



Tips to Host a Science Festival Event

October 15-25th, 2026

PRODUCERS



Welcome, Event Hosts!

TIPS TO HOST A SUCCESSFUL WISCONSIN SCIENCE FESTIVAL EVENT

Please note these are general tips for science outreach events and should be modified to suit your needs.

BEFORE THE EVENT

Solicit Support

- Recruit possible government or corporate support for financial requirements associated with the night. Think of material costs, space reservation fees, staffing costs.
- Make a formal call to area educators or student groups to help put on activities.
- You can also ask parents or PTA committees to volunteer prepping activities or assisting with set-up, recording, wayfinding or event evaluation.
- Make sure you have engaged more than enough support staff for your anticipated numbers.

Activity Selection

- Choose your activities in advance so that you can publicize them and have time to get them ready.
- Make sure that you have enough activities so that families won't have to wait too long at each station to get involved.
- At a minimum: Eight hands-on activities, plus one or two activities that many families can participate on at the same time (i.e. Murals, Rube Goldberg machine)
- When possible, set up more than one of each activity.
- Recommended Activities: Quick hands-on experiments using readily available materials. An opportunity to build or invent an item that displays a scientific property. Large murals or art projects that illustrate some aspect of science.
- Try to avoid longer talks or presentations as these may not be well attended if there are more engaging hands-on activities. Displays from outside organizations are also sometimes overlooked with the other hands-on stations around that are more eye-catching and appealing to the audience.

Publicize the Event

- Publicize the event through the school newsletter, website, and teacher emails to their students.
- Make your description of the event concrete by listing some of the specific activities that families will have the chance to do.
- If you have held the event before, let readers know how this year's event will be different.
- Recruiting multiple teachers to attend will boost the attendance of the event, since teachers are likely to encourage their students to go.
- The WSF website has a marketing resource that provides event flyer templates and other helpful promotional materials. Don't forget to use any social media channels you have available! (#WiSciFest)

Logistics and Event Set-Up

- Try to anticipate crowd flow prior to the start of your event. Think about where to position any hands-on activities as well as where you'll need to place directional signs (bathrooms, parking, etc.). Use volunteers and support staff as way-finders to assist attendees.
- Locate sources for tables, chairs, trash cans, and if your event is outdoors paperweights.
- Make sure you prepare any copies for activities. The WSF website has signage templates available for download.
- If you are using a building that is not your own, anticipate the basic building functions:
 - Do you know how to turn on/off the lights?
 - Do you know who has a key to the facility and how you will gain access on the day of the event?
 - Do you know how to unlock the bathrooms? Turn on the water?
 - Do you know where to locate the closest electrical outlet in the event that a presenter needs one?
- If you are planning tours, walks or talks, will there be a central meeting place? How will participants know they are in the right place?

DAY OF THE EVENT

- Get there early—at least 1.5 hours before participants will arrive to ensure adequate setup time.
- Set up any tables, chairs, trash receptacles, and additional lighting.
- Make sure bathrooms are unlocked and that water is turned on and ready for use.
- Put out any way finding signs or station volunteers to help with attendee direction.
- Set up materials for distribution. Be sure to prevent them from flying away.
- Once volunteers and staff are onsite, brief them on job assignments and answer any questions they have regarding tasks.
- Prepare and deploy all necessary materials to the various stations
 - Materials to have on hand: Cleaning products, first aid kits, hand sanitizer, coat racks or cubbies for personal items, snacks and water for volunteers and staff, maps and handouts for attendees and staff.

Thank you for helping us
unleash curiosity at this year's
Wisconsin Science Festival,
Oct 15-25, 2026.

Please contact us at any time!

info@wiscifest.org

We want to trend on social media during the month of October! When promoting your event online, tag us @WiSciFest or use the hashtag:

#WiSciFest



Wisconsin Science Festival



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