**NY-Upstate Regional JSHS FAQ (11.22.24)**

**About JSHS**

**What is the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS)?**

Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) is a Department of Defense sponsored STEM program (U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense and the U.S. Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force) that encourages high school students to conduct original research in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and publicly recognizes students for outstanding achievement. By connecting talented students, their teachers, and research professionals at affiliated symposia and by rewarding research excellence, JSHS aims to widen the pool of trained talent prepared to conduct research and development vital to our nation.

JSHS regional and national symposia are held during the academic year and reach more than 8,000 high school students and teachers throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Department of Defense Schools of Europe and the Pacific. Students must first participate in their regional symposium where they compete for selection to present at the national symposium each year.

**What makes JSHS unique from other STEM competitions?**

NY Upstate JSHS participants will apply to either the poster or oral presentation tracks of the competition. The opportunity for oral presentation is unique to JSHS. Additionally, JSHS exposes participants to opportunities in academic, industrial, and governmental communities with a special focus on DOD-related opportunities and areas of interest in STEM. All applicants to NY Upstate JSHS will be invited to participate in a virtual speaker series during the month of January. The in-person regional symposium will feature a STEM showcase including resources and activities.

**Why should I participate in JSHS?**

All qualified high school students are encouraged to apply to the NY-Upstate JSHS regional. JSHS is about more than winning prizes (though we do award scholarships and all-expense-paid trips to the National JSHS event). JSHS is about the opportunity to showcase your work and receive feedback from professionals in your field of interest. It is about networking with a community of like-minded peers. It is about new opportunities. It is about stepping outside of your comfort zone. JSHS can be a lot of fun. Trying something new can be scary, but we are here to help! Contact us at [jshs@rit.edu](mailto:jshs@rit.edu).

**Do the students who submit application materials to the NY-Upstate regional count as participants in JSHS?**

Yes. All students who submit application materials to the competition are considered participants, whether or not they are invited to the in-person regional event.

**General Info on Applying to the NY Upstate Regional JSHS**

**Is there an application guide or walkthrough available?**

Yes, we have instructions [here](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1YTnaeneCcCFD3Xe24jgx-IkPZx1c9MUl/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=116293009125964492985&rtpof=true&sd=true) to help you through the application process.

**The registration form asks for “Title” under the category of “Registration Information” (below date of birth and email address) and later asks for “Project Title”. What is the difference?**

The first request for “Title” under the category of “Registration Information” refers to your personal/professional title. This refers to the honorific before a registrant’s name (ex. Ms., Mr., Dr.). Use the “Project Title” field to share the title of your research project.

**In the application, should students register as a “student participant” or a “speaker”?**

All students who are submitting application materials to participate in the oral or poster competition at the regional should register as a “student participant.

**Do applicants need to register for either the poster or oral category in the application?**

Yes. Applications will be reviewed against others in the same category. Once the category is selected, it cannot be changed. Students can only apply for one category – oral or poster.

**What are the eight research categories of JSHS?**

Research is assigned to one of the following categories: Environmental Science, Biomedical Sciences, Life & Behavioral Sciences, Medicine & Health, Engineering & Technology, Mathematics & Computer Science, Physical Sciences, or Chemistry. Please see the JSHS Core Rules of Competition (pg. 3) for details on each of the categories.

**Should teachers register for the regional?**

Teachers (and other adults) should not register until they have been identified as the chaperone for one of the participants invited to the in-person regional event, after December 18. Instructions will be provided to the students with their invitation to the February 1 competition.

**Are digital signatures accepted on the Statement of Outside Assistance (SOA)?**

Yes. Digital or wet signatures are acceptable. Please contact [jshs@rit.edu](mailto:jshs@rit.edu) to report any problems with the signature process.

**I have submitted my application materials through the registration system. What are the next steps?**

Judges will review all of the applications received by the December 4 due date. Students will be notified of their acceptance into the February 1 regional event by December 18. Accepted students must confirm their intent to participate, identify their chaperone, and indicate a need for travel support by December 23.

**Preparing an Abstract**

**What are the guidelines for writing the abstract for the application?**

Students should reference two guiding documents when preparing their research abstract for submission with the application. The first is the “Abstract Preparation” section in the JSHS Core Rules of Competition (page 4). The second is the rubric that will be used to judge the abstracts. Note that the abstract word limit is 500 words. This limit does not includes references. The word limit does not include contents of the abstract header.

**Is there a preferred format for the abstract?**

While there is a preferred format for the abstract, the format is not required. The only requirement is the 500-word limit (not including header and references).

The preferred format for the abstract borrows from the JSHS Core Rules of Competition. Abstracts should be 1-inch single-spaced, typed in 12-point font (Times New Roman), with 1-inch margins. The header preceding the abstract body must include:

1. Title of the research;
2. Author name;
3. High school, high school city, high school state;
4. Name of teacher/mentor/sponsor and his or her organization. Precede the individual’s name with a subheading (i.e. teacher, mentor, sponsor);
5. Include one line of space between the heading and abstract body.

**What is the word limit for the abstract?**

The abstract word limit is 500 words. This limit does not include references. The limit does not include contents of a header.

**What format should be used for references?**

References should be included in the abstract as appropriate. APA Style is preferred, but not required. For help with APA, see the APA Guide and Purdue OWL.

**Can I submit a full research paper instead of an abstract with my application?**

No. We realize that this is a change from the past format of the NY Upstate regional, but we have decided to select participants using research abstracts this year. Only the students selected for the oral research competition at the in-person event will be expected to submit full research papers.

**Is there an abstract sample provided for reference?**

There is not a sample available at this time. Participants are encouraged to review the abstract judging rubric.

**Attending the NY Upstate Regional on February 1st**

**Will financial support for travel to the NY Upstate Regional JSHS be provided?**

All students who are invited to participate in the in-person regional event on February 1 in Rome, NY, will indicate their need for funds to support travel when confirming their spot in the program. Details regarding travel support will be provided with the invitation to participate. JSHS is committed to removing barriers to participation, including costs for travel. RIT will not arrange transportation or lodging (if necessary) for participants. We will, however, make recommendations upon request for carpooling connecting competitors traveling from the same area.

**I am interested in JSHS but am not ready to participate, can I observe the regional event on February 1?**

Unfortunately, space in our venue is limited and we are not able to host observers for the in-person event. We realize that this is a change from the past and will provide feedback to the host of the 2026 event that increased capacity to enable observers is desired by the community.

**Can I attend the regional event as a teacher, parent, or general observer?**

Unfortunately, space in our venue is limited and we are limited in the number of non-participants that are able to attend. Students who are invited to the February 1 event will have the availability to identify one person to serve as their adult chaperone. More information will be provided with the invitation to the February 1 regional. We realize that this is a change from the past and will provide feedback to the host of the 2026 event that increased capacity to enable additional attendees is desired by the community.

**I represent a STEM career path, DOD agency, or university. Can I attend the regional to participate in the STEM showcase?**

Please contact us at [jshs@rit.edu](mailto:jshs@rit.edu) to express your interest. Planning for the showcase is underway.