

UCSD Human Research Protections Program
Exempt Research Application — Exempt Categories 1, 2, and 3

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(Enter text in the **white space areas** below each numbered heading bar. **Expand the size of table cells as needed** – to multiple pages if needed.
See accompanying Instructions for explanation of headings and information to be provided)

1. PROJECT TITLE

NSF DRL Informal Science Education: National Science Festival Network

2. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR and CO-INVESTIGATORS

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3. FACILITIES

Schools & research facilities in four cities around the country (San Diego, CA; Cambridge, MA; San Francisco, CA; and Philadelphia, PA)

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The purpose of the National Science Festival Network evaluation will gather feedback and outcomes data for each Festival around the country, gather feedback and outcomes data for Festival-related year-round informal science educational activities that take place in each Festival city, and document the creation and success of the NSFN. The methods to be used for each of these goals are described below.

Gather Feedback and Outcomes Data for each Festival

Data will be collected from a representative sample of the events hosted during each Festival (e.g., lectures, hands-on events, visits to ISE institutions), for a minimum of 8 events per site. To make these selections, events will be categorized by type and organized by theme. In a similar previous evaluation intercept data were collected from 15 of 36 events.

Attendees at self-contained events hosted by schools and organizations will be asked to complete a brief (5-10 minute) survey at the end of the event. The survey will gather basic demographic information (gender, age, race/ethnicity, zip code), perceptions of the success of the event in key domains, overall awareness of the San Diego Science Festival, and whether the attendee plans to attend future Festival events.

Attendees at public-space events (such as those hosted in Balboa Park) will be asked to share similar information through intercept surveys. These surveys will be programmed into PDA devices and available at computer stations set up around the park, as feasible. Respondents who are interested in completing the survey can stop to answer the questions or, if they chose, the researcher will walk with them through the park to enter their responses on the PDA as the respondent makes his/her way to their next activity.

The instrument for the public-space events is included for the IRB's review. The scope of questions on this survey will be identical to those used for the self-contained events, though the title on the survey and the wording of some questions will be changed to match the specific features of particular events.

While women and underrepresented minorities will clearly be part of the population comprising schools and public groups taking part in Festival activities, no special provision for including such will be employed excepting that a great many of the schools in which activities will be conducted are located in economically disadvantaged, educationally underserved areas of the San Diego region.

Gather Feedback and Outcomes Data for Festival-Related Year-Round Activities

The purpose of the year-round informal science educational activities related to Festival activities is to provide students with hands-on science experience led by real scientists, undergraduates or graduate students. A sample of K-12 students who participate in these activities will complete a brief survey at the end of these events by completing a standard anonymous Hands-On Feedback Survey form. The survey will be no more than two pages in length and different versions will be created for middle and high school students. Each survey will ask students whether this is the first time they have completed an activity with a scientist and then gather task-specific and overall ratings of their experience.

Middle and high school students will also share basic demographic information (gender, race/ethnicity, school, and zip code), and indicate whether they attended the Festival.

5. RECRUITMENT

All attendees at events hosted by schools and organizations will have the chance to complete a survey. All current and future National Science Festival Network partners will have an opportunity to complete surveys.

6. INFORMED CONSENT

We would like to waive the consent requirement. All surveys will be completed anonymously for the evaluation. Requiring consent would necessitate gathering the names of participants and linking their names to the data collected. All participants will have the opportunity to choose to or refuse to complete the survey; as such, if they complete the form or participate in the intercept survey, they have provided consent.

7. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALTY PROCEDURES

Subjects' identities will not be known.

8. FUNDING SUPPORT AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of any sort exists. Funding will come primarily from NSF with other support coming from local area private sector industry, schools, universities, foundations and individuals.