



ISA

STEM
COMPETITION



Open to KS2-5
Final: Thursday 19 March 2026,
Crosfields School, RG2 9BL

DEADLINE

Thursday 22 January 2026

Competition open to ISA Members' schools only
Visit the ISA website for more information

isaschools.org.uk | isaarts@isaschools.org.uk

ISA
ARTS

The ISA STEM Competition encourages pupils at our Members' schools to investigate and consider solutions to modern day problems. Pupils are presented with an opportunity to showcase and develop skills such as teamwork, communication and problem solving. Open to Key Stages 2-5.

Eligibility

Only schools whose Head is a Member with ISA are eligible to enter ISA competitions. Any pupils competing must be on the main school's admissions register, on the date of the event.

Open to Year 3 to Year 13. Schools can submit a maximum of two entries per year group. We encourage schools to run a competition in house and put through their best projects. Our year groups are based on the UK national curriculum, for more information and to check the correct year group for your students see [here](#). Please ensure you enter pupils according to the UK system, even if your own school's age group system differs.

At ISA, we are committed to making our opportunities accessible, we welcome applications from all pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. If your pupil(s), those with an EHCP or on the school's SEND register, are working at a level that differs from their age group's key stage, or if your school or student focuses on development and skills rather than year groups, please contact us.

Alternative formats of these guidelines are available on request. Please notify us at the earliest opportunity so we can provide the document accordingly, if required.

Competition Categories

Schools can submit a maximum of two entries per year group.

- Year 3/4: Design a paper rollercoaster that can support a marble
- Year 5/6: Design a self-sustaining terrarium
- Year 7 to 9: Design a toiletry item that is accessible for people with a disability
- Year 10 to 13: Design a system to capture rainwater to irrigate and regreen deserts

How to enter

Entries must be submitted via the online entry form [here](#) on the ISA website by **Thursday 22 January 2026** at the latest. Entries must follow technical and creative requirements set out in these official rules and guidelines.

Please note, there are two rounds for this competition. Shortlisted entries will be invited to present their project to the judges at **Crosfields School on Thursday 19 March 2026**. Further details will be sent to the finalists nearer the time.

Each entry should include:

- a PDF presentation to explain the following:
- The project created
- The problem that participants are trying to solve or investigate

- The process, highlight the stages, and introduce the design and the outcome.

Videos to support the project are optional and cannot be separate files. They must be embedded via a link in the PDF document to support the entry.

Competition Format

1. Online Qualification Round

The first stage of this competition consists of an online qualification round.

Late cancellations cause considerable inconvenience to the organisers and prevent other schools from taking part. All entries received will be regarded as a definite commitment to attend the final if successful.

2. The Final

Finalists will be invited to **Crosfields School on Thursday 19 March 2026** for the final. Schools will be asked to email the following information to isaarts@isaschools.org.uk.

- Total number of attendees, including staff and audience.

General Guidance for the final

- Each finalist will be provided a table of 120cm (set of 2 tables together 60x60cm and 71cm height) per group.
- Tablecloths will not be provided, feel free to bring your own if you wish. (It can be your school's branding, plain or one created by your students).
- Teams are limited to one device for their presentation.
- Plug sockets at the venue are limited. Therefore, please ensure any devices are fully charged before use.

Judging criteria

- Creativity, originality, and innovation
- Presentation and communication
- Procedure and results
- Effort and motivation

Rules

- Entries can be individual, or a group of maximum six pupils.
- Entries can be presented in any language, provided an English translation is given.
- Please note that teacher intervention is allowed. Teachers may help with dangerous tasks but cannot offer suggestions.
- Please name your files with the school name followed by the project title e.g. SchoolName_ProjectTitle
- Please make sure that your videos are accessible to view by anyone with the link. YouTube videos will need to be unlisted, Vimeo videos will need to be unlisted and age rated, Google Drive will need to be set to 'Anyone with the link' and OneDrive needs to be set with 'share link' to 'anyone'.
- While we recognise the potential benefit of AI, we kindly request that participants are using it for inspiration and support and in line with their schools policies on its use, rather than using it to generate their projects. Please include details about the process of using AI under "any special circumstances" box if applicable, so judges are aware.

General safety guidelines

Please note that the guidelines below are not a substitute for professional advice or common sense. Make sure to do enough research regarding health and safety, prior to performing your project.

- Make sure no danger is involved in your demonstration for yourself or for others.
- You cannot use animals, live ammunition, firearms or explosives, poisonous plants, or radioactive material.
- Make sure parts of the body are not to be placed in danger. Do not directly view the sun, infrared, or ultraviolet sources.
- Do not use food substance that has been subjected to possible contamination.
- Dress safely for your presentation if required (i.e., masks, gloves, apron, eye and/or ear protection, safety shield, etc.).
- Keep quantities of hazardous materials to a minimum, and always have waste containers for the disposal of such materials.
- Comply with school or local fire and safety rules and regulations. Use caution when heating all forms of matter. Always have a fire extinguisher available.
- Check if certain elements of your demonstration require you to obtain any kind of permits.
- Pupils must consult teachers for advice and prior to practice first demonstration.
- Always practice your demonstration before filming.
- Projects that involve harming or injuring living organisms are not acceptable in this competition.

If you have any questions, please contact isaarts@isaschools.org.uk