

1995
Brian Fitzpatrick, Shane Markey

1996
Elsie O'Sullivan, Rowena Mooney, Patricia Lyne

1997
Ciara McGoldrick, Emma McQuillan, Fiona Fraser

1998
Raphael Hurley

1999
Sarah Flannery

2000
Thomas Gernon

2001
Shane Browne, Peter Taylor, Michael O'Toole

2002
David Michael O'Doherty

2003
Adnan Osmani

2004
Ronan Larkin

2005
Patrick Collison

2006
Aisling Judge

2007
Abdusalam Abubakar

2008
Emer Jones

2009
John D. O'Callaghan, Liam McCarthy

2010
Richard O'Shea

2011
Alexander Amini

2012
Eric Doyle, Mark Kelly

2013
Ciara Judge, Emer Hickey, Sophie Healy-Thow

2014
Paul Clarke

2015
Ian O'Sullivan, Eimear Murphy

2016
Diana Bura, Maria Louise Fufezan

2017
Shane Curran

2018
Simon Meehan

2019
Adam Kelly

2020
Alan O'Sullivan, Cormac Harris

2021
Greg Tarr

2022
Aditya Joshi, Aditya Kumar

2023
Shane O'Connor, Liam Carew

2024
Seán O'Sullivan

2025
Ciara Murphy, Saoirse Murphy, Laoise Murphy

2026
Aoibheann Daly

2027
Winner will be announced on Friday, 8 January

Full archive at **archive.yste.ie**

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If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us:

For inquiries regarding the entry process: **yste@yste.ie**
For all other inquiries: **stripeyste@stripe.com**
Visit our website at: **stripeyste.com**