



SCIENCE FESTIVAL

PARTNER GUIDE 2025



WHY PARTICIPATE?



The COSI Science Festival helps build a diverse STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) workforce and address Ohio's STEAM skills gap by exposing individuals to science and technology where they live, learn, and lounge. It is fueled by partnerships and built on collaboration. With businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, civic leaders, and industry joining forces, the COSI Science Festival features a unique, partner-based model that ensures the benefits of the festival reach a diverse audience across a wide geography, while also ensuring each festival event has its own distinct science flair.

FOUR DAYS OF HANDS-ON SCIENCE

Wednesday
April 30

Community STEAM events all around Ohio

Thursday
May 1

Community STEAM events all around Ohio

Friday
May 2

Community STEAM events all around Ohio

Saturday
May 3



BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

▶ Enhance STEAM Learning and Career Readiness

Engage students with hands-on activities that build STEAM knowledge and career interest, while linking classroom knowledge with real world applications.

▶ Build Partnerships and Community Visibility

Collaborate with educational institutions and industry to expose students to STEAM professions, provide authentic STEAM experiences, and showcase your organization's STEAM innovations, contributions, and opportunities.

▶ Promote Diversity, Inclusivity, and Access to New Audiences

Reach diverse students, addressing unique challenges faced by underrepresented groups, ensure cultural relevance in STEAM programs, and connect with tens of thousands of attendees to broaden career options and support lifelong learning.

▶ Connect with Other Institutions

Join a network of passionate individuals and organizations in STEAM, growing new ideas and opportunities while spreading the love of STEAM.

By participating in the COSI Science Festival, your organization supports a skilled, diverse STEAM workforce, gains visibility, reaches new audiences, and connects with other institutions to foster a STEAM-literate community.



A scientist from Battelle, the Visionary Sponsor of the COSI Science Festival, interacts with guests at the Big Science Celebration.

STEAM COMMUNITY EVENT HOSTS



Join the **COSI Science Festival** by hosting a STEAM community event, and share your organization's work and mission with your neighbors. These events provide a fun, interactive setting that sparks curiosity about science, enabling attendees to envision themselves in STEAM careers while engaging with scientific research and opportunities within their community.

In essence, COSI Science Festival events celebrate and highlight the importance of science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics organizations in an engaging and enjoyable manner, emphasizing that science is everywhere and for everyone.

THREE DAYS OF COMMUNITY EVENTS

▶ **Wednesday, APRIL 30**

▶ **Thursday, MAY 1**

▶ **Friday, MAY 2**

PARTNER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

▶ Produce an event

Events, no matter their size, can make a significant impact on an attendee. What's an important topic related to your organization's mission that you'd like to share?

In general, we recommend hosting events after school and work hours, but the event time, topic, and format are ultimately up to you. Choose what aligns best with your organization's goals and your audience. While we encourage new ideas, repeating successful events from previous years can also be a great fit.

▶ Complete necessary paperwork

Applications open in Fall and begin to close in mid-February. Applying is easy, but there are a few key steps in the application process. It is critical to meet application deadlines. Timely and complete submissions increase the exposure your event will receive.

▶ Promote your event and the overall festival

COSI will provide you with a marketing toolkit to help you advertise your event. As an event host, you should:

- Use the toolkit to promote your event through social media, newsletters, email, and any of your other communication methods.
- Link to the COSI Science Festival (CSF) on your organization's website and social media.
- Share COSI's CSF social media posts and use the hashtag #cosiscifest.

▶ Have a question? Please ask!

COSI recognizes that everyone has a limited amount of time and resources. We strive to be the best partner in science, technology, and industry learning. Our Science Festival, Scientific Content, and Education teams are available for questions or feedback on an idea - cosiscifest@cosi.org.



HOSTING A COMMUNITY EVENT



While a wide array of formats are possible, events typically fall into one of four categories:

BE A SCIENTIST

Showcase the amazing STEAM work you do! These events offer behind-the-scenes access to labs, nature centers, museums, and more, inviting the public to see what STEAM experts do daily—all while having fun. Join us in fostering a love for science in our community!

ADULT SCIENCE SERIES

Bring science to life for adults with engaging talks, hands-on experiments, and social fun. Whether 21+ or just for mature audiences, your event will prove it's never too late to enjoy science. Cocktails, mingling, and curiosity await—make science an adventure at any age!

ARTS EVENTS

There's a commonality of creativity driving both arts and science—they solve problems and connect us to our world. Highlighting this connection makes science more accessible. Whether you have a performing scientist or an artist painting murals, we're excited to share their stories with the public. Let's inspire together!

SCIENCE BLOCK PARTY!

Invite the whole neighborhood for a science block party with music, food trucks, and hands-on science stations. These large-scale events are fun, engaging opportunities to bring science to everyone. Let's create a memorable community experience that celebrates the excitement of discovery!



HOW TO APPLY

1

Propose an Event

By mid-February, submit your event proposal to the [Host an Event](#) page on the COSI Science Festival website (www.cosi-scifest.org). You don't need all the details confirmed, just a rough idea of what you'd like to do and an approximate date/time. COSI's team is also available if you'd like feedback or need help fleshing an idea out.

2

Confirm Your Details

COSI's Science Festival team will review your event proposals and ensure subject materials will be a good fit for the Science Festival. Approved events will be asked to confirm their details (finalized name, exact date/time/location, etc.) and sign an exhibitor host agreement. Upon confirmation, details will be included on the COSI Science Festival website.

3

Promote!

Once you know what you're doing, it's important to tell people about your event and the COSI Science Festival as a whole. You'll be sent a media toolkit that will help let the public know what you have planned, and we ask that you use #cosiscifest in your social media. COSI will also promote your event, but we will reach more people if we work together.

EVENT HOSTING GUIDELINES



1. Showcase Your Passion: Your event should reflect your organization's mission and passions. We're excited to provide feedback if you need it. Every industry has something amazing to share.

2. STEAM Focus: Your event should prominently feature science, technology, engineering, art, and/or mathematics. Don't be afraid to try something new, but repeat ideas can also work well.

3. Host Responsibilities: You are responsible for all aspects of the event, including organization, content, staffing, costs, etc.

4. Promote with COSIScifest: Host agrees to promote the event as a COSIScifest event using marketing materials and a toolkit provided by the COSI Science Festival. This helps to ensure consistency and brand recognition, making it easier for the public to identify and participate in your event.

- ▶ While COSI will promote your event and the festival in general, host organizations should do the same! Have a social media presence or a website? Make sure you create an event and share it! Send out a quarterly activity guide? Don't forget to include your festival event! Social media, newsletters, bulletin boards, and emails are all great examples, but the toolkit includes instructions to make it simple.

5. Timing: Events should occur during the COSI Science Festival. Events that start before but end during the Festival might be acceptable. Avoid scheduling events on the last day during the Big Science Celebration at COSI.

6. Event Location: In-person events are usually held in Ohio, but virtual events are also welcome. Have an idea for an event outside Ohio? Let's chat! Email us at cosiscifest@cosi.org.

7. Public Access: Events should be open to the public. Free events are encouraged. Consider audience, transportation, timing, and parking when deciding where and when your event will be.

8. Event Costs: Free events are preferred, but free events with paid admission (e.g., museum entry) are acceptable. Ticketed events should only cover production costs. We usually can't support fundraising events for other causes.

9. Provide Feedback: As a COSIScifest host, you agree to give COSI requested feedback on your event.

10. Non-Commercial: Festival organizers may reject excessively commercial events and reserve the right to reject any event for any reason.

What does COSI provide?

- ▶ **Larger Audience:** It goes beyond just increasing attendance numbers. The COSI Science Festival aims to connect new audiences with the idea that science is in your work. COSI's brand assists in that connection, showcasing what you do while celebrating the benefits it brings to us all.
- ▶ **Marketing Toolkit:** This assists in advertising your event and includes marketing strategy, promotional materials, signage, and a simple how-to if you aren't a marketing professional.
- ▶ **STEAM Experts:** Feel like your idea needs some extra expert power? Let us know, and we'll work to find knowledgeable scientists that can assist.
- ▶ **COSI Representative:** We aim to send a COSI representative to your event. However, please ensure that the event programming focuses on your organization and team. With so many events going on, our representative's attendance is not guaranteed.
- ▶ **Festival Impact Report:** This report can be used for grant applications and other organizational needs.

How do we promote your event and organization?

- ▶ **Digital and Online Promotion:** Utilize the COSI Science Festival website, social media, email newsletters, online ads, and unique event URLs to engage a broad audience.
- ▶ **Media and Public Relations:** Partner with local and statewide media, influencers, and use press releases and #cosiscifest for extensive coverage.
- ▶ **Community Engagement:** Collaborate with schools, community centers, libraries, and businesses, and provide festival swag to enhance promotion.
- ▶ **Promotional Events and Materials:** Host pre-festival events, and actively promote through COSI's marketing channels.

BIG SCIENCE CELEBRATION



Join us for the **Big Science Celebration (BSC)**, the largest interactive STEAM event in Ohio and the grand finale of the four-day COSI Science Festival. This high-energy, outdoor event brings together the nation's top STEAM organizations to connect with thousands of youth and adults. Prepare for a day packed with exciting experiments and spectacular science displays, where your organization can showcase the amazing STEAM activities happening within. This free event is open to everyone, especially families with school-aged children and those with limited access to science education resources. Get ready for an unforgettable day of discovery and fun!



Saturday
May 3
11 AM - 5 PM



HOW DO I EXHIBIT AT THE BSC?

- ▶ **Propose an exhibit space** (including vehicles) by early February at <https://cosiscifest.org/get-involved/become-an-exhibitor/>
- ▶ **Become a COSI Science Festival sponsor**, receiving numerous benefits, including an exhibitor space.

Why is there a fee? From permitting costs to equipment rentals and security, there are many costs associated with organizing an event of this scale. The exhibitor fee allows us to recoup some of these costs so that the festival and its impact are sustained for years to come.

Please check online at <https://cosiscifest.org/get-involved/become-an-exhibitor/> for an updated fee schedule, including discounted pricing for non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and governmental offices.



Interested in performing at the Big Science Celebration or have a public art piece that ties in?

Reach out to cosiscifest@cosi.org to find out more about participating.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I participate?

There are two key ways: creating and hosting a STEAM community event during the first three days of the festival, or exhibiting at the Big Science Celebration on the final day. Applications are on www.cosiscifest.org, and organizations are encouraged to do both.

Do I need to submit multiple applications?

There are two separate applications: one for community events and one for Big Science Celebration exhibitors. If you're hosting the same event multiple times, you can submit one application and provide the dates and times. For different events, you need to submit a separate application for each to ensure we have all the necessary details. The Big Science Celebration has its own application. These applications are quick and help keep all the information organized.

Can we host multiple events?

Absolutely. With event logistics determined by your organization, you are welcome to host as much as you feel you need and have capacity to run. To reach a strong audience base—sometimes less is more.

What's your event selection criteria?

We prioritize a diverse range of event categories to achieve a well-balanced combination. In our evaluation, we consider various scientific subjects, different demographic targets, and event locations within the state. We are especially interested in events that expand access to science education and resources for underserved communities. Additionally, we value innovative and unconventional ideas, and we encourage you to bring fresh concepts to the table.



Can we be a sponsor?

Yes. The COSI Science Festival is the perfect opportunity to align with COSI's important work to improve science literacy, foster a diverse STEAM workforce, and support accessible STEAM learning in our community – all while gaining region-wide marketing reach and impact. Contact Keely Buckley at kbuckley@cosi.org for more information.

Can government agencies participate?

Absolutely. COSI regularly collaborates with local, state, and federal agencies and has team members dedicated to each level of government. The COSI Science Festival is an excellent opportunity for workforce development and for showcasing the valuable contributions government agencies make to society.

How do I volunteer?

We connect local STEAM experts with [events and places they can assist](#) and can always use volunteers for the [Big Science Celebration](#). Find more information at www.cosiscifest.org.

FAQ CONTINUED

I want to host an event - what recommendations can you give?

We want participants to easily attend your event, so please choose locations that are close to public transportation or offer free parking. Non-academic venues are recommended to attract a wider audience. Be mindful of the event timing to avoid inconvenient hours for the public. Consider the following when scheduling: desired audience, travel time, mealtime, and bedtime. For example, an event for adults on Thursday at 3 PM might be convenient for the hosts but may not attract your desired attendance numbers due to school or work obligations.

Can we repeat something we've done in the past?

We encourage you to think creatively, experiment, and try something new, but we know many organizations have put on incredible past programs that the public would love to see again. If you want to try something you've done before in order to improve it for this year, go ahead and submit.

What if it rains?

Individual community events will be decided on a case by case basis, but the Big Science Celebration will be held rain or shine (barring severe weather). We'll put in a request for sunny and 72, but we all know how Ohio weather is.

What's co-branding?

To amplify event marketing efforts, we ask that you use the COSI Science Festival logo as much as possible when mentioning the festival in marketing or press material. All logos will be available in the toolkit that you'll be sent, and COSI will recognize each partner in conjunction with your event.



Does the COSI Science Festival provide any funding?

Our aim is to assist you to the best of our ability, and we consistently make efforts to secure funds for financial assistance for various events. In certain years, we are fortunate to establish a formal grant structure as part of the proposal process. In less financially abundant years, don't hesitate to reach out—we'll do our best to help within our means.

Who can I ask for help with my event or exhibitor space ideas?

Our Science Festival, Scientific Content, and Education teams are here to help. Please reach out to cosiscifest@cosi.org and we will be happy to discuss more.

