

2026 Wisconsin Science Festival: Kickoff Party Follow-up Information

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

Based on the feedback and questions we received after the 2026 Festival Virtual Kickoff Party, we wanted to share a bit more information about the following topics. If you missed the kickoff party and would like to view the slides or recording, these are available on our "[Host an Event](#)" page. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any specific questions or concerns you might have. We're here to help and look forward to working with you and your organization for the 16th annual Wisconsin Science Festival!

PROCESS TO SUBMIT EVENTS AND TIMELINE

- **APRIL 16:** Our [event intake form](#) opened on April 16th and will remain open through October 14, 2026
 - Create an account at wiscifest.org/my-account to submit, track, and view your events
 - Once logged in, submit details using our intake form for any and all events you would like to be included during the festival (October 15-25, 2026). If your event doesn't fall within the dates, but is still in the month of October, we will likely be able to promote it on our website as a pre-/post-festival event.
 - Submitted events will not receive an automatic email confirmation. Once we've had a chance to review the submission, we send a formal confirmation to notify of approval. You can see all your successfully submitted events in your festival website account.
 - Regular newsletters and reminders will be sent. If you don't already receive our quarterly BeeLine newsletter, subscribe here: wiscifest.org/subscribe.
- **JULY 1:** We begin publishing events to our website after July 1st. Once an event is published, we are still able to make any modifications to the listing. Please notify us directly via email/phone to make any changes to your listing. You can view all your published events in your account.
- **AUGUST 1:** Events submitted before August 1st will have a chance to request an "Event Host Kit" with swag and other materials to help promote your event as part of the larger Science Festival. Events submitted after August 1st will still have the option to request these materials but supplies are limited and certain items may no longer be available.
- **SEPTEMBER:** Event Host Kits mailed mid-month and distribution process of official WI Sci Fest ads, press release, and other information begins.
- **OCTOBER 1:** Science in a Bag distribution process begins. Libraries accepted as a Science in a Bag site will be notified by the end of July.
- **OCTOBER 15-25:** 16th Wisconsin Science Festival!
- **NOVEMBER 15:** Post-event attendance, photos, feedback requested by this date.
- **JANUARY 1:** Annual report published and shared broadly

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

- **Wisconsin Science Festival BioBlitz:** A BioBlitz allows volunteers, from the public to professionals, to report observations of plants, animals, and fungi seen in Wisconsin during the festival dates. Our friends at the Wisconsin Water Library and Wisconsin Sea Grant, who host the annual Great Lakes BioBlitz in the spring, have assembled an amazing [BioBlitz resource guide](#) with all the important information you need to host your own BioBlitz. There will also be an informational webinar (date & time TBD). [Learn more on our website.](#)
- **Science in a Bag:** Now in it's 6th year, the Science in a Bag program partners with libraries all throughout Wisconsin to distribute free, hands-on STEAM kits to families. To learn more about Science in a Bag and fill out the application form to receive bags at your library location, please visit our [Science in a Bag web page](#). Contact Jerrod (jbuckner@morgridge.org).
- **Badger Talks and Badgers on Tap:** Request a UW presenter to engage with your organization in-person or virtually or host a Badgers on Tap flash talk-style event at a local watering hole. Contact Maya at: badgertalks@uwmad.wisc.edu to learn more or visit the [Badger Talks web page](#).
- **Media Resources Page:** Find festival logos, boilerplate language, press releases and host guides on our [Resources Page](#) which is also linked at the footer of each page on our website.

Beesly Visits: Event hosts have reached out to ask about our mascot, [Beesly](#), making a visit to their location. We have a limited staffing capacity to travel during the dates of the festival, but if this is of interest to you, please reach out to info@wiscifest.org and we will do our best to accommodate!

BRAINSTORM HELP AND PAST EXAMPLES

- **How to find events in your community:** The easiest way is to explore locations in your area is our [official festival map](#). Please contact us directly to ask about other possible partners in your area who have connected with the festival in previous years.
- **Year-round Activities:** Check out our [activity page](#) for examples of low-cost science activities and coloring pages that can be utilized before, during, or after the festival.
- **Feature ideas:** Incorporating "Us" is not required but here are some potential options
 - Invite a local scientist to share their story of how they got involved in STEAM
 - Build edible DNA models using tasty treats
 - Panel discussion on the philosophy and history of science
 - Kineisiology workshop exploring how we move the way we do
- **Events in Madison:** We collaboratively produce several of our own "festival mainstay" events in Madison. Please reach out to us directly if you'd like to learn more about:
 - [Science on the Square](#) (October 15)
 - Discovery Field Trip Expo Day (October 20) - [presenter registration](#)
 - [WhySci Variety Show](#) (Date TBD)
 - [Wisconsin Book Festival](#) STEAM Author Events (October 15-18)



BRAINSTORM HELP AND PAST EXAMPLES (cont.)

- Past Examples of Festival Events:** We include a wide variety of events for learners of all ages during our Science Festival. Nature walks, pub talks, STEAM storytimes, stargazing nights, comedy shows, tours, tastings, and family STEAM nights. A screen shot of some events from 2024 is shown below. If you are curious to know more about specific events in your area or examples of past descriptions please reach out to us directly.

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