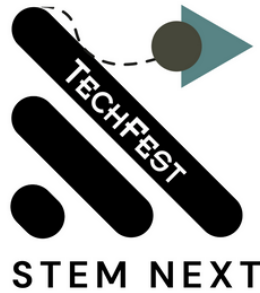
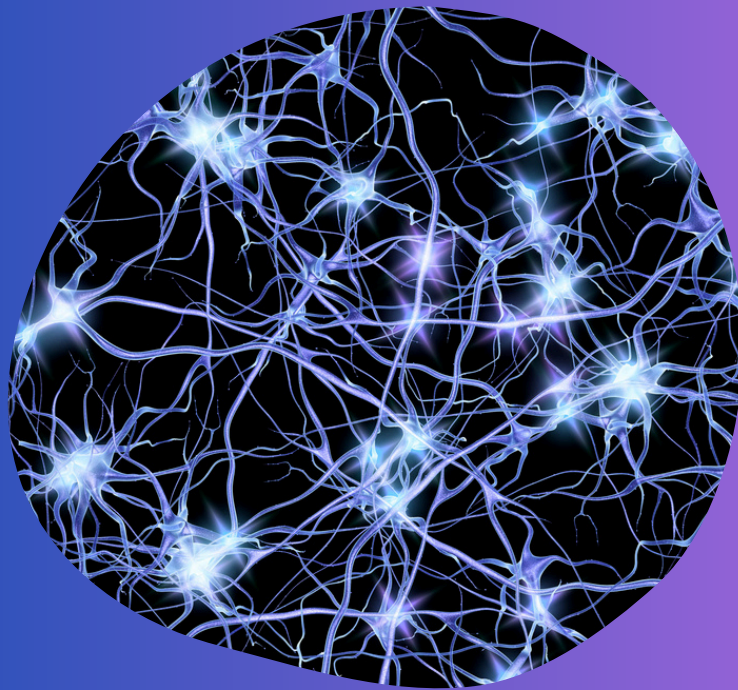


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CHEMISTRY & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES



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CHEMISTRY & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

TechFest's STEM Next essay competition is open to all 16 - 18 year olds.

This is a solo project that will require independent research and writing. However, it is encouraged that participants get feedback from their peers or teachers before the final submission.

Entrants are invited to submit an essay that addresses one of the essay titles or questions outlined below. There is the option to write broadly about a general topic, or you can choose to go into greater detail on a specific aspect or question. Essay questions are provided below. You must select one of the topics provided, however, you have the freedom to tailor the question to your preference. In addition, regardless of your approach, your essay should fulfil the below requirements.

ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

The essay should be **between 1000 to a maximum of 3000 words** in length (excluding footnotes, figure captions and references). All sources must be appropriately acknowledged and cited (including all websites and personal correspondence), and a full reference list should be included. In addition, **at least** one external industry professional must be interviewed as part of the research for the essay. A database of industry professionals (including their area of expertise and contact details) will be provided to each participating student as potential sources they could contact. However, students are also free to make their own connections, or to get in touch for help identifying an expert in a particular field.

There is no rigid requirement for the structure and format of the essays, but good submissions will present clear arguments, a detailed reference list of sources, include illustrations (which could be graphs, plots, diagrams or pictures) and where possible provide some specific examples or cases. A good level of technical content is expected, but you should aim to make the essay interesting and accessible to an intelligent non-specialist audience. The essays will be judged by a panel of experts from various fields and prizes will be awarded to the winning entries.

TECHFEST'S STEM NEXT ESSAY COMPETITION IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline to register interest - 14/06/24

Deadline for essay submission - 30/08/24

(don't forget to submit the cover sheet as well!)

Winning essays announced - November 2024

TECHFEST'S STEM NEXT CHEMISTRY & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES ESSAY COMPETITION PRIZES



First place - Amazon vouchers - amount TBC
 Second place - Amazon vouchers - amount TBC
 Third place - Amazon vouchers - amount TBC



Please note Amazon vouchers cannot be exchanged for cash or alternative prize.

ESSAY CRITERIA SUMMARY:

- **Between 1000 to a maximum of 3000** words in length (excluding footnotes, figure captions, in text references and reference list).
- 12-point font minimum
- 2cm margins minimum
- 1.5 line spacing minimum
- Harvard style referencing for in text citations and full reference list (downloadable referencing guide as well as online tutorials will be available).
- At least one illustration (this could be a graph, plot, diagram, table or picture) with appropriate figure or table legend and source material reference.
- An interview with at least one external industry professional (TechFest can help you find an appropriate interviewee, or you are welcome to find your own).
- Submissions must include a cover sheet (which can be downloaded from TechFest's website).

REGISTRATION

Students that wish to take part should register their interest **no later than 14/06/24** by submitting the online form --> [CLICK](#).

The project officially launches on **17/06/24** - at that point registered students will be sent a starting pack with all the information they will need to complete the project.

In addition, throughout the course of the competition we will be posting pre-recorded lectures on topics related to essay writing that will provide additional support and information. What is more, students are encouraged to contact us should they have specific questions about their essay.

If you have any questions, please check the FAQ section on our website first. If your query is not there, get in touch with gabijablazyte@techfest.org.uk

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Question 1.

There is still a huge STEM skills gap, i.e. not enough people are choosing to learn and work in STEM fields. What do you think could be done to rectify this situation?

Question 2.

How do opioids work? Discuss the risks and benefits associated with this group of drugs.

Question 3.

It's been suggested that extreme weather events are occurring more frequently across the globe in recent years. Discuss these events, the mechanisms involved in such events, the communities that are at risk of being affected and possible mitigations of these risks.

Question 4.

Plastic pollution is a concern due to the time it takes for plastics to break down in the environment. Investigate the role of living organisms, including fungi and bacteria, in breaking down complex compounds in biology, and how this can be utilised for breaking down plastics.

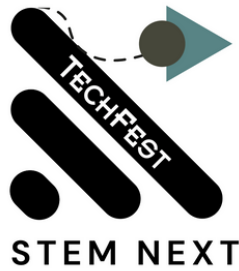
Question 5.

Discuss the challenges and opportunities available to ensure that food production is environmentally sustainable whilst providing access to adequate nourishment for the world's population.

Question 6.

Highlight the ways in which hormonal imbalance impacts people's physical and/or emotional well-being and discuss possible remedies and solutions designed to restore the balance.

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